

**First Regular Session
Seventy-fifth General Assembly
STATE OF COLORADO**

ENGROSSED

*This Version Includes All Amendments Adopted
on Second Reading in the House of Introduction*

LLS NO. 25-0117.01 Jerry Barry x4341

HOUSE BILL 25-1188

HOUSE SPONSORSHIP

Froelich,

SENATE SPONSORSHIP

Michaelson Jenet,

House Committees

Health & Human Services
Appropriations

Senate Committees

A BILL FOR AN ACT

101 **CONCERNING THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE MANDATORY**
102 **REPORTER TASK FORCE, AND, IN CONNECTION THEREWITH,**
103 **MAKING AN APPROPRIATION.**

Bill Summary

(Note: This summary applies to this bill as introduced and does not reflect any amendments that may be subsequently adopted. If this bill passes third reading in the house of introduction, a bill summary that applies to the reengrossed version of this bill will be available at <http://leg.colorado.gov>.)

The bill specifies that child abuse or neglect must not be based solely upon a parent's or child's indigence, unavailability of accessible services, unhoused status, or disability.

For mandatory reporters, the bill:

- Requires reports to be submitted as soon as possible, but

Shading denotes HOUSE amendment. Double underlining denotes SENATE amendment.
Capital letters or bold & italic numbers indicate new material to be added to existing law.
Dashes through the words or numbers indicate deletions from existing law.

HOUSE
Amended 2nd Reading
April 16, 2025

within 24 hours, after receiving information of child abuse or neglect; except that reports concerning young victims of dating violence or sexual assault must be made within 72 hours;

- Provides that reports are not required if the person:
 - Receives the information outside of the person's professional capacity that would require a report; or
 - Is connected to an attorney representing a party involved in a suspected child abuse or neglect case that would require a report under current law;
- Removes victim's advocates from the list of professions required to report child abuse or neglect;
- Prohibits reports based solely on a family's race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, or disability; and
- Prohibits the delegation of the duty to report to a person who does not have firsthand knowledge of the suspected child abuse or neglect.

For entities that employ a mandatory reporter, the bill:

- Authorizes the entity to develop protocols for making the report if the protocols comply with state law and regulations; and
- Prohibits representatives of the entity from deterring or impeding a person from filing a report.

The bill requires a county department of human or social services (county department) to assign a referral identification number to each report of child abuse or neglect. If a mandatory reporter contacts a county department about a suspected child abuse or neglect report and the department gives the mandatory reporter the referral identification number of a related report that was previously filed, the mandatory reporter is not required to file a written report.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Colorado:

SECTION 1. Legislative declaration. (1) (a) The general assembly finds that complete reporting of known or suspected child abuse or neglect is a matter of public concern and that it is the intent of the general assembly to protect the best interests of children in this state and to offer protective services in order to prevent any further harm to children suffering from abuse.

(b) The general assembly further finds that requiring people to

1 report known or suspected child abuse or neglect impacts the people
2 reporting, as well as children and families who are the subjects of the
3 reports. As a result of implicit bias, under-resourced communities,
4 communities of color, and persons with disabilities are disproportionately
5 impacted by the mandatory reporting system.

6 (2) (a) To address these impacts and additional issues, the general
7 assembly established the mandatory reporting task force in 2022, which
8 was charged with making findings and recommendations to clarify the
9 law and recommending changes to mandatory reporting procedures and
10 trainings.

11 (b) The task force found that:

12 (I) Colorado's mandatory reporting law and system for making
13 reports disproportionately impacts families of color, people with
14 disabilities, and under-resourced communities, resulting in some contacts
15 with child protection services that are unnecessary;

16 (II) Colorado's mandatory reporting law requires mandatory
17 reporters to report circumstances that may not involve the safety of
18 children;

19 (III) By forcing mandatory reporters to report all concerns through
20 the child abuse hotline, Colorado's mandatory reporting law requires
21 professionals to engage child protection services with families that do not
22 require their services;

23 (IV) Cases that do not involve concerns of child safety may not
24 get adequate attention because the system is overwhelmed by reports. A
25 lack of training perpetuates this issue.

26 (V) Colorado's mandatory reporting law may hinder certain
27 professionals from forming trusted relationships with children and

1 families.

2 (c) To address these issues, the task force issued 24
3 recommendations to the general assembly. The task force's
4 recommendations are intended to provide a comprehensive approach to
5 improving the mandatory reporting system, including clarifying the law,
6 standardizing practices and training, and creating alternative reporting
7 methods.

8 (d) Therefore, the general assembly finds and declares that the
9 first step in comprehensively improving the mandatory reporting system
10 is to implement the task force's recommendations to address clarity in the
11 law. These clarifications will serve as the foundation for further
12 improvements to the mandatory reporting system.

13 (e) The general assembly further declares that the task force's
14 continuum of recommendations must be implemented in whole to
15 effectively serve children and families.

16 **SECTION 2.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, 19-3-304, **amend**
17 (1)(a) and (2) introductory portion; **repeal** (2)(w); and **add** (1)(c), [REDACTED]
18 (3.2), and (3.3) as follows:

19 **19-3-304. Persons required to report child abuse or neglect.**

20 (1) (a) Except as otherwise provided by section 19-3-307, section
21 25-1-122 (4)(d), ~~C.R.S.~~, and ~~paragraph (b) of this subsection (1), any~~
22 ~~SUBSECTIONS (1)(b) AND (1)(c) OF THIS SECTION,~~ A person specified in
23 subsection (2) of this section who has reasonable cause to know or
24 suspect that a child has been subjected to abuse or neglect or who has
25 observed the child being subjected to circumstances or conditions that
26 would reasonably result in abuse or neglect shall immediately upon
27 receiving ~~such~~ THE information report or cause a report to be made of

1 ~~such~~ THE fact AS SOON AS REASONABLY POSSIBLE, BUT NO LATER THAN
2 TWENTY-FOUR HOURS AFTER RECEIVING THE INFORMATION, to the county
3 department, the local law enforcement agency, or through the child abuse
4 reporting hotline system as set forth in section 26-5-111. ~~C.R.S.~~

5 (c) THE REPORTING REQUIREMENT DESCRIBED IN SUBSECTION
6 (1)(a) OF THIS SECTION DOES NOT APPLY IF THE PERSON:

7 (I) LEARNS OF THE SUSPECTED ABUSE OR NEGLECT OUTSIDE OF THE
8 PERSON'S PROFESSIONAL CAPACITY THAT WOULD REQUIRE THE PERSON TO
9 MAKE A REPORT PURSUANT TO THIS SECTION; OR

10 (II) IS EMPLOYED BY, AN AGENT OF, OR A CONTRACTOR FOR ANY
11 ATTORNEY WHO IS PROVIDING LEGAL SERVICES.

12

13 (2) Persons required to report ~~such~~ THE abuse or neglect or
14 circumstances or conditions include ~~any~~ A:

15 (w) ~~Victim's advocate, as defined in section 13-90-107 (1)(k)(H),~~
16 ~~C.R.S.~~

17 (3.2) A PERSON SPECIFIED IN SUBSECTION (2) OR (3) OF THIS
18 SECTION SHALL NOT MAKE A REPORT  DUE TO A FAMILY'S OR CHILD'S
19 RACE, ETHNICITY, SOCIOECONOMIC STATUS, OR DISABILITY STATUS. IN
20 ADDITION, THE REPORTING REQUIREMENT DESCRIBED IN SUBSECTION
21 (1)(a) OF THIS SECTION DOES NOT APPLY IF THE BASIS FOR THE REPORT
22 ARISES FROM CONCERNS SOLELY DUE TO ANY OF THE FOLLOWING
23 CRITERIA:

24 (a) SOCIOECONOMIC STATUS, WHICH INCLUDES FACTORS SUCH AS
25 INADEQUATE HOUSING, FURNISHINGS, INCOME, OR CLOTHING; OR

26 (b) DISABILITY.

27 (3.3) (a) A PERSON SPECIFIED IN SUBSECTION (2) OF THIS SECTION

1 SHALL NOT DELEGATE THE DUTY TO MAKE THE REPORT REQUIRED BY
2 SUBSECTION (1)(a) OF THIS SECTION TO ANOTHER PERSON WHO DOES NOT
3 HAVE FIRSTHAND KNOWLEDGE OF THE SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE OR
4 NEGLECT.

5 (b) AN ENTITY THAT EMPLOYS A PERSON SPECIFIED IN SUBSECTION
6 (2) OR (2.5) OF THIS SECTION MAY DEVELOP PROTOCOLS REGARDING THE
7 PROCESS FOR MAKING THE REPORT REQUIRED BY SUBSECTION (1)(a) OF
8 THIS SECTION. THE PROTOCOLS MUST COMPLY WITH STATE LAW AND
9 REGULATIONS. REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ENTITY SHALL NOT DETER OR
10 IMPEDE A PERSON FROM FILING A REPORT REQUIRED BY SUBSECTION (1)(a)
11 OF THIS SECTION.

12 **SECTION 3.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, 19-3-307, **amend** (1)
13 and (4) as follows:

14 **19-3-307. Reporting procedures - definitions.** (1) (a) Reports
15 of known or suspected child abuse or neglect made pursuant to this ~~article~~
16 ~~shall~~ ARTICLE 3 MUST be made ~~immediately~~ AS SOON AS PRACTICABLE,
17 BUT NO LATER THAN TWENTY-FOUR HOURS AFTER RECEIVING THE
18 INFORMATION, to the county department, the local law enforcement
19 agency, or through the child abuse reporting hotline system as set forth in
20 section 26-5-111. ~~C.R.S., and shall be followed promptly by a written~~
21 ~~report prepared by those persons required to report.~~ The county
22 department shall submit a report of confirmed child abuse or neglect
23 within sixty days ~~of~~ AFTER receipt of the report to the state department in
24 a manner prescribed by the state department.

25 (b) IF A PERSON REQUIRED TO SUBMIT A REPORT PURSUANT TO THIS
26 PART 3 CONTACTS THE CHILD ABUSE REPORTING HOTLINE SYSTEM
27 CREATED PURSUANT TO SECTION 26-5-111 OR A COUNTY DEPARTMENT

1 ABOUT AN INCIDENT OR SITUATION FOR WHICH THE CHILD ABUSE
2 REPORTING HOTLINE SYSTEM OR COUNTY DEPARTMENT HAS ALREADY
3 RECEIVED A REPORT, THE CHILD ABUSE REPORTING HOTLINE SYSTEM OR
4 COUNTY DEPARTMENT MAY, AFTER CONFIRMING THAT THE REPORT DOES
5 NOT REQUIRE A NEW REFERRAL, PROVIDE THE PERSON WITH THE REFERRAL
6 IDENTIFICATION NUMBER FROM THE EARLIER CHILD ABUSE REPORTING
7 HOTLINE SYSTEM OR COUNTY REPORT. A PERSON REQUIRED TO SUBMIT A
8 REPORT PURSUANT TO THIS PART 3 WHO RECEIVES A REFERRAL
9 IDENTIFICATION NUMBER FROM THE CHILD ABUSE REPORTING HOTLINE
10 SYSTEM OR A COUNTY DEPARTMENT IS NOT REQUIRED TO MAKE A REPORT
11 PURSUANT TO SUBSECTION (1)(a) OF THIS SECTION AND IS DEEMED TO
12 HAVE FULFILLED THEIR REPORTING RESPONSIBILITY. NOTHING IN THIS
13 SECTION PRECLUDES THE CHILD ABUSE REPORTING HOTLINE SYSTEM OR A
14 COUNTY DEPARTMENT FROM GENERATING A NEW REPORT IF THERE IS
15 ADDITIONAL OR DIFFERENT INFORMATION THAT MIGHT NOT HAVE BEEN
16 REPORTED OR IF THE REFERRAL IS NOT CURRENTLY UNDER REVIEW.

17 (4) A written report, INCLUDING A REPORT VOLUNTARILY MADE,
18 from persons or officials required by this part 3 to report known or
19 suspected child abuse or neglect shall be IS admissible as evidence in any
20 A proceeding relating to child abuse, subject to the limitations of section
21 19-1-307.

22 **SECTION 4. Appropriation.** For the 2025-26 state fiscal year,
23 \$5,375 is appropriated to the department of human services for use by the
24 division of child welfare. This appropriation is from the general fund. To
25 implement this act, the division may use this appropriation for training.

26 **SECTION 5. Effective date.** This act takes effect September 1,
27 2025; except that section 19-3-304 (2)(w), Colorado Revised Statutes, as

1 repealed in section 2 of this act, this section 4, and section 5 of this act
2 take effect upon passage.

3 **SECTION 6. Safety clause.** The general assembly finds,
4 determines, and declares that this act is necessary for the immediate
5 preservation of the public peace, health, or safety or for appropriations for
6 the support and maintenance of the departments of the state and state
7 institutions.