

Sixtieth  
Legislative Assembly  
of North Dakota

**SENATE BILL NO. 2100**

Introduced by

Judiciary Committee

(At the request of the Department of Human Services)

A BILL for an Act to amend and reenact sections 50-25.1-02, 50-25.1-03, 50-25.1-03.1, 50-25.1-04.4, and 50-25.1-05.3 and subsection 4 of section 50-25.1-11 of the North Dakota Century Code, relating to definitions, persons required and permitted to report child abuse, persons allowed access to child fatality review panel records, who may investigate reports of child abuse or neglect when the accused is not a person responsible for the child's health or welfare, and information that may be provided to a person who is the subject of a report alleging child abuse or neglect.

**BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF NORTH DAKOTA:**

**SECTION 1. AMENDMENT.** Section 50-25.1-02 of the North Dakota Century Code is amended and reenacted as follows:

**50-25.1-02. Definitions.** In this chapter, unless the context or subject matter otherwise requires:

1. "A person responsible for the child's welfare" means a person who has responsibility for the care or supervision of a child and who is the child's parent, an adult family member of the child, any member of the child's household, the child's guardian, or the child's foster parent; an employee of, or any person providing care for the child in a public or private school or nonresidential child care facility; an employee of a public or private residential home, institution, or agency; or a person responsible for the child's welfare in a residential setting.
2. "Abuse of alcohol", "alcohol abuse", or "abused alcohol" means alcohol abuse or dependence as defined in the current diagnostic and statistical manual published by the American psychiatric association or a maladaptive use of alcohol with negative medical, sociological, occupational, or familial effects.

- 1           3. "Abused child" means an individual under the age of eighteen years who is  
2           suffering from ~~serious physical harm or traumatic abuse~~ as defined in subdivision a  
3           of subsection 1 of section 14-09-22 caused by ~~other than accidental means by a~~  
4           person responsible for the child's welfare; ~~or who is suffering from or was~~  
5           ~~subjected~~ and "sexually abused child" means an individual under the age of  
6           eighteen years who is subjected by a person responsible for the child's welfare to  
7           any act in violation of sections 12.1-20-01 through 12.1-20-07, sections 12.1-20-11  
8           through 12.1-20-12.2, or chapter 12.1-27.2.
- 9           4. "Assessment" means a factfinding process designed to provide information that  
10          enables a determination to be made that services are required to provide for the  
11          protection and treatment of an abused or neglected child.
- 12          5. "Authorized agent" means the county social service board, unless another entity is  
13          designated by the department.
- 14          6. "Children's advocacy center" means a full or associate member of the national  
15          children's alliance which assists in the coordination of the investigation in response  
16          to allegations of child abuse by providing a dedicated child-friendly location at  
17          which to conduct forensic interviews, forensic medical examinations, and other  
18          appropriate services and which promotes a comprehensive multidisciplinary team  
19          response to allegations of child abuse. The team response may include forensic  
20          interviews, forensic medical examinations, mental health and related support  
21          services, advocacy, and case review.
- 22          7. "Citizen review committee" means a committee appointed by the department to  
23          review the department's provision of child welfare services.
- 24          8. "Department" means the department of human services or its designee.
- 25          9. ~~"Harm" means negative changes in a child's health which occur when a person~~  
26          ~~responsible for the child's welfare:~~
- 27           a. ~~Inflicts, or allows to be inflicted, upon the child, physical or mental injury;~~  
28           ~~including injuries sustained as a result of excessive corporal punishment; or~~
- 29           b. ~~Commits, allows to be committed, or conspires to commit, against the child, a~~  
30          ~~sex offense as defined in chapter 12.1-20.~~

1        ~~40.~~    "Institutional child abuse or neglect" means situations of known or suspected child  
2                    abuse or neglect where the ~~person~~ institution responsible for the child's welfare is  
3                    ~~an employee of~~ a residential child care facility, a treatment or care center for  
4                    mentally retarded, a public or private residential educational facility, a maternity  
5                    home, or any residential facility owned or managed by the state or a political  
6                    subdivision of the state.

7        ~~44.~~ 10.    "Local child protection team" means a multidisciplinary team consisting of the  
8                    designee of the director of the regional human service center, together with such  
9                    other representatives as that director might select for the team with the consent of  
10                   the director of the county social service board. All team members, at the time of  
11                   their selection and thereafter, must be staff members of the public or private  
12                   agencies they represent or shall serve without remuneration. An attorney member  
13                   of the child protection team may not be appointed to represent the child or the  
14                   parents at any subsequent court proceeding nor may the child protection team be  
15                   composed of fewer than three members. The department shall coordinate the  
16                   organization of local child protection teams on a county or multicounty basis.

17        ~~42.~~ 11.    "Neglected child" means a deprived child as defined in chapter 27-20.

18        ~~43.~~ 12.    "Prenatal exposure to a controlled substance" means use of a controlled substance  
19                   as defined in chapter 19-03.1 by a pregnant woman for a nonmedical purpose  
20                   during pregnancy as evidenced by withdrawal symptoms in the child at birth,  
21                   results of a toxicology test performed on the mother at delivery of the child at birth,  
22                   or medical effects or developmental delays during the child's first year of life that  
23                   medically indicate prenatal exposure to a controlled substance.

24        ~~44.~~ 13.    "Protective services" includes services performed after an assessment of a report  
25                   of child abuse or neglect has been conducted, such as social assessment, service  
26                   planning, implementation of service plans, treatment services, referral services,  
27                   coordination with referral sources, progress assessment, monitoring service  
28                   delivery, and direct services.

29        ~~45.~~ 14.    "State child protection team" means a multidisciplinary team consisting of the  
30                   designee of the department and, where possible, of a physician, a representative  
31                   of a child-placing agency, a representative of the state department of health, a

representative of the attorney general, a representative of the superintendent of public instruction, a representative of the department of corrections and rehabilitation, one or more representatives of the lay community, and, as an ad hoc member, the designee of the chief executive official of any institution named in a report of institutional abuse or neglect. All team members, at the time of their selection and thereafter, must be staff members of the public or private agency they represent or shall serve without remuneration. An attorney member of the child protection team may not be appointed to represent the child or the parents at any subsequent court proceeding nor may the child protection team be composed of fewer than three persons.

**SECTION 2. AMENDMENT.** Section 50-25.1-03 of the North Dakota Century Code is amended and reenacted as follows:

**50-25.1-03. Persons required and permitted to report - To whom reported.**

1. Any physician, nurse, dentist, optometrist, medical examiner or coroner, or any other medical or mental health professional, veterinarian, religious practitioner of the healing arts, schoolteacher or administrator, school counselor, addiction counselor, social worker, ~~day~~ child care center or any other child care worker or school personnel, schoolbus driver, foster parent, police or law enforcement officer, or member of the clergy having knowledge of or reasonable cause to suspect that a child is abused or neglected, or has died as a result of abuse or neglect, shall report the circumstances to the department if the knowledge or suspicion is derived from information received by that person in that person's official or professional capacity. A member of the clergy, however, is not required to report such circumstances if the knowledge or suspicion is derived from information received in the capacity of spiritual adviser.
2. Any person having reasonable cause to suspect that a child is abused or neglected, or has died as a result of abuse or neglect, may report such circumstances to the department.

**SECTION 3. AMENDMENT.** Section 50-25.1-03.1 of the North Dakota Century Code is amended and reenacted as follows:

1           **50-25.1-03.1. Photographs - X-rays - Medical tests.** Any person or official required to  
2 report under this chapter may cause to be taken color photographs of the areas of trauma  
3 visible on a child who is the ~~subject of~~ child identified in a child abuse and neglect report and, if  
4 indicated by medical consultation, cause to be performed imaging studies, laboratory tests,  
5 colposcopies, and other medical tests of the child without the consent of the child's parents or  
6 guardian. All photographs and other visual images taken pursuant to this section must be taken  
7 by law enforcement officials, physicians, or medical facility professionals upon the request of  
8 any person or official required to report under this chapter. Photographs and visual images, or  
9 copies of them, must be sent to the department or the department's designee at the time the  
10 initial report of child abuse or neglect is made or as soon thereafter as possible. Imaging  
11 studies or copies of the studies and copies of results of other tests conducted under this section  
12 must be provided to the department or the department's designee upon request.

13           **SECTION 4. AMENDMENT.** Section 50-25.1-04.4 of the North Dakota Century Code  
14 is amended and reenacted as follows:

15           **50-25.1-04.4. Child fatality review panel - Access to records.** Upon the request of a  
16 coroner or the presiding officer of a child fatality review panel, any hospital, physician, medical  
17 professional, medical facility, mental health professional, ~~or~~ mental health facility, school  
18 counselor, or division of juvenile services staff shall disclose all records of that entity with  
19 respect to any child who has or is eligible to receive a certificate of live birth and who has died.  
20 The person submitting the request shall reimburse the disclosing entity for the actual costs of  
21 assembling and disclosing the information.

22           **SECTION 5. AMENDMENT.** Section 50-25.1-05.3 of the North Dakota Century Code  
23 is amended and reenacted as follows:

24           **50-25.1-05.3. Disposition of reports implicating a person not responsible for the**  
25 **child's health or welfare.** Upon determination by the department or the department's  
26 designee that a report made under this chapter implicates a person other than a person  
27 responsible for a child's welfare, the department may refer the report to an appropriate law  
28 enforcement agency or to a local school board for investigation and disposition.

29           **SECTION 6. AMENDMENT.** Subsection 4 of section 50-25.1-11 of the North Dakota  
30 Century Code is amended and reenacted as follows:

- 1           4. Any person who is the subject of a report; provided, however, that the identity of  
2           persons reporting or supplying information under this chapter is protected.