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**SENATE BILL 5406**

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**State of Washington 65th Legislature 2017 Regular Session**

**By** Senator Becker

AN ACT Relating to department of social and health services responses to reports of abandonment, abuse, financial exploitation, or neglect in certain long-term care settings; and amending RCW 74.34.063.

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

**Sec.**  RCW 74.34.063 and 2005 c 274 s 354 are each amended to read as follows:

(1)(a) The department shall initiate a response to a report, no later than twenty-four hours after knowledge of the report, of suspected abandonment, abuse, financial exploitation, neglect, or self-neglect of a vulnerable adult.

(b) In the case of a report in an adult family home or assisted living facility, the department shall designate the unit responsible for conducting inspections under chapter 18.20 or 70.128 RCW, as applicable, as the entity to initiate the first response to a report on behalf of the department. If the initial report or investigation by the entity indicates the alleged abandonment, abuse, financial exploitation, or neglect has occurred, the entity shall immediately notify the unit of the department responsible for conducting investigations under this chapter, which shall then initiate its investigation.

(2) When the initial report or investigation by the department indicates that the alleged abandonment, abuse, financial exploitation, or neglect may be criminal, the department shall make an immediate report to the appropriate law enforcement agency. The department and law enforcement will coordinate in investigating reports made under this chapter. The department may provide protective services and other remedies as specified in this chapter.

(3) The law enforcement agency or the department shall report the incident in writing to the proper county prosecutor or city attorney for appropriate action whenever the investigation reveals that a crime may have been committed.

(4) The department and law enforcement may share information contained in reports and findings of abandonment, abuse, financial exploitation, and neglect of vulnerable adults, consistent with RCW 74.04.060, chapter 42.56 RCW, and other applicable confidentiality laws.

(5) The department shall notify the proper licensing authority concerning any report received under this chapter that alleges that a person who is professionally licensed, certified, or registered under Title 18 RCW has abandoned, abused, financially exploited, or neglected a vulnerable adult.

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