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## BILL ANALYSIS



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Senate Bill 334 (as introduced 5-14-15)  
Sponsor: Senator Judy K. Emmons  
Committee: Families, Seniors and Human Services

Date Completed: 5-19-15

**CONTENT**

**The bill would amend the Child Protection Law to do 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 by January 1, 2017.**
- **Require a mandated reporter of suspected child abuse or neglect to make an immediate report to centralized intake by telephone or through the online reporting system.**
- **Specify that a report made using the online reporting system would be considered a written report if it 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.**
- **Eliminate a requirement that members of the Task Force on the Prevention of Sexual Abuse of Children serve without compensation, or reimbursement of expenses.**

The bill would take effect 90 days after its enactment.

The Law requires medical professionals, marriage therapists, licensed counselors, social workers, social service technicians, school counselors, professionals employed in a friend of the court office, school administrators, counselors, teachers, law enforcement officers, members of the clergy, and regulated child care providers who have reasonable cause to suspect child abuse or neglect to make an oral report, or cause an oral report to be made, to the Department of Health and Human Services. (These individuals are commonly referred to as "mandated reporters".) Under the bill, instead, a mandated reporter would have to make an immediate report to centralized intake by telephone or, if available, through the online reporting system.

"Centralized intake" would mean the DHHS's statewide centralized processing center for reports of suspected child abuse and neglect. "Online reporting system" would mean the electronic system established by the Department for mandated reporters to report suspected child abuse or child neglect.

The Law requires the reporting person to file a written report within 72 hours after making an oral report. The bill specifies that this requirement would apply in the case of an oral report made by telephone to centralized intake. If the immediate report had been made using the online reporting system and included the information required in a written report, the online report would be considered a written report and no additional written report would be

required. The same information that must be included in a written report would have to be included in a report made using the online system.

The bill would require the written report to be mailed or otherwise transmitted to centralized intake, rather than the county department of human services in the county in which the child suspected of being abused or neglected is found.

The bill would require the online reporting system to be implemented by January 1, 2017.

The Law creates the Task Force on the Prevention of Sexual Abuse, provides for the selection of Task Force members, and prescribes its duties and responsibilities. The Law also provides that members of the Task Force must serve without compensation or reimbursement for their expenses. The bill would eliminate that provision.

MCL 722.622 et al.

Legislative Analyst: Jeff Mann

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

The bill would require the Department of Health and Human Services to establish the online reporting system for suspected child abuse or neglect by January 1, 2017. A request for information on the projected costs of implementing the new system is pending to the Department.

The bill also would remove a prohibition on compensation or reimbursement to members of the Task Force on the Prevention of Sexual Abuse of Children. Any reimbursement would remain limited to "travel costs related to task force operations," per Section 590 of Article X of Public Act 252 of 2014 (the general omnibus appropriation bill for fiscal year 2014-15).

Fiscal Analyst: Frances Carley

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This analysis was prepared by nonpartisan Senate staff for use by the Senate in its deliberations and does not constitute an official statement of legislative intent.