

RCW 7.68.175 Examination costs of assault of a child victims paid by state. (1) No costs incurred by an institution as defined in RCW 26.44.020 for the examination of a suspected victim of assault of a child under chapter 9A.36 RCW may be billed or charged directly or indirectly to the suspected victim of the assault. Subject to the availability of amounts appropriated for this specific purpose, the department must pay all costs incurred by an institution as defined in RCW 26.44.020 for the examination of a suspected victim of assault of a child, provided that the cost of the examination would not otherwise be covered by the department.

(2) The department must notify the office of financial management and the fiscal committees of the legislature if it projects that the cost of services provided under this section exceeds the amount of funding provided by the legislature solely for the purposes of this section. [2022 c 171 s 2.]

Findings—2022 c 171: "The legislature finds that the crime victims' compensation fund was established in 1973 to cover medical bills and other costs associated with being the victim of a crime. The legislature finds that state law requires the crime victims' compensation fund to pay the costs of sexual assault examinations of minors when they are performed to gather evidence for possible prosecution. The legislature finds that in 2015, the legislature passed Substitute Senate Bill No. 5897 to provide funding for medical evaluations of suspected child victims of physical abuse. The legislature finds that this law expired June 30, 2019, and was not extended in the omnibus operating appropriations act. The legislature recognizes that while sexual assault examinations are currently provided for by the crime victims' compensation fund, examinations for child victims of physical assault are not provided for. The legislature finds that medical examinations are important for children who may be victims of physical abuse. The legislature finds that contributing to the cost of these examinations will incentivize timely evaluations, lead to early identification of abuse, and potentially prevent a child from further traumatization or injury. The legislature therefore resolves to reenact the provision of medical examinations of children who may be victims of physical abuse." [2022 c 171 s 1.]