

Act No. 563
Public Acts of 2004
Approved by the Governor
January 3, 2005
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**STATE OF MICHIGAN
92ND LEGISLATURE
REGULAR SESSION OF 2004**

Introduced by Reps. Vander Veen, Hager, Voorhees, Pastor, LaJoy, Pappageorge, Garfield, Brandenburg, Huizenga, Ehardt, Middaugh, Hoogendyk, Emmons, Amos, Taub, Ruth Johnson and Richardville

ENROLLED HOUSE BILL No. 4586

AN ACT to amend 1975 PA 238, entitled "An act to require the reporting of child abuse and neglect by certain persons; to permit the reporting of child abuse and neglect by all persons; to provide for the protection of children who are abused or neglected; to authorize limited detainment in protective custody; to authorize medical examinations; to prescribe the powers and duties of the state department of social services to prevent child abuse and neglect; to prescribe certain powers and duties of local law enforcement agencies; to safeguard and enhance the welfare of children and preserve family life; to provide for the appointment of legal counsel; to provide for the abrogation of privileged communications; to provide civil and criminal immunity for certain persons; to provide rules of evidence in certain cases; to provide for confidentiality of records; to provide for the expungement of certain records; to prescribe penalties; and to repeal certain acts and parts of acts," by amending sections 2, 5, 7, 7c, and 7j (MCL 722.622, 722.625, 722.627, 722.627c, and 722.627j), section 2 as amended by 2002 PA 693, section 5 as amended and section 7c as added by 1998 PA 428, section 7 as amended by 2002 PA 661, and section 7j as added by 2002 PA 716.

The People of the State of Michigan enact:

Sec. 2. As used in this act:

(a) "Adult foster care location authorized to care for a child" means an adult foster care family home or adult foster care small group home as defined in section 3 of the adult foster care facility licensing act, 1979 PA 218, MCL 400.703, in which a child is placed in accordance with section 5 of 1973 PA 116, MCL 722.115.

(b) "Attorney" means, if appointed to represent a child under the provisions referenced in section 10, an attorney serving as the child's legal advocate in the manner defined and described in section 13a of chapter XIIA of the probate code of 1939, 1939 PA 288, MCL 712A.13a.

(c) "Central registry" means the system maintained at the department that is used to keep a record of all reports filed with the department under this act in which relevant and accurate evidence of child abuse or neglect is found to exist.

(d) "Central registry case" means a child protective services case that the department classifies under sections 8 and 8d as category I or category II. For a child protective services case that was investigated before July 1, 1999, central registry case means an allegation of child abuse or neglect that the department substantiated.

(e) "Child" means a person under 18 years of age.

(f) "Child abuse" means harm or threatened harm to a child's health or welfare that occurs through nonaccidental physical or mental injury, sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, or maltreatment, by a parent, a legal guardian, or any other person responsible for the child's health or welfare or by a teacher, a teacher's aide, or a member of the clergy.

- (g) “Child care organization” means that term as defined in section 1 of 1973 PA 116, MCL 722.111.
- (h) “Child care provider” means an owner, operator, employee, or volunteer of a child care organization or of an adult foster care location authorized to care for a child.
- (i) “Child care regulatory agency” means the department of consumer and industry services or a successor state department that is responsible for the licensing or registration of child care organizations or the licensing of adult foster care locations authorized to care for a child.
- (j) “Child neglect” means harm or threatened harm to a child’s health or welfare by a parent, legal guardian, or any other person responsible for the child’s health or welfare that occurs through either of the following:
- (i) Negligent treatment, including the failure to provide adequate food, clothing, shelter, or medical care.
 - (ii) Placing a child at an unreasonable risk to the child’s health or welfare by failure of the parent, legal guardian, or other person responsible for the child’s health or welfare to intervene to eliminate that risk when that person is able to do so and has, or should have, knowledge of the risk.
- (k) “Citizen review panel” means a panel established as required by section 106 of title I of the child abuse prevention and treatment act, Public Law 93-247, 42 U.S.C. 5106a.
- (l) “Member of the clergy” means a priest, minister, rabbi, Christian science practitioner, or other religious practitioner, or similar functionary of a church, temple, or recognized religious body, denomination, or organization.
- (m) “Controlled substance” means that term as defined in section 7104 of the public health code, 1978 PA 368, MCL 333.7104.
- (n) “CPSI system” means the child protective service information system, which is an internal data system maintained within and by the department, and which is separate from the central registry and not subject to section 7.
- (o) “Department” means the family independence agency.
- (p) “Director” means the director of the department.
- (q) “Expunge” means to physically remove or eliminate and destroy a record or report.
- (r) “Lawyer-guardian ad litem” means an attorney appointed under section 10 who has the powers and duties referenced by section 10.
- (s) “Local office file” means the system used to keep a record of a written report, document, or photograph filed with and maintained by a county or a regionally based office of the department.
- (t) “Nonparent adult” means a person who is 18 years of age or older and who, regardless of the person’s domicile, meets all of the following criteria in relation to a child:
- (i) Has substantial and regular contact with the child.
 - (ii) Has a close personal relationship with the child’s parent or with a person responsible for the child’s health or welfare.
 - (iii) Is not the child’s parent or a person otherwise related to the child by blood or affinity to the third degree.
- (u) “Person responsible for the child’s health or welfare” means a parent, legal guardian, person 18 years of age or older who resides for any length of time in the same home in which the child resides, or, except when used in section 7(2)(e) or 8(8), nonparent adult; or an owner, operator, volunteer, or employee of 1 or more of the following:
- (i) A licensed or registered child care organization.
 - (ii) A licensed or unlicensed adult foster care family home or adult foster care small group home as defined in section 3 of the adult foster care facility licensing act, 1979 PA 218, MCL 400.703.
- (v) “Relevant evidence” means evidence having a tendency to make the existence of a fact that is at issue more probable than it would be without the evidence.
- (w) “Sexual abuse” means engaging in sexual contact or sexual penetration as those terms are defined in section 520a of the Michigan penal code, 1931 PA 328, MCL 750.520a, with a child.
- (x) “Sexual exploitation” includes allowing, permitting, or encouraging a child to engage in prostitution, or allowing, permitting, encouraging, or engaging in the photographing, filming, or depicting of a child engaged in a listed sexual act as defined in section 145c of the Michigan penal code, 1931 PA 328, MCL 750.145c.
- (y) “Specified information” means information in a children’s protective services case record related specifically to the department’s actions in responding to a complaint of child abuse or neglect. Specified information does not include any of the following:
- (i) Except as provided in this subparagraph regarding a perpetrator of child abuse or neglect, personal identification information for any individual identified in a child protective services record. The exclusion of personal identification information as specified information prescribed by this subparagraph does not include personal identification information identifying an individual alleged to have perpetrated child abuse or neglect, which allegation has been classified as a central registry case.

(ii) Information in a law enforcement report as provided in section 7(8).

(iii) Any other information that is specifically designated as confidential under other law.

(iv) Any information not related to the department's actions in responding to a report of child abuse or neglect.

(z) "Structured decision-making tool" means the department document labeled "DSS-4752 (P3) (3-95)" or a revision of that document that better measures the risk of future harm to a child.

(aa) "Substantiated" means a child protective services case classified as a central registry case.

(bb) "Unsubstantiated" means a child protective services case the department classifies under sections 8 and 8d as category III, category IV, or category V.

Sec. 5. Except for records available under section 7(2)(a), (b), and (n), the identity of a reporting person is confidential subject to disclosure only with the consent of that person or by judicial process. A person acting in good faith who makes a report, cooperates in an investigation, or assists in any other requirement of this act is immune from civil or criminal liability that might otherwise be incurred by that action. A person making a report or assisting in any other requirement of this act is presumed to have acted in good faith. This immunity from civil or criminal liability extends only to acts done according to this act and does not extend to a negligent act that causes personal injury or death or to the malpractice of a physician that results in personal injury or death.

Sec. 7. (1) The department shall maintain a statewide, electronic central registry to carry out the intent of this act.

(2) Unless made public as specified information released under section 7d, a written report, document, or photograph filed with the department as provided in this act is a confidential record available only to 1 or more of the following:

(a) A legally mandated public or private child protective agency investigating a report of known or suspected child abuse or neglect.

(b) A police or other law enforcement agency investigating a report of known or suspected child abuse or neglect.

(c) A physician who is treating a child whom the physician reasonably suspects may be abused or neglected.

(d) A person legally authorized to place a child in protective custody when the person is confronted with a child whom the person reasonably suspects may be abused or neglected and the confidential record is necessary to determine whether to place the child in protective custody.

(e) A person, agency, or organization, including a multidisciplinary case consultation team, authorized to diagnose, care for, treat, or supervise a child or family who is the subject of a report or record under this act, or who is responsible for the child's health or welfare.

(f) A person named in the report or record as a perpetrator or alleged perpetrator of the child abuse or neglect or a victim who is an adult at the time of the request, if the identity of the reporting person is protected as provided in section 5.

(g) A court that determines the information is necessary to decide an issue before the court.

(h) A grand jury that determines the information is necessary to conduct the grand jury's official business.

(i) A person, agency, or organization engaged in a bona fide research or evaluation project. The person, agency, or organization shall not release information identifying a person named in the report or record unless that person's written consent is obtained. The person, agency, or organization shall not conduct a personal interview with a family without the family's prior consent and shall not disclose information that would identify the child or the child's family or other identifying information. The department director may authorize the release of information to a person, agency, or organization described in this subdivision if the release contributes to the purposes of this act and the person, agency, or organization has appropriate controls to maintain the confidentiality of personally identifying information for a person named in a report or record made under this act.

(j) A lawyer-guardian ad litem or other attorney appointed as provided by section 10.

(k) A child placing agency licensed under 1973 PA 116, MCL 722.111 to 722.128, for the purpose of investigating an applicant for adoption, a foster care applicant or licensee or an employee of a foster care applicant or licensee, an adult member of an applicant's or licensee's household, or other persons in a foster care or adoptive home who are directly responsible for the care and welfare of children, to determine suitability of a home for adoption or foster care. The child placing agency shall disclose the information to a foster care applicant or licensee under 1973 PA 116, MCL 722.111 to 722.128, or to an applicant for adoption.

(l) Family division of circuit court staff authorized by the court to investigate foster care applicants and licensees, employees of foster care applicants and licensees, adult members of the applicant's or licensee's household, and other persons in the home who are directly responsible for the care and welfare of children, for the purpose of determining the suitability of the home for foster care. The court shall disclose this information to the applicant or licensee.

(m) Subject to section 7a, a standing or select committee or appropriations subcommittee of either house of the legislature having jurisdiction over child protective services matters.

(n) The children's ombudsman appointed under the children's ombudsman act, 1994 PA 204, MCL 722.921 to 722.935.

(o) A child fatality review team established under section 7b and authorized under that section to investigate and review a child death.

(p) A county medical examiner or deputy county medical examiner appointed under 1953 PA 181, MCL 52.201 to 52.216, for the purpose of carrying out his or her duties under that act.

(q) A citizen review panel established by the department. Access under this subdivision is limited to information the department determines is necessary for the panel to carry out its prescribed duties.

(r) A child care regulatory agency.

(s) A foster care review board for the purpose of meeting the requirements of 1984 PA 422, MCL 722.131 to 722.139a.

(3) Subject to subsection (9), a person or entity to whom information described in subsection (2) is disclosed shall make the information available only to a person or entity described in subsection (2). This subsection does not require a court proceeding to be closed that otherwise would be open to the public.

(4) If the department classifies a report of suspected child abuse or neglect as a central registry case, the department shall maintain a record in the central registry and, within 30 days after the classification, shall notify in writing each person who is named in the record as a perpetrator of the child abuse or neglect. The notice shall set forth the person's right to request expunction of the record and the right to a hearing if the department refuses the request. The notice shall state that the record may be released under section 7d. The notice shall not identify the person reporting the suspected child abuse or neglect.

(5) A person who is the subject of a report or record made under this act may request the department to amend an inaccurate report or record from the central registry and local office file. A person who is the subject of a report or record made under this act may request the department to expunge from the central registry a report or record in which no relevant and accurate evidence of abuse or neglect is found to exist. A report or record filed in a local office file is not subject to expunction except as the department authorizes, if considered in the best interest of the child.

(6) If the department refuses a request for amendment or expunction under subsection (5), or fails to act within 30 days after receiving the request, the department shall hold a hearing to determine by a preponderance of the evidence whether the report or record in whole or in part should be amended or expunged from the central registry on the grounds that the report or record is not relevant or accurate evidence of abuse or neglect. The hearing shall be held before a hearing officer appointed by the department and shall be conducted as prescribed by the administrative procedures act of 1969, 1969 PA 306, MCL 24.201 to 24.328.

(7) If the investigation of a report conducted under this act fails to disclose evidence of abuse or neglect, the information identifying the subject of the report shall be expunged from the central registry. If evidence of abuse or neglect exists, the department shall maintain the information in the central registry until the department receives reliable information that the perpetrator of the abuse or neglect is dead.

(8) In releasing information under this act, the department shall not include a report compiled by a police agency or other law enforcement agency related to an ongoing investigation of suspected child abuse or neglect. This subsection does not prevent the department from releasing reports of convictions of crimes related to child abuse or neglect.

(9) A member or staff member of a citizen review panel shall not disclose identifying information about a specific child protection case to an individual, partnership, corporation, association, governmental entity, or other legal entity. A member or staff member of a citizen review panel is a member of a board, council, commission, or statutorily created task force of a governmental agency for the purposes of section 7 of 1964 PA 170, MCL 691.1407. Information obtained by a citizen review panel is not subject to the freedom of information act, 1976 PA 442, MCL 15.231 to 15.246.

Sec. 7c. (1) Sections 7d to 7i govern the director's decisions to release specified information from child protective services records.

(2) The director shall release specified information in a child abuse or neglect case in which a child who was a part of the case has died.

(3) The director may designate another individual to act for the director under sections 7d to 7i, and a reference to the director under those sections applies to an individual designated by the director.

(4) For the purposes of sections 7d to 7i, a child's best interest shall be determined based on all of the following:

(a) Protection of the child's safety.

(b) Preservation of the child's physical, mental, and emotional health.

(c) Consideration of the child's likelihood of establishing a successful and timely permanent family and community relationship.

(5) Sections 7d to 7i do not subject a report or record that is confidential under this act to disclosure under the freedom of information act, 1976 PA 442, MCL 15.231 to 15.246.

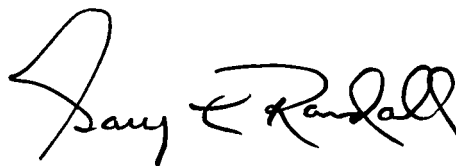
Sec. 7j. (1) Upon written request, the department may provide to an individual documentation stating that the individual is not named in a central registry case as the perpetrator of child abuse or child neglect. The written request required under this section shall include the individual's affirmation that he or she is employed by, volunteers at, is applying for employment in, or is seeking to volunteer in a child care center, child caring institution, or child placing agency.

(2) For the purpose of applying for employment or seeking to volunteer in a child care center, child caring institution, or child placing agency, an individual may share the document provided in subsection (1) with the child care center owner or licensee, or a child caring institution or child placing agency, or an individual authorized by the child care center owner or licensee, the child caring institution, or the child placing agency.

(3) The family independence agency may develop an automated system that will allow an individual applying for child-related employment or seeking to volunteer in a capacity that would allow unsupervised access to a child for whom the individual is not a person responsible for that child's health or welfare to be listed in that system if a screening of the individual finds that he or she has not been named in a central registry case as the perpetrator of child abuse or child neglect. The automated system developed under this section shall provide for public access to the list of individuals who have been screened for the purposes of complying with this section. An automated system developed under this section shall have appropriate safeguards and procedures to ensure that information that is confidential under this act, state law, or federal law is not accessible or disclosed through that system.

(4) As used in this section, "child care center", "child caring institution", and "child placing agency" mean those terms as defined in section 1 of 1973 PA 116, MCL 722.111.

This act is ordered to take immediate effect.



Clerk of the House of Representatives



Secretary of the Senate

Approved

Governor