

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6556

As of January 27, 2020

Title: An act relating to expanding reporting options for mandated reporters of child abuse and neglect.

Brief Description: Expanding reporting options for mandated reporters of child abuse and neglect.

Sponsors: Senators Cleveland, Darneille and Wilson, C.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Human Services, Reentry & Rehabilitation: 1/28/20.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Directs the Department of Children, Youth and Families (DCYF) to implement a web-based reporting portal accessible to those mandated by law to report child abuse and neglect, subject to appropriation.
- Directs DCYF to implement a call-back option for callers placed on hold to provide a phone number for DCYF to return a call to complete the report of child abuse and neglect, subject to appropriation.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES, REENTRY & REHABILITATION

Staff: Alison Mendiola (786-7488)

Background: Mandatory Reporting Laws and Offenses. Mandatory reporting laws require certain people to report suspected child abuse or neglect to DCYF or law enforcement, when a reporter has reasonable cause to believe that a child has suffered abuse or neglect.

People designated as mandatory reporters are:

- any practitioner;
- county coroner;
- medical examiner;
- law enforcement officer;
- professional school personnel;
- registered or licensed nurse;

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- social service counselor;
- psychologist;
- pharmacist;
- employee of the Department of Early Learning;
- licensed or certified child care providers or their employees;
- employee of the Department of Social and Health Services;
- juvenile probation officer;
- placement and liaison specialist;
- responsible living skills program staff;
- HOPE center staff;
- state family and children's ombuds or any volunteer in the ombuds's office;
- Department of Corrections personnel;
- guardian ad litem;
- court appointed special advocates;
- any person in an official supervisory capacity with a profit or nonprofit organization;
- administrative, academic, or athletic department employees of higher learning institutions; and
- any adult who has reasonable cause to believe that a child who resides with the adult is a victim of abuse or neglect.

Any person who has reason to believe that child abuse or neglect has occurred may report that information.

Summary of Bill: Subject to funding appropriated for this specific purpose, DCYF must establish, develop, and implement a web-based reporting portal accessible to those mandated to report child abuse and neglect. DCYF must establish, develop, and implement a call-back option for callers placed on hold to provide a phone number for DCYF to return a call to complete the report of child abuse and neglect.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 23, 2020.

Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.