

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## HB 1931

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As Passed Senate, April 10, 2017

**Title:** An act relating to posting child abuse and neglect mandated reporter requirements.

**Brief Description:** Concerning the posting of child abuse and neglect mandated reporter requirements.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Hayes, Macri, McDonald and Jinkins.

**Brief History:** Passed House: 2/28/17, 98-0.

**Committee Activity:** Human Services, Mental Health & Housing: 3/15/17, 3/20/17 [DP, w/oRec].

**Floor Activity:**

Passed Senate: 4/10/17, 47-0.

### Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires the Department of Social and Health Services to make available on its website a poster that includes the requirements for mandated reporters of child abuse and neglect, and organizations with employees or volunteers subject to the mandatory reporter requirements must display that poster in a common area.

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES, MENTAL HEALTH & HOUSING

**Majority Report:** Do pass.

Signed by Senators O'Ban, Chair; Miloscia, Vice Chair; Darneille, Ranking Minority Member; Carlyle, Padden and Walsh.

**Minority Report:** That it be referred without recommendation.

Signed by Senator Hunt.

**Staff:** Alison Mendiola (786-7444)

**Background:** In Washington, mandatory reporting laws require certain people to report suspected child abuse or child neglect to the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) or law enforcement. Practitioners, medical examiners, law enforcement officers,

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professional school personnel, registered or licensed nurses, social service counselors, psychologists, pharmacists, the Department of Early Learning employees, licensed or certified child care providers, juvenile probation officers, placement and liaison specialists, responsible living skills program staff, the DSHS employees, HOPE center staff, the Office of the Family and Children's Ombudsman (Ombuds) employees, any volunteers in the Ombuds's office, or host home providers are all examples of mandated reporters.

Mandated reporting requirements are also extended to the Department of Corrections personnel; guardians ad litem; court appointed special advocates; any person in an official supervisory capacity with a profit or nonprofit organization; administrative, academic, or athletic departmental employees of institutions of higher learning; or any adult who has reasonable cause to believe that a child who resides with them is a victim of abuse or neglect. Any other person who has reason to believe that child abuse or child neglect has occurred may report that information.

Upon suspecting child abuse or child neglect, the mandated reporter must make a report within 48 hours. Failing to report suspected child abuse or child neglect within 48 hours is considered a gross misdemeanor.

**Summary of Bill:** DSHS must make available on its public website a downloadable and printable poster that includes the requirements for mandated reporters of child abuse and neglect. The poster must be at least 8.5 inches by 11 inches with all information on one side and made available in both English and Spanish. Organizations that include employees or volunteers subject to the mandatory reporter requirements must clearly display this poster in a common area.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

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

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

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony:** PRO: There have been instances where abuse or neglect is reported but unreported to DSHS or law enforcement for awhile. This gap of time can lead to more harm for a child. This is a basic bill to remind mandated reporters of their obligations. You might get training only at the beginning of your job. This bill is a good step to remind us of our duties, ask questions, and report to law enforcement.

**Persons Testifying:** PRO: Representative Dave Hayes, Prime Sponsor; Byron Mannering, Children's Advocacy Centers of Washington; John Snaza, Thurston County Sheriff.

**Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying:** No one.