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HOUSE BILL NO. 1581

Offered January 10, 2001

Prefiled October 24, 2000

A BILL to amend and reenact § 63.1-55.3 of the Code of Virginia, relating to adult protective services; employees of financial institutions to report exploitation.

Patron—Hamilton

Referred to Committee on Corporations, Insurance and Banking

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That § 63.1-55.3 of the Code of Virginia is amended and reenacted as follows:

§ 63.1-55.3. Protection of aged or incapacitated adults; physicians, nurses, etc., to report abuse, neglect or exploitation of adults; complaint by others; penalty for failure to report.

A. ~~Any~~ Matters giving reason to suspect:

1. *The abuse, neglect or exploitation of adults shall be reported by any person licensed to practice medicine or any of the healing arts, any hospital resident or intern, any person employed in the nursing profession, any person employed by a public or private agency or facility and working with adults, any person providing full-time or part-time care to adults for pay on a regularly scheduled basis, any person employed as a social worker, any mental health professional and any law-enforcement officer, in his professional or official capacity, who has reason to suspect that an adult is an abused, neglected or exploited adult, shall report the matter immediately to the local department of the county or city wherein the adult resides or wherein the abuse, neglect or exploitation is believed to have occurred. If neither locality is known, then the report shall be made to the local department of the county or city where the abuse, neglect, or exploitation was discovered. If the information is received by a staff member, resident, intern or nurse in the course of professional services in a hospital or similar institution, such person may, in place of the report, immediately notify the person in charge of the institution or department, or his designee, who shall make such report forthwith; and*

2. *The exploitation of incapacitated persons shall be reported by any person employed by a financial institution, as such term is defined in § 6.1-125.1, who has reason to suspect, based on information obtained in his professional or official capacity, that such a person is being exploited.*

The report shall be made immediately to the local department of the county or city wherein the adult resides or wherein the abuse, neglect or exploitation is believed to have occurred. If neither locality is known, then the report shall be made to the local department of the county or city where the abuse, neglect, or exploitation was discovered. Any person required to make the report or notification required by this subsection shall do so either orally or in writing and shall disclose all information which is the basis for the suspicion of abuse, neglect or exploitation of the adult. Upon request, any person required to make the report shall make available to the adult protective services worker and the local department investigating the reported case of abuse, neglect or exploitation any information, records or reports which document the basis for the report. All persons required to report suspected abuse, neglect or exploitation who maintain a record of a person who is the subject of such a report shall cooperate with the investigating adult protective services worker of a local department and shall make information, records and reports which are relevant to the investigation available to such worker to the extent permitted by state and federal law.

B. The report required by subsection A shall be reduced to writing within seventy-two hours by the director of the local department on a form prescribed by the State Board of Social Services.

C. Any person required to make a report pursuant to *subdivision 1* of subsection A who has reason to suspect that an adult has been sexually abused as that term is defined in § 18.2-67.10, and any person in charge of a hospital or similar institution, or a department thereof, who receives such information from a staff member, resident, intern or nurse, also shall immediately report the matter, either orally or in writing, to the local law-enforcement agency where the adult resides or the sexual abuse is believed to have occurred, or if neither locality is known, then where the abuse was discovered. The person making the report shall disclose and, upon request, make available to the law-enforcement agency all information forming the basis of the report.

D. Any person other than those specified in subsection A who suspects that an adult is an abused, neglected or exploited adult may report the matter to the local department of the county or city wherein the adult resides or wherein the abuse, neglect or exploitation is believed to have occurred. Such a complaint may be oral or in writing.

E. Any person who makes a report or provides records or information pursuant to subsection A or D

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59 of this section or who testifies in any judicial proceeding arising from such report, records or
60 information shall be immune from any civil or criminal liability on account of such report, records,
61 information or testimony, unless such person acted in bad faith or with a malicious purpose.

62 F. All law-enforcement departments and other state and local departments, agencies, authorities and
63 institutions shall cooperate with each adult protective services worker of a local department in the
64 detection and prevention of abuse, neglect or exploitation of adults.

65 G. Any person who is found guilty of failing to make a required report or notification pursuant to
66 subsection A or C of this section, within 24 hours of having the reason to suspect abuse shall be fined
67 not more than \$500 for the first failure and not less than \$100 nor more than \$1,000 for any subsequent
68 failures.