

government and its existing public institutions, and shall take effect immediately.

Passed the House March 9, 1988.

Passed the Senate March 5, 1988.

Approved by the Governor March 21, 1988.

Filed in Office of Secretary of State March 21, 1988.

## CHAPTER 142

[Substitute House Bill No. 608]

### CHILD ABUSE OR NEGLECT—MALICIOUS REPORTING, MISDEMEANOR

AN ACT Relating to malicious reporting of child abuse or neglect; amending RCW 26-.44.060; reenacting and amending RCW 26.4.020 and 26.44.030; and prescribing penalties.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of the State of Washington:

Sec. 1. Section 2, chapter 13, Laws of 1965 as last amended by section 2, chapter 206, Laws of 1987 and by section 9, chapter 524, Laws of 1987 and RCW 26.44.020 are each reenacted and amended to read as follows:

For the purpose of and as used in this chapter:

(1) "Court" means the superior court of the state of Washington, juvenile department.

(2) "Law enforcement agency" means the police department, the prosecuting attorney, the state patrol, the director of public safety, or the office of the sheriff.

(3) "Practitioner of the healing arts" or "practitioner" means a person licensed by this state to practice podiatry, optometry, chiropractic, nursing, dentistry, osteopathy and surgery, or medicine and surgery or to provide other health services. The term "practitioner" shall include a duly accredited Christian Science practitioner: PROVIDED, HOWEVER, That a person who is being furnished Christian Science treatment by a duly accredited Christian Science practitioner shall not be considered, for that reason alone, a neglected person for the purposes of this chapter.

(4) "Institution" means a private or public hospital or any other facility providing medical diagnosis, treatment or care.

(5) "Department" means the state department of social and health services.

(6) "Child" or "children" means any person under the age of eighteen years of age.

(7) "Professional school personnel" shall include, but not be limited to, teachers, counselors, administrators, child care facility personnel, and school nurses.

(8) "Social service counselor" shall mean anyone engaged in a professional capacity during the regular course of employment in encouraging or promoting the health, welfare, support or education of children, or providing

social services to adults or families, including mental health, drug and alcohol treatment, and domestic violence programs, whether in an individual capacity, or as an employee or agent of any public or private organization or institution.

(9) "Psychologist" shall mean any person licensed to practice psychology under chapter 18.83 RCW, whether acting in an individual capacity or as an employee or agent of any public or private organization or institution.

(10) "Pharmacist" shall mean any registered pharmacist under the provisions of chapter 18.64 RCW, whether acting in an individual capacity or as an employee or agent of any public or private organization or institution.

(11) "Clergy" shall mean any regularly licensed or ordained minister, priest or rabbi of any church or religious denomination, whether acting in an individual capacity or as an employee or agent of any public or private organization or institution.

(12) "Child abuse or neglect" shall mean the injury, sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, or negligent treatment or maltreatment of a child by any person under circumstances which indicate that the child's health, welfare, and safety is harmed thereby. An abused child is a child who has been subjected to child abuse or neglect as defined herein: PROVIDED, That this subsection shall not be construed to authorize interference with child-raising practices, including reasonable parental discipline, which are not proved to be injurious to the child's health, welfare, and safety: AND PROVIDED FURTHER, That nothing in this section shall be used to prohibit the reasonable use of corporal punishment as a means of discipline. No parent or guardian shall be deemed abusive or neglectful solely by reason of the parent's or child's blindness, deafness, developmental disability, or other handicap.

(13) "Child protective services section" shall mean the child protective services section of the department.

(14) "Adult dependent persons not able to provide for their own protection through the criminal justice system" shall be defined as those persons over the age of eighteen years who have been found legally incompetent pursuant to chapter 11.88 RCW or found disabled to such a degree pursuant to said chapter, that such protection is indicated: PROVIDED, That no persons reporting injury, abuse, or neglect to an adult dependent person as defined herein shall suffer negative consequences if such a judicial determination of incompetency or disability has not taken place and the person reporting believes in good faith that the adult dependent person has been found legally incompetent pursuant to chapter 11.88 RCW.

(15) "Sexual exploitation" includes: (a) Allowing, permitting, or encouraging a child to engage in prostitution by any person; or (b) allowing,

permitting, encouraging, or engaging in the obscene or pornographic photographing, filming, or depicting of a child for commercial purposes as those acts are defined by state law by any person.

(16) "Negligent treatment or maltreatment" means an act or omission which evidences a serious disregard of consequences of such magnitude as to constitute a clear and present danger to the child's health, welfare, and safety.

(17) "Developmentally disabled person" means a person who has a disability defined in RCW 71.20.016.

(18) "Child protective services" means those services provided by the department designed to protect children from child abuse and neglect and safeguard the general welfare of such children and shall include investigations of child abuse and neglect reports, including reports regarding child care centers and family child care homes, and the development, management, and provision of or referral to services to ameliorate conditions which endanger the welfare of children, the coordination of necessary programs and services relevant to the prevention, intervention, and treatment of child abuse and neglect, and services to children to ensure that each child has a permanent home. In determining whether protective services should be provided, the department shall not decline to provide such services solely because of the child's unwillingness or developmental inability to describe the nature and severity of the abuse or neglect.

(19) "Malice" or "maliciously" means an evil intent, wish, or design to vex, annoy, or injure another person. Such malice may be inferred from an act done in wilful disregard of the rights of another, or an act wrongfully done without just cause or excuse, or an act or omission of duty betraying a wilful disregard of social duty.

Sec. 2. Section 3, chapter 13, Laws of 1965 as last amended by section 3, chapter 206, Laws of 1987, by section 23, chapter 512, Laws of 1987, and by section 10, chapter 524, Laws of 1987 and RCW 26.44.030 are each reenacted and amended to read as follows:

(1) When any practitioner, professional school personnel, registered or licensed nurse, social service counselor, psychologist, pharmacist, licensed or certified child care providers or their employees, employee of the department, or juvenile probation officer has reasonable cause to believe that a child or adult dependent or developmentally disabled person has suffered abuse or neglect, he or she shall report such incident, or cause a report to be made, to the proper law enforcement agency or to the department as provided in RCW 26.44.040. The report shall be made at the first opportunity, but in no case longer than forty-eight hours after there is reasonable cause to believe that the child or adult has suffered abuse or neglect.

(2) Any other person who has reasonable cause to believe that a child or adult dependent or developmentally disabled person has suffered abuse or neglect may report such incident to the proper law enforcement agency or

to the department of social and health services as provided in RCW 26.44.040.

(3) The department, upon receiving a report of an incident of abuse or neglect pursuant to this chapter, involving a child or adult dependent or developmentally disabled person who has died or has had physical injury or injuries inflicted upon him or her other than by accidental means or who has been subjected to sexual abuse, shall report such incident in writing to the proper law enforcement agency.

(4) Any law enforcement agency receiving a report of an incident of abuse or neglect pursuant to this chapter, involving a child or adult dependent or developmentally disabled person who has died or has had physical injury or injuries inflicted upon him or her other than by accidental means, or who has been subjected to sexual abuse, shall report such incident in writing as provided in RCW 26.44.040 to the proper county prosecutor or city attorney for appropriate action whenever the law enforcement agency's investigation reveals that a crime may have been committed. The law enforcement agency shall also notify the department of all reports received and the law enforcement agency's disposition of them.

(5) Any county prosecutor or city attorney receiving a report under subsection (4) of this section shall notify the victim, any persons the victim requests, and the local office of the department, of the decision to charge or decline to charge a crime, within five days of making the decision.

(6) The department may conduct ongoing case planning and consultation with those persons or agencies required to report under this section and with designated representatives of Washington Indian tribes if the client information exchanged is pertinent to cases currently receiving child protective services or department case services for the developmentally disabled. Upon request, the department shall conduct such planning and consultation with those persons required to report under this section, with consultants designated by the department, if the department determines it is in the best interests of the child or developmentally disabled person. Information considered privileged by statute and not directly related to reports required by this section shall not be divulged without a valid written waiver of the privilege.

(7) Any case referred to the department by a physician licensed under chapter 18.57 or 18.71 RCW on the basis of an expert medical opinion that child abuse, neglect, or sexual assault has occurred and that the child's safety will be seriously endangered if returned home, the department shall file a dependency petition unless a second licensed physician of the parents' choice believes that such expert medical opinion is incorrect. If the parents fail to designate a second physician, the department may make the selection. If a physician finds that a child has suffered abuse or neglect but that such abuse or neglect does not constitute imminent danger to the child's health or safety, and the department agrees with the physician's assessment,

the child may be left in the parents' home while the department proceeds with reasonable efforts to remedy parenting deficiencies.

(8) Persons or agencies exchanging information under subsection (6) of this section shall not further disseminate or release the information except as authorized by state or federal statute. Violation of this subsection is a misdemeanor.

(9) Upon receiving reports of abuse or neglect, the department or law enforcement agency may interview children. The interviews may be conducted on school premises, at day-care facilities, at the child's home, or at other suitable locations outside of the presence of parents. Parental notification of the interview shall occur at the earliest possible point in the investigation that will not jeopardize the safety or protection of the child or the course of the investigation. Prior to commencing the interview the department or law enforcement agency shall determine whether the child wishes a third party to be present for the interview and, if so, shall make reasonable efforts to accommodate the child's wishes. Unless the child objects, the department or law enforcement agency shall make reasonable efforts to include a third party in any interview so long as the presence of the third party will not jeopardize the course of the investigation.

(10) Upon receiving a report of incidents, conditions, or circumstances of child abuse and neglect, the department shall have access to all relevant records of the child in the possession of mandated reporters and their employees.

(11) The department shall maintain investigation records and conduct timely and periodic reviews of all cases constituting abuse and neglect. The department shall maintain a log of screened-out nonabusive cases.

(12) The department of social and health services shall, within funds appropriated for this purpose, use a risk assessment tool when investigating child abuse and neglect referrals. The tool shall be used, on a pilot basis, in three local office service areas. The department shall, within funds appropriated for this purpose, offer enhanced community-based services to persons who are determined not to require further state intervention.

The department shall report to the ways and means committees of the senate and house of representatives on the use of the tool by December 1, 1988. The report shall include recommendations on the continued use and possible expanded use of the tool.

(13) Upon receipt of such report the law enforcement agency may arrange to interview the person making the report and any collateral sources to determine if any malice is involved in the reporting.

Sec. 3. Section 6, chapter 13, Laws of 1965 as last amended by section 9, chapter 129, Laws of 1982 and RCW 26.44.060 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) (a) Except as provided in (b) of this subsection, any person participating in good faith in the making of a report pursuant to this chapter or

testifying as to alleged child abuse or neglect in a judicial proceeding shall in so doing be immune from any liability arising out of such reporting or testifying under any law of this state or its political subdivisions.

(b) A person convicted of a violation of subsection (4) of this section shall not be immune from liability under (a) of this subsection.

(2) An administrator of a hospital or similar institution or any physician licensed pursuant to chapters 18.71 or 18.57 RCW taking a child into custody pursuant to RCW 26.44.056 shall not be subject to criminal or civil liability for such taking into custody.

(3) Conduct conforming with the reporting requirements of this chapter shall not be deemed a violation of the confidential communication privilege of RCW 5.60.060 (3) and (4), 18.53.200 and 18.83.110. Nothing in this chapter shall be construed as to supersede or abridge remedies provided in chapter 4.92 RCW.

(4) A person who, intentionally and in bad faith or maliciously, knowingly makes a false report of abuse or neglect shall be guilty of a misdemeanor punishable in accordance with RCW 9A.20.021.

Passed the House March 10, 1988.

Passed the Senate March 1, 1988.

Approved by the Governor March 21, 1988.

Filed in Office of Secretary of State March 21, 1988.

## CHAPTER 143

[Substitute House Bill No. 1271]

### DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

AN ACT Relating to the department of corrections; amending RCW 72.12.160, 72.02.100, 72.02.110, 72.13.110, 72.13.120, 72.13.130, 72.13.140, 72.13.150, 72.13.160, 72.08.380, 9.94A.170, 9.94A.383, and 9.94A.400; reenacting and amending RCW 72.01.050 and 9.94A.120; adding new sections to chapter 72.02 RCW; creating new sections; recodifying RCW 72.12.160, 72.13.110, 72.13.120, 72.13.130, 72.13.140, 72.13.150, 72.13.160, 72.15.060, and 72.08.380; repealing RCW 72.02.050, 72.08.010, 72.08.020, 72.08.040, 72.08.045, 72.08.050, 72.08.080, 72.08.090, 72.08.101, 72.08.102, 72.08.103, 72.08.120, 72.08.130, 72.08.160, 72.12.010, 72.12.020, 72.12.040, 72.12.070, 72.12.090, 72.12.100, 72.12.140, 72.13.001, 72.13.010, 72.13.040, 72.13.050, 72.13.060, 72.13.080, 72.13.091, 72.13.100, 72.13.170, 72.15.010, 72.15.020, 72.15.030, 72.15.040, 72.15.050, and 72.15.070; and declaring an emergency.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of the State of Washington:

Sec. 1. Section 72.01.050, chapter 28, Laws of 1959 as last amended by section 1, chapter 350, Laws of 1985 and by section 8, chapter 378, Laws of 1985 and RCW 72.01.050 are each reenacted and amended to read as follows:

(1) The secretary of social and health services shall have full power to manage and govern the following public institutions: The western state hospital, the eastern state hospital, the northern state hospital, the state training school, the state school for girls, Lakeland Village, the Rainier school,