
SUBSTITUTE SENATE BILL 6245

State of Washington

54th Legislature

1996 Regular Session

By Senate Committee on Health & Long-Term Care (originally sponsored by Senators Thibaudeau, Prentice, Goings, Wood, Sheldon, Winsley, Quigley, Wojahn, Smith, Fraser, Moyer, Franklin, McAuliffe, Deccio and Rasmussen)

Read first time 01/29/96.

1 AN ACT Relating to child death investigations; and adding a new
2 section to chapter 74.13 RCW.

3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** A new section is added to chapter 74.13 RCW
5 to read as follows:

6 (1) Unless the context clearly requires otherwise, the definitions
7 in this section apply in this section.

8 (a) "Community child death review team" means a multidisciplinary,
9 multiagency team, including without limitation professionals in the
10 area of public health, medicine, law enforcement, mental health, social
11 services, chemical dependency treatment, child welfare, and social work
12 and representation from the foster parent community and the general
13 public, who perform a comprehensive evaluation of circumstances leading
14 up to the unexpected death of a minor in the care of the department.

15 (b) "Consistent process of review" means the use of protocols that
16 ensure the comprehensive evaluation of circumstances leading up to the
17 unexpected death of a minor.

18 (c) "Department" means the department of social and health
19 services.

1 (d) "Unexpected or unexplained death of a minor" means a death not
2 resulting from a diagnosed terminal illness or other debilitating or
3 deteriorating illness or condition where death is anticipated.

4 (2) The department, in consultation with the department of health
5 and with coroners and medical examiners, shall review deaths of minors
6 under this section by using a two-step process.

7 (a) The regional administrator for the department in the region
8 where the death occurred, in consultation with the local coroner or
9 medical examiner, shall perform fact-finding regarding the unexpected
10 death of a minor, and shall present the results of the fact-finding to
11 the community child death review team, which shall convene to review
12 the death.

13 (b) The community child death review team shall meet to consider
14 and review the child's death. Members of the team shall be reimbursed
15 for travel expenses as provided in RCW 43.03.050 and 43.03.060.

16 (3) The department shall adopt rules regarding child death review
17 under this section, including, but not limited to time frames for
18 completion of child death review, the manner of deaths subject to
19 review, and the membership of community child death review teams, for
20 purposes of reviewing unexpected or unexplained deaths of children in
21 the care of or receiving the services of the department.

22 (4) The department of health and the department shall provide an
23 annual, joint report to the appropriate committees of the legislature
24 on child deaths in Washington state. This report shall include, but
25 not be limited to, information on deaths attributed to child
26 maltreatment and deaths of children in the care of or receiving those
27 services described in this chapter from the department.

28 (5) This section does not apply to cases involving stillborn
29 infants in hospitals, nor to predischARGE deaths of infants delivered
30 in neonatal intensive care units in hospitals.

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