



# MYTHS VS. FACTS: SEXUAL ABUSE AND MOLESTATION INVESTIGATIONS



## ✘ MYTHS

Misconceptions about sexual abuse are a common pitfall. We must examine and correct them so they do not impede our ability to investigate claims.

**The most common myth leading to delays in sexual abuse and molestation investigations and subsequent rising claim costs:**

- ✘ **The employer (public entity or school district) does not need to investigate because two (2) entities — the police department and the Department of Children and Families (DCF) — are already investigating the matter(s).**

## ✔ FACTS

Two (2) or more concurrent, parallel investigations by multiple agencies are expected. For instance, in the case of suspected abuse or neglect of a student, there will likely be three (3) investigations coinciding across three (3) separate agencies that are all trying to determine different things. These would include:

ENTITY	PURPOSE OF INVESTIGATION
Local Law Enforcement	Determine if a criminal act has been committed.
Department of Children and Families (DCF)	Determine if there was in fact abuse and neglect of the child.
Employer (Public Entity or School District)	Determine compliance with internal policies and applicable civil laws.

# MYTHS VS. FACTS: SEXUAL ABUSE AND MOLESTATION INVESTIGATIONS

## BACKGROUND:

Sadly, sexually-based crimes are more common than we might think, and their damages are long-lasting. Public entities provide many valuable services for children and the general public; however, these programs can also potentially create an environment where sexual exploitation and abuse can occur.

As with any allegation of potential wrongdoing, timely and thorough investigations are integral in correcting action and controlling costs. Unfortunately, in instances of sexual abuse and molestation, workplace investigations tend to pause while criminal investigations are ongoing, causing delays and unintended costs.

## KEY TAKEAWAYS:

Understand the myths vs. facts of Sexual Abuse and Molestation (SAM) investigations and consider the following:

- Report allegations of sexual abuse and molestation to local law enforcement and participate in law enforcement's investigation as needed.
- Report abuse, neglect, or imminent harm of a child under the age of 18 to the Department of Children and Families (DCF) by Connecticut General Statute (CGS) Section 17a-101a and participate in DCF's investigation, as needed.
- Work with your employer's Compliance team, including representatives of Human Resources and an employment practices attorney, to ensure compliance with internal policies and procedures.
- Create a Sexual Abuse and Molestation Prevention Policy that details reporting and investigation procedures. Consider reviewing the policy regularly with legal counsel.

For more information on this topic, please contact your **CIRMA Risk Management Consultant**. Please visit our training and education program page at **CIRMA.org** for our current training schedule.

visit **CIRMA.org** to learn more



This material is intended for informational purposes only and is intended exclusively for CIRMA Members. This material does not amend, extend, or otherwise affect the provisions or coverages of any insurance policy issued by Connecticut Interlocal Risk Management Agency (CIRMA), nor is it a representation that coverage does or does not exist.

©2024 Connecticut Interlocal Risk Management Agency (CIRMA). All rights reserved. CIRMA.org