

978554687

SENATE BILL NO. 1048

Offered January 20, 1997

A BILL to amend and reenact § 63.1-248.6 of the Code of Virginia, as it is currently effective and as it may become effective, relating to child protective services.

Patrons—Howell; Delegates: Darner and Plum

Referred to the Committee on Rehabilitation and Social Services

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That § 63.1-248.6 of the Code of Virginia, as it is currently effective and as it may become effective, is amended and reenacted as follows:

§ 63.1-248.6. Local departments to establish child-protective services; duties.

A. Each local department shall establish child-protective services under a departmental coordinator within such department or with one or more adjacent local departments which shall be staffed with qualified personnel pursuant to regulations promulgated by the State Board of Social Services. The local department shall be the public agency responsible for receiving and investigating complaints and reports, except that (i) in cases where the reports or complaints are to be made to the juvenile and domestic relations district court and the judge determines that no local department of social services within a reasonable geographic distance can impartially investigate the report, the court shall be responsible for the investigation and (ii) in cases where an employee at a private or state-operated hospital, institution or other facility, or an employee of a school board is suspected of abusing or neglecting a child in such hospital, institution or other facility, or public school, the local department shall request the Department to assist in conducting the investigation in accordance with rules and regulations approved by the State Board.

B. The local department shall ensure, through its own personnel or through cooperative arrangements with other local agencies, that personnel who investigate reports or complaints that an employee of a private or state-operated hospital, institution or other facility, or an employee of a school board, abused or neglected a child in such hospital, institution or other facility, or public school, are qualified and assisted by the Department in accordance with State Board regulations.

C. The local department shall ensure, through its own personnel or through cooperative arrangements with other local agencies, the capability of receiving reports or complaints and responding to them promptly on a twenty-four-hours-a-day, seven-days-per-week basis.

D. The local department shall widely publicize a telephone number for receiving complaints and reports.

E. The local department shall upon receipt of a report or complaint:

1. Make immediate investigation. *In the course of the investigation, any interview with an alleged child victim shall not be required to be tape-recorded;*

2. When investigation of a complaint reveals cause to suspect abuse or neglect, complete a report and transmit it forthwith to the central registry;

3. When abuse or neglect is found, arrange for necessary protective and rehabilitative services to be provided to the child and his family;

4. If removal of the child or his siblings from their home is deemed necessary, petition the court for such removal;

5. Report immediately to the attorney for the Commonwealth and the local law-enforcement agency and make available to them the records of the local department when abuse or neglect is suspected in any case involving (i) death of a child; (ii) injury or threatened injury to the child in which a felony or Class 1 misdemeanor is also suspected; (iii) any sexual abuse, suspected sexual abuse or other sexual offense involving a child, including but not limited to the use or display of the child in sexually explicit visual material, as defined in § 18.2-374.1; (iv) any abduction of a child; (v) any felony or Class 1 misdemeanor drug offense involving a child; or (vi) contributing to the delinquency of a minor in violation of § 18.2-371, and provide the attorneys for the Commonwealth and the local law-enforcement agency with records of any complaints of abuse or neglect involving the victim or the alleged perpetrator. The local department shall not allow reports of the death of the victim from other local agencies to substitute for direct reports to the attorney for the Commonwealth and the local law-enforcement agency;

6. Send a follow-up report based on the investigation to the central registry within fourteen days and at subsequent intervals to be determined by Board regulations;

7. Determine within forty-five days if a report of abuse or neglect is founded or unfounded and

INTRODUCED

SB1048

60 transmit a report to such effect to the central registry and to the person who is the subject of the
61 investigation. However, upon written justification by the local department, such determination may be
62 extended, not to exceed a total of sixty days. If through the exercise of reasonable diligence the
63 department is unable to find the child who is the subject of the report, the time the child cannot be
64 found shall not be computed as part of the forty-five-day or sixty-day period and documentation of such
65 reasonable diligence shall be placed in the record;

66 8. If a report of abuse or neglect is unfounded, transmit a report to such effect to the complainant
67 and parent or guardian and the person responsible for the care of the child in those cases where such
68 person was suspected of abuse or neglect;

69 9. When abuse or neglect is suspected in any case involving the death of a child, report the case
70 immediately to the regional medical examiner and the local law-enforcement agency;

71 10. Use reasonable diligence to locate (i) any child for whom a report of suspected abuse or neglect
72 has been received and is under investigation or for whom a founded determination of abuse and neglect
73 has been made and a child protective services case opened and (ii) persons who are the subject of a
74 report that is under investigation, if the whereabouts of the child or such persons are unknown to the
75 local department;

76 11. When an abused or neglected child and the persons who are the subject of an open child
77 protective services case have relocated out of the jurisdiction of the local department, notify the child
78 protective services agency in the jurisdiction to which such persons have relocated, whether inside or
79 outside of the Commonwealth, and forward to such agency relevant portions of the case record. The
80 receiving local department shall arrange protective and rehabilitative services as required by this section;
81 and

82 12. When a child for whom a report of suspected abuse or neglect has been received and is under
83 investigation and the child and/or the child's parents or other persons responsible for the child's care who
84 are the subject of the report that is under investigation have relocated out of the jurisdiction of the local
85 department, notify the child protective services agency in the jurisdiction to which the child and/or such
86 persons have relocated, whether inside or outside of the Commonwealth, and complete such
87 investigation by requesting such agency's assistance in completing the investigation. The local
88 department that completes the investigation shall forward to the receiving agency relevant portions of the
89 case record in order for the receiving agency to arrange protective and rehabilitative services as required
90 by this section;

91 13. *When there is reason to believe that the alleged abuser and/or neglecter is abusing substances,*
92 *and such behavior may be related to the matter being investigated, shall not be required to administer*
93 *the substance abuse screening of the alleged child abuser and/or neglecter; and*

94 14. *Prior to rendering a founded disposition concerning a complaint of child abuse and /or neglect,*
95 *shall not be required to provide the alleged abuser and/or neglecter the opportunity of a*
96 *predispositional consultation. Such predispositional consultation shall be at the discretion of the local*
97 *department. A predispositional consultation means a meeting between the local department and the*
98 *person suspected of committing child abuse and/or neglect where such person is granted the opportunity*
99 *to discuss the local department's investigation and findings prior to the disposition.*

100 F. The local department shall foster, when practicable, the creation, maintenance and coordination of
101 hospital and community-based multi-disciplinary teams which shall include where possible, but not be
102 limited to, members of the medical, mental health, social work, nursing, education, legal and
103 law-enforcement professions. Such teams shall assist the local departments in identifying abused and
104 neglected children; coordinating medical, social, and legal services for the children and their families;
105 developing innovative programs for detection and prevention of child abuse; promoting community
106 concern and action in the area of child abuse and neglect; and disseminating information to the general
107 public with respect to the problem of child abuse and neglect and the facilities and prevention and
108 treatment methods available to combat child abuse and neglect. These teams may be the family
109 assessment and planning teams established pursuant to § 2.1-753. Multi-disciplinary teams may develop
110 agreements regarding the exchange of information among the parties for the purposes of the
111 investigation and disposition of complaints of child abuse and neglect, delivery of services, and child
112 protection. Any information exchanged in accordance with the agreement shall not be considered to be a
113 violation of the provisions of § 63.1-53 or § 63.1-209.

114 The local department shall also coordinate its efforts in the provision of these services for abused and
115 neglected children with the judge and staff of the court.

116 G. The local department shall report annually on its activities concerning abused and neglected
117 children to the court and to the Child-Protective Services Unit in the Department on forms provided by
118 the Department.

119 H. Statements, or any evidence derived therefrom, made to local department child-protective services
120 personnel, or to any person performing the duties of such personnel, by any person accused of the
121 abuse, injury, neglect or death of a child after the arrest of such person, shall not be used in evidence in

the case in chief against such person in the criminal proceeding on the question of guilt or innocence over the objection of the accused, unless the statement was made after such person was fully advised (i) of his right to remain silent, (ii) that anything he says may be used against him in a court of law, (iii) that he has a right to the presence of an attorney during any interviews, and (iv) that if he cannot afford an attorney, one will be appointed for him prior to any questioning.

I. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the local department, in accordance with Board regulations, shall transmit information regarding founded complaints and may transmit other information regarding reports, complaints, and investigations involving active duty military personnel or members of their household to family advocacy representatives of the United States Armed Forces.

§ 63.1-248.6. (Delayed effective date) Local departments to establish child-protective services; duties.

A. Each local department shall establish child-protective services under a departmental coordinator within such department or with one or more adjacent local departments which shall be staffed with qualified personnel pursuant to regulations promulgated by the State Board of Social Services. The local department shall be the public agency responsible for receiving and investigating complaints and reports, except that (i) in cases where the reports or complaints are to be made to the family court and the judge determines that no local department of social services within a reasonable geographic distance can impartially investigate the report, the court shall be responsible for the investigation and (ii) in cases where an employee at a private or state-operated hospital, institution or other facility, or an employee of a school board is suspected of abusing or neglecting a child in such hospital, institution or other facility, or public school, the local department shall request the Department to assist in conducting the investigation in accordance with rules and regulations approved by the State Board.

B. The local department shall ensure, through its own personnel or through cooperative arrangements with other local agencies, that personnel who investigate reports or complaints that an employee of a private or state-operated hospital, institution or other facility, or an employee of a school board, abused or neglected a child in such hospital, institution or other facility, or public school, are qualified and assisted by the Department in accordance with State Board regulations.

C. The local department shall ensure, through its own personnel or through cooperative arrangements with other local agencies, the capability of receiving reports or complaints and responding to them promptly on a twenty-four-hours-a-day, seven-days-per-week basis.

D. The local department shall widely publicize a telephone number for receiving complaints and reports.

E. The local department shall upon receipt of a report or complaint:

1. Make immediate investigation. *In the course of the investigation, any interview with an alleged child victim shall not be required to be tape-recorded;*

2. When investigation of a complaint reveals cause to suspect abuse or neglect, complete a report and transmit it forthwith to the central registry;

3. When abuse or neglect is found, arrange for necessary protective and rehabilitative services to be provided to the child and his family;

4. If removal of the child or his siblings from their home is deemed necessary, petition the court for such removal;

5. Report immediately to the attorney for the Commonwealth and the local law-enforcement agency and make available to them the records of the local department when abuse or neglect is suspected in any case involving (i) death of a child; (ii) injury or threatened injury to the child in which a felony or Class 1 misdemeanor is also suspected; (iii) any sexual abuse, suspected sexual abuse or other sexual offense involving a child, including but not limited to the use or display of the child in sexually explicit visual material, as defined in § 18.2-374.1; (iv) any abduction of a child; (v) any felony or Class 1 misdemeanor drug offense involving a child; or (vi) contributing to the delinquency of a minor in violation of § 18.2-371, and provide the attorneys for the Commonwealth and the local law-enforcement agency with records of any complaints of abuse or neglect involving the victim or the alleged perpetrator. The local department shall not allow reports of the death of the victim from other local agencies to substitute for a direct report to the attorney for the Commonwealth and the local law-enforcement agency;

6. Send a follow-up report based on the investigation to the central registry within fourteen days and at subsequent intervals to be determined by Board regulations;

7. Determine within forty-five days if a report of abuse or neglect is founded or unfounded and transmit a report to such effect to the central registry and to the person who is the subject of the investigation. However, upon written justification by the local department, such determination may be extended, not to exceed a total of sixty days. If through the exercise of reasonable diligence the department is unable to find the child who is the subject of the report, the time the child cannot be found shall not be computed as part of the forty-five-day or sixty-day period and documentation of such reasonable diligence shall be placed in the record;

8. If a report of abuse or neglect is unfounded, transmit a report to such effect to the complainant and parent or guardian and the person responsible for the care of the child in those cases where such person was suspected of abuse or neglect;

9. When abuse or neglect is suspected in any case involving the death of a child, report the case immediately to the regional medical examiner and the local law-enforcement agency;

10. Use reasonable diligence to locate (i) any child for whom a report of suspected abuse or neglect has been received and is under investigation or for whom a founded determination of abuse and neglect has been made and a child protective services case opened and (ii) persons who are the subject of a report that is under investigation, if the whereabouts of the child or such persons are unknown to the local department;

11. When an abused or neglected child and the persons who are the subject of an open child protective services case have relocated out of the jurisdiction of the local department, notify the child protective services agency in the jurisdiction to which such persons have relocated, whether inside or outside of the Commonwealth, and forward to such agency relevant portions of the case record. The receiving local department shall arrange protective and rehabilitative services as required by this section; and

12. When a child for whom a report of suspected abuse or neglect has been received and is under investigation and the child and/or the child's parents or other persons responsible for the child's care who are the subject of the report that is under investigation have relocated out of the jurisdiction of the local department, notify the child protective services agency in the jurisdiction to which the child and/or such persons have relocated, whether inside or outside of the Commonwealth, and complete such investigation by requesting such agency's assistance in completing the investigation. The local department that completes the investigation shall forward to the receiving agency relevant portions of the case record in order for the receiving agency to arrange protective and rehabilitative services as required by this section;

13. *When there is reason to believe that the alleged abuser and/or neglecter is abusing substances, and such behavior may be related to the matter being investigated, shall not be required to administer the substance abuse screening of the alleged child abuser and/or neglecter; and*

14. *Prior to rendering a founded disposition concerning a complaint of child abuse and /or neglect, shall not be required to provide the alleged abuser and/or neglecter the opportunity of a predispositional consultation. Such predispositional consultation shall be at the discretion of the local department. A predispositional consultation means a meeting between the local department and the person suspected of committing child abuse and/or neglect where such person is granted the opportunity to discuss the local department's investigation and findings prior to the disposition.*

F. The local department shall foster, when practicable, the creation, maintenance and coordination of hospital and community-based multi-disciplinary teams which shall include where possible, but not be limited to, members of the medical, mental health, social work, nursing, education, legal and law-enforcement professions. Such teams shall assist the local departments in identifying abused and neglected children; coordinating medical, social, and legal services for the children and their families; developing innovative programs for detection and prevention of child abuse; promoting community concern and action in the area of child abuse and neglect; and disseminating information to the general public with respect to the problem of child abuse and neglect and the facilities and prevention and treatment methods available to combat child abuse and neglect. These teams may be the family assessment and planning teams established pursuant to § 2.1-753. Multi-disciplinary teams may develop agreements regarding the exchange of information among the parties for the purposes of the investigation and disposition of complaints of child abuse and neglect, delivery of services, and child protection. Any information exchanged in accordance with the agreement shall not be considered to be a violation of the provisions of § 63.1-53 or § 63.1-209.

The local department shall also coordinate its efforts in the provision of these services for abused and neglected children with the judge and staff of the court.

G. The local department shall report annually on its activities concerning abused and neglected children to the court and to the Child-Protective Services Unit in the Department on forms provided by the Department.

H. Statements, or any evidence derived therefrom, made to local department child-protective services personnel, or to any person performing the duties of such personnel, by any person accused of the abuse, injury, neglect or death of a child after the arrest of such person, shall not be used in evidence in the case in chief against such person in the criminal proceeding on the question of guilt or innocence over the objection of the accused, unless the statement was made after such person was fully advised (i) of his right to remain silent, (ii) that anything he says may be used against him in a court of law, (iii) that he has a right to the presence of an attorney during any interviews, and (iv) that if he cannot afford an attorney, one will be appointed for him prior to any questioning.

I. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the local department, in accordance with Board

245 regulations, shall transmit information regarding founded complaints and may transmit other information
246 regarding reports, complaints, and investigations involving active duty military personnel or members of
247 their household to family advocacy representatives of the United States Armed Forces.

INTRODUCED

SB1048