

CHILD PROTECTION: ONLINE REPORTING

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Senate Bill 334 (S-2, as passed by the Senate)

Sponsor: Sen. Judy K. Emmons

House Committee: Families, Children, and Seniors

Senate Committee: Families, Seniors and Human Services

Complete to 10-20-15

Analysis available at
<http://www.legislature.mi.gov>

SUMMARY:

Certain professionals who have a reasonable cause to suspect child abuse are required to immediately make an oral report of suspected child abuse or child neglect to the Department of Health and Human Services, by telephone or otherwise. This includes medical professionals, marriage and family therapists, licensed professional counselors, social workers, registered social service technicians, professionals employed in the Office of the Friend of the Court, school administrators, school counselors, teachers, law enforcement officers, members of the clergy, and regulated child care providers. The law also requires the person making the oral report to file a written report within 72 hours after making an oral report.

Senate Bill 334 would amend the Child Protection Law (MCL 722.622 et al.) to do all of the following:

- Require the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) to implement an online reporting system for the reporting of child abuse and neglect, subject to appropriation.
- Require a mandated reporter of suspected child abuse or neglect to make an immediate report to centralized intake by telephone or, if available, through the online reporting system (instead of making an oral report, as currently required).
- Specify that a report made through the online reporting system would be considered a written report, and no additional written report would be required, if the online report contained the information required in a written report.
- Require written reports to be submitted to centralized intake instead of a county department of human services.
- Replace the term "venereal disease" with "sexually transmitted infection," in a provision that the presence of a venereal disease in a child over one month old but less 12 years of age is reasonable cause to suspect that child abuse or neglect has occurred.

The bill defines the following terms: "online reporting system" would mean the electronic system established by the department for identified the bill to report suspected child abuse

or neglect; "centralized intake" would mean the DHHS's statewide centralized processing center for reports of suspected child abuse and neglect; and "child care regulatory agency" would be amended to refer to the Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs.

The bill would take effect 90 days after being enacted.

FISCAL IMPACT:

This bill will have no direct fiscal impact on the state or local units of government. Section 3(10) makes the implementation of an online reporting system subject to appropriations, meaning the online reporting system will not be implemented without an increase to the Department of Health and Human Services budget. This bill does not include an increase in appropriations to DHHS for implementation purposes. DHHS has estimated that the cost of creating an online reporting system to be \$2.6 million.

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