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**HOUSE BILL 2648**

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**State of Washington 65th Legislature 2018 Regular Session**

**By** Representatives Orwall, Goodman, Klippert, Appleton, Jinkins, Wylie, Tarleton, McBride, Eslick, McDonald, and Stanford

AN ACT Relating to supporting sexual assault survivors; amending RCW 43.101.272 and 70.125.090; amending 2017 c 290 s 2 (uncodified); adding new sections to chapter 70.125 RCW; creating a new section; and providing an expiration date.

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

**Sec.**  2017 c 290 s 2 (uncodified) is amended to read as follows:

(1)(a) The joint legislative task force on sexual assault forensic examination best practices is established for the purpose of reviewing best practice models for managing all aspects of sexual assault ((~~examinations~~)) investigations and for reducing the number of untested sexual assault examination kits in Washington state ((~~that were collected prior to the effective date of this section~~)).

(i) The caucus leaders from the senate shall appoint one member from each of the two largest caucuses of the senate.

(ii) The caucus leaders from the house of representatives shall appoint one member from each of the two largest caucuses of the house of representatives.

(iii) The president of the senate and the speaker of the house of representatives shall jointly appoint:

(A) One member representing each of the following:

(I) The Washington state patrol;

(II) The Washington association of sheriffs and police chiefs;

(III) The Washington association of prosecuting attorneys;

(IV) The Washington defender association or the Washington association of criminal defense lawyers;

(V) The Washington association of cities;

(VI) The Washington association of county officials;

(VII) The Washington coalition of sexual assault programs;

(VIII) The office of crime victims advocacy;

(IX) The Washington state hospital association;

(X) The Washington state forensic investigations council;

(XI) A public institution of higher education as defined in RCW 28B.10.016;

(XII) A private higher education institution as defined in RCW 28B.07.020; ((~~and~~))

(XIII) The office of the attorney general; and

(XIV) A sexual assault nurse examiner; and

(B) Two members representing survivors of sexual assault.

(b) The task force shall choose two cochairs from among its legislative membership. The legislative membership shall convene the initial meeting of the task force.

(2) The duties of the task force include, but are not limited to:

(a) Researching and determining the number of untested sexual assault examination kits in Washington state;

(b) Researching the locations where the untested sexual assault examination kits are stored;

(c) Researching, reviewing, and making recommendations regarding legislative policy options for reducing the number of untested sexual assault examination kits;

(d) Researching the best practice models both in state and from other states for collaborative responses to victims of sexual assault from the point the sexual assault examination kit is collected to the conclusion of the investigation and prosecution of a case, and providing recommendations regarding any existing gaps in Washington and resources that may be necessary to address those gaps; ((~~and~~))

(e) Researching, identifying, and making recommendations for securing nonstate funding for testing the sexual assault examination kits, and reporting on progress made toward securing such funding;

(f) Monitoring implementation of state and federal legislative changes;

(g) Collaborating with the office of the attorney general to implement reforms pursuant to federal grant requirements; and

(h) Making recommendations for institutional reforms necessary to prevent sexual assault and improve the experiences of sexual assault survivors in the criminal justice system.

(3) Staff support for the task force must be provided by the senate committee services and the house of representatives office of program research.

(4) Legislative members of the task force must be reimbursed for travel expenses in accordance with RCW 44.04.120. Nonlegislative members, except those representing an employer or organization, are entitled to be reimbursed for travel expenses in accordance with RCW 43.03.050 and 43.03.060.

(5) The expenses of the task force must be paid jointly by the senate and the house of representatives. Task force meetings and expenditures are subject to approval by the senate facilities and operations committee and the house of representatives executive rules committee, or their successor committees.

(6) The first meeting of the task force must occur prior to October 1, 2015. The task force shall submit a preliminary report regarding its initial findings and recommendations to the appropriate committees of the legislature and the governor no later than December 1, 2015.

(7) The task force must meet no less than twice annually.

(8) The task force shall report its findings and recommendations to the appropriate committees of the legislature and the governor by September 30, 2016, and by December 1st of ((~~the following~~)) each subsequent year.

(9) This section expires ((~~June~~)) September 30, ((~~2018~~)) 2020.

**Sec.**  RCW 43.101.272 and 2017 c 290 s 3 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) Subject to the availability of amounts appropriated for this specific purpose, the commission shall provide ongoing specialized, intensive, and integrative training for persons responsible for investigating sexual assault cases involving adult victims. The training must be based on a victim-centered, trauma-informed approach to responding to sexual assault. Among other subjects, the training must include content on the neurobiology of trauma and trauma-informed interviewing, counseling, and investigative techniques.

(2) The training must: Be based on research-based practices and standards; offer participants an opportunity to practice interview skills and receive feedback from instructors; minimize the trauma of all persons who are interviewed during abuse investigations; provide methods of reducing the number of investigative interviews necessary whenever possible; assure, to the extent possible, that investigative interviews are thorough, objective, and complete; recognize needs of special populations; recognize the nature and consequences of victimization; require investigative interviews to be conducted in a manner most likely to permit the interviewed persons the maximum emotional comfort under the circumstances; address record retention and retrieval; ((~~and~~)) address documentation of investigative interviews; and educate investigators on the best practices for notifying victims of the results of forensic analysis of sexual assault kits and other significant events in the investigative process, including for active investigations and cold cases.

(3) In developing the training, the commission shall seek advice from the Washington association of sheriffs and police chiefs, the Washington coalition of sexual assault programs, and experts on sexual assault and the neurobiology of trauma. The commission shall consult with the Washington association of prosecuting attorneys in an effort to design training containing consistent elements for all professionals engaged in interviewing and interacting with sexual assault victims in the criminal justice system.

(4) The commission shall develop the training and begin offering it by July 1, 2018. Officers assigned to regularly investigate sexual assault involving adult victims shall complete the training within one year of being assigned or by July 1, 2020, whichever is later.

**Sec.**  RCW 70.125.090 and 2015 c 247 s 1 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) When a law enforcement agency receives a sexual assault examination kit, the law enforcement agency must, within thirty days of its receipt, submit a request for laboratory examination to the Washington state patrol crime laboratory for prioritization for testing by it or another accredited laboratory that holds an outsourcing agreement with the Washington state patrol if:

(a) Consent has been given by the victim; or

(b) The victim is a person under the age of eighteen who is not emancipated pursuant to chapter 13.64 RCW.

(2) Subject to available funding, the Washington state patrol crime laboratory must give priority to the laboratory examination of sexual assault examination kits at the request of a local law enforcement agency for:

(a) Active investigations and cases with impending court dates;

(b) Active investigations where public safety is an immediate concern;

(c) Violent crimes investigations, including active sexual assault investigations;

(d) Postconviction cases; and

(e) Other crimes' investigations and nonactive investigations, such as previously unsubmitted older sexual assault kits or recently collected sexual assault kits that the submitting agency has determined to be lower priority based on their initial investigation.

(3) The failure of a law enforcement agency to submit a request for laboratory examination within the time prescribed under this section does not constitute grounds in any criminal proceeding for challenging the validity of a DNA evidence association, and any evidence obtained from the sexual assault examination kit may not be excluded by a court on those grounds.

(4) A person accused or convicted of committing a crime against a victim has no standing to object to any failure to comply with the requirements of this section, and the failure to comply with the requirements of this section is not grounds for setting aside the conviction or sentence.

(5) Nothing in this section may be construed to create a private right of action or claim on the part of any individual, entity, or agency against any law enforcement agency or any contractor of any law enforcement agency.

(6) This section applies prospectively only and not retroactively. It only applies to sexual assault examinations performed on or after July 24, 2015.

(7)(a) Until June 30, ((~~2018~~)) 2022, the Washington state patrol shall compile the following information related to the sexual assault examination kits identified in this section and section 4 of this act:

(i) The number of requests for laboratory examination made for sexual assault examination kits and the law enforcement agencies that submitted the requests; and

(ii) The progress made towards testing the sexual assault examination kits, including the status of requests for laboratory examination made by each law enforcement agency.

(b) The Washington state patrol shall make recommendations for increasing the progress on testing any untested sexual assault examination kits.

(c) Beginning in 2015, the Washington state patrol shall report its findings and recommendations annually to the appropriate committees of the legislature and the governor by December 1st of each year.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  A new section is added to chapter 70.125 RCW to read as follows:

(1) Law enforcement agencies shall submit requests for forensic analysis of all sexual assault kits collected prior to July 24, 2015, and in the possession of the agencies to the Washington state patrol crime laboratory by January 1, 2019, except submission for forensic analysis is not required when: (a) Forensic analysis has previously been conducted; (b) there is documentation of an adult victim or emancipated minor victim expressing that he or she does not want his or her sexual assault kit submitted for forensic analysis; or (c) a sexual assault kit is noninvestigatory and held by a law enforcement agency pursuant to an agreement with a hospital or other medical provider. The requirements of this subsection apply regardless of the statute of limitations or the status of any related investigation.

(2) The Washington state patrol crime laboratory may consult with local law enforcement agencies to coordinate the efficient submission of requests for forensic analysis under this section in conjunction with the implementation of the statewide tracking system under RCW 43.43.545, provided that all requests are submitted by January 1, 2019. The Washington state patrol crime laboratory shall facilitate the forensic analysis of all sexual assault kits submitted under this section by December 1, 2021. The analysis may be conducted by the Washington state patrol laboratory or an accredited laboratory holding a contract or agreement with the Washington state patrol. The Washington state patrol shall process the forensic analysis of sexual assault kits in accordance with the priorities in RCW 70.125.090(2).

(3) The failure of a law enforcement agency to submit a request for laboratory examination within the time prescribed under this section does not constitute grounds in any criminal proceeding for challenging the validity of a DNA evidence association, and any evidence obtained from the sexual assault kit may not be excluded by a court on those grounds.

(4) A person accused or convicted of committing a crime against a victim has no standing to object to any failure to comply with the requirements of this section, and the failure to comply with the requirements of this section is not grounds for setting aside the conviction or sentence.

(5) Nothing in this section may be construed to create a private right of action or claim on the part of any individual, entity, or agency against any law enforcement agency or any contractor of any law enforcement agency.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  A new section is added to chapter 70.125 RCW to read as follows:

(1) In addition to all other rights provided in law, a sexual assault survivor has the right to:

(a) Receive a medical forensic examination at no cost;

(b) Consult with a sexual assault survivor's advocate during any medical evidentiary examination and during any interview by law enforcement officers, prosecuting attorneys, or defense attorneys, unless an advocate cannot be summoned in a timely manner, and regardless of whether a survivor has waived the right in a previous examination or interview;

(c) Be informed, upon the request of a survivor, of when the forensic analysis of his or her sexual assault kit and other related physical evidence will be or was completed, the results of the forensic analysis, and whether the analysis yielded a DNA profile and match, provided that the disclosure is made at an appropriate time so as to not impede or compromise an ongoing investigation;

(d) Receive notice prior to the destruction or disposal of his or her sexual assault kit;

(e) Receive a copy of the police report related to the investigation without charge; and

(f) Review his or her statement before law enforcement refers a case to the prosecuting attorney.

(2) A sexual assault survivor retains all the rights of this section regardless of whether the survivor agrees to participate in the criminal justice system and regardless of whether the survivor agrees to receive a forensic examination to collect evidence.

(3) Nothing contained in this section may be construed to provide grounds for error in favor of a criminal defendant in a criminal proceeding, nor may anything in this section be construed to grant a new cause of action or remedy against the state, its political subdivisions, law enforcement agencies, or prosecuting attorneys. The failure of a person to make a reasonable effort to protect or adhere to the rights enumerated in this section may not result in civil liability against that person. This section does not limit other civil remedies or defenses of the sexual assault survivor or the offender.

(4) For the purposes of this section:

(a) "Law enforcement officer" means a general authority Washington peace officer, as defined in RCW 10.93.020, or any person employed by a private police agency at a public school as described in RCW 28A.150.010 or an institution of higher education, as defined in RCW 28B.10.016.

(b) "Sexual assault survivor" means any person who is a victim, as defined in RCW 7.69.020, of sexual assault. However, if a victim is incapacitated, deceased, or a minor, sexual assault survivor also includes any lawful representative of the victim, including a parent, guardian, spouse, or other designated representative, unless the person is an alleged perpetrator or suspect.

(c) "Sexual assault survivor's advocate" means any person who is defined in RCW 5.60.060 as a sexual assault advocate, or a crime victim advocate.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  The office of the attorney general is authorized and encouraged to facilitate the hosting of the sexual assault kit initiative summit in conjunction with any conditions of federal funds granted to the state through the sexual assault kit initiative. The attorney general may use its contracting authority and use, when appropriate, public and private moneys for the purpose of hosting the summit.

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