

## **If You are Accused and Under Pressure! What to do Until Help Arrives**

### **(FOR CAESS MEMBERS ONLY)**

#### **If you are accused of child abuse, assault, or any other criminal charge:**

- **DON'T TALK TO ANYONE ABOUT THE CASE.** Tell the principal, parent, police officer, or social services worker that you will be happy to answer questions as soon as you have an attorney present. They must respect your right to have an attorney present during questioning -- **EVEN IF THAT MEANS POSTPONING THE MEETING.**
- Call Joe Sella, Uniserv Director, at 310-518-1376 immediately. Advise Mr. Sella that you are being accused of a crime and need an attorney. If for any reason you are unable to reach Mr. Sella, call MSEA headquarters in Annapolis at 1-800-448-6782 and ask to speak to an attorney.
- If you are unable to reach Joe Sella or someone at MSEA, advise the principal, administrator, or officer that the questioning will have to be rescheduled when you can have an attorney present and that you will advise him/her as soon as you have arranged for representation. He/she can contact your attorney by calling MSEA.
- Do not allow yourself to be manipulated into discussing the case without legal counsel. The vast majority of complaints are false, but your response can easily be twisted or misconstrued. Promises like "just answer a few questions and we can close the book on this and go home" or insinuations like "you wouldn't mind talking to us if you were not guilty" are designed to help the investigators and the accusers, not you. Expedience is never a good reason to sacrifice your legal rights.

#### **If you are accused by your supervisor of misconduct, incompetence, insubordination, or impropriety:**

Advise the supervisor that the charge is one for which you could be reprimanded or suffer other disciplinary action and that you have a right to have a representative attend any meetings to help discuss the charge.

Contact your building's CAESS Rep or call Joe Sella at 310-518-1376. The building rep can accompany you to the meeting or we can arrange other representation as the situation requires.

If you are unable to reach Mr. Sella, advise your supervisor that you wish to postpone the meeting until you can have a representative present. If the supervisor insists that the meeting proceed, you must attend in order to not be insubordinate, but don't discuss the charge. Your best bet is to repeat, "I'll be happy to respond to that when I have a representative present."