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## HOUSE BILL NO. 1069

Offered January 13, 2010

Prefiled January 13, 2010

A *BILL to amend and reenact § 63.2-1606 of the Code of Virginia, relating to suspected adult abuse; mandatory reporting.*

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Patron—Athey

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Referred to Committee on Health, Welfare and Institutions

**Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:****1. That § 63.2-1606 of the Code of Virginia is amended and reenacted as follows:**

§ 63.2-1606. Protection of aged or incapacitated adults; mandated and voluntary reporting.

A. Matters giving reason to suspect the abuse, neglect or exploitation of adults shall be reported immediately upon the reporting person's determination that there is such reason to suspect. Medical facilities inspectors of the Department of Health are exempt from reporting suspected abuse immediately while conducting federal inspection surveys in accordance with § 1864 of Title XVIII and Title XIX of the Social Security Act, as amended, of certified nursing facilities as defined in § 32.1-123. Reports shall be made to the local department or the adult protective services hotline in accordance with requirements of this section by the following persons acting in their professional capacity:

1. Any person licensed, certified, or registered by health regulatory boards listed in § 54.1-2503, with the exception of persons licensed by the Board of Veterinary Medicine;

2. Any mental health services provider as defined in § 54.1-2400.1;

3. Any emergency medical services personnel certified by the Board of Health pursuant to § 32.1-111.5, unless such personnel immediately reports the suspected abuse, neglect or exploitation directly to the attending physician at the hospital to which the adult is transported, who shall make such report forthwith;

4. Any guardian or conservator of an adult;

5. Any person employed by or contracted with a public or private agency or facility and working with adults in an administrative, supportive or direct care capacity;

6. Any person providing full, intermittent or occasional care to an adult for compensation, including but not limited to, companion, chore, homemaker, and personal care workers; and

7. Any law-enforcement officer.

B. *Any person employed in the emergency department of any private or state-operated hospital who treats an adult who has suffered serious bodily injury and is unable to explain the cause of such injuries due to physical or mental incapacity shall immediately report the case to Adult Protective Services, unless such person immediately reports the case directly to the attending physician, who shall make the required report.*

C. The report shall be made in accordance with subsection A or B to the local department of the county or city wherein the adult resides or wherein the adult abuse, neglect or exploitation is believed to have occurred or to the adult protective services hotline. Nothing in this section shall be construed to eliminate or supersede any other obligation to report as required by law. If a person required to report under this section receives information regarding abuse, neglect or exploitation while providing professional services in a hospital, nursing facility or similar institution, then he may, in lieu of reporting, notify the person in charge of the institution or his designee, who shall report such information, in accordance with the institution's policies and procedures for reporting such matters, immediately upon his determination that there is reason to suspect abuse, neglect or exploitation. 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 that is the basis for the suspicion of adult abuse, neglect or exploitation. 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 adult abuse, neglect or exploitation any information, records or reports which document the basis for the report. All persons required to report suspected adult abuse, neglect or exploitation 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. Criminal investigative reports received from law-enforcement agencies shall not be further disseminated by the investigating agency nor shall they be subject to public disclosure; such reports may, however, be disclosed to the Adult Fatality Review Team as provided in § 32.1-283.5 and, if reviewed by the Team, shall be subject to all of the Team's confidentiality requirements.

INTRODUCED

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59 *CD.* Any financial institution staff who suspects that an adult has been exploited financially may  
60 report such suspected exploitation to the local department of the county or city wherein the adult resides  
61 or wherein the exploitation is believed to have occurred or to the adult protective services hotline. For  
62 purposes of this section, financial institution staff means any employee of a bank, savings institution,  
63 credit union, securities firm, accounting firm, or insurance company.

64 *DE.* Any person other than those specified in subsection A *or B* who suspects that an adult is an  
65 abused, neglected or exploited adult may report the matter to the local department of the county or city  
66 wherein the adult resides or wherein the abuse, neglect or exploitation is believed to have occurred or to  
67 the adult protective services hotline.

68 *EF.* Any person who makes a report or provides records or information pursuant to subsection A, C  
69 B, ~~or D~~, *or E*, or who testifies in any judicial proceeding arising from such report, records or  
70 information, or who takes or causes to be taken with the adult's or the adult's legal representative's  
71 informed consent photographs, video recordings, or appropriate medical imaging of the adult who is  
72 subject of a report shall be immune from any civil or criminal liability on account of such report,  
73 records, information, photographs, video recordings, appropriate medical imaging or testimony, unless  
74 such person acted in bad faith or with a malicious purpose.

75 *FG.* An employer of a mandated reporter shall not prohibit a mandated reporter from reporting  
76 directly to the local department or to the adult protective services hotline. Employers whose employees  
77 are mandated reporters shall notify employees upon hiring of the requirement to report.

78 *GH.* Any person 14 years of age or older who makes or causes to be made a report of adult abuse,  
79 neglect, or exploitation that he knows to be false shall be guilty of a Class 4 misdemeanor. Any  
80 subsequent conviction of this provision shall be a Class 2 misdemeanor.

81 *HI.* Any person who fails to make a required report or notification pursuant to subsection A shall be  
82 subject to a civil penalty of not more than \$500 for the first failure and not less than \$100 nor more  
83 than \$1,000 for any subsequent failures. Civil penalties under subdivision A 7 shall be determined by a  
84 court of competent jurisdiction, in its discretion. All other civil penalties under this section shall be  
85 determined by the Commissioner or his designee. The Board shall establish by regulation a process for  
86 imposing and collecting civil penalties, and a process for appeal of the imposition of such penalty  
87 pursuant to § 2.2-4026 of the Administrative Process Act.

88 *IJ.* Any mandated reporter who has reasonable cause to suspect that an adult died as a result of  
89 abuse or neglect shall immediately report such suspicion to the appropriate medical examiner and to the  
90 appropriate law-enforcement agency, notwithstanding the existence of a death certificate signed by a  
91 licensed physician. The medical examiner and the law-enforcement agency shall receive the report and  
92 determine if an investigation is warranted. The medical examiner may order an autopsy. If an autopsy is  
93 conducted, the medical examiner shall report the findings to law enforcement, as appropriate, and to the  
94 local department or to the adult protective services hotline.

95 *JK.* No person or entity shall be obligated to report any matter if the person or entity has actual  
96 knowledge that the same matter has already been reported to the local department or to the adult  
97 protective services hotline.

98 *KL.* All law-enforcement departments and other state and local departments, agencies, authorities and  
99 institutions shall cooperate with each adult protective services worker of a local department in the  
100 detection, investigation and prevention of adult abuse, neglect and exploitation.