

SENATE BILL 296

D4, E1

01r0987

By: **Senators Hough, Cassilly, and Ready**
Introduced and read first time: January 22, 2020
Assigned to: Judicial Proceedings

Committee Report: Favorable with amendments
Senate action: Adopted
Read second time: February 25, 2020

CHAPTER _____

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Family Law – Preventing or Interfering With Report of Suspected ~~Child Abuse~~**
3 **~~or Neglect~~ Sexual Abuse of a Child – Statute of Limitations**

4 FOR the purpose of altering the statute of limitations for a violation of the prohibition on
5 preventing or interfering with the making of a certain report of suspected ~~child abuse~~
6 ~~or neglect~~ sexual abuse of a child; providing that a person who violates the
7 prohibition on preventing or interfering with the making of a certain report of
8 suspected ~~child abuse or neglect~~ sexual abuse of a child may reserve a point or
9 question for in banc review; and generally relating to the reporting of suspected ~~child~~
10 ~~abuse or neglect~~ sexual abuse of a child.

11 BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,
12 Article – Courts and Judicial Proceedings
13 Section 5–106(b)
14 Annotated Code of Maryland
15 (2013 Replacement Volume and 2019 Supplement)

16 BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,
17 Article – Family Law
18 Section 5–704(a) and 5–705.1(c)(1) and (2)
19 Annotated Code of Maryland
20 (2019 Replacement Volume)

21 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
22 Article – Family Law

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.

Underlining indicates amendments to bill.

~~Strike out~~ indicates matter stricken from the bill by amendment or deleted from the law by amendment.



1 Section 5–705.2
2 Annotated Code of Maryland
3 (2019 Replacement Volume)

4 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,
5 That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

6 **Article – Court and Judicial Proceedings**

7 5–106.

8 (b) Notwithstanding § 9–103(a)(3) of the Correctional Services Article or any
9 other provision of the Code, if a statute provides that a misdemeanor is punishable by
10 imprisonment in the penitentiary or that a person is subject to this subsection:

11 (1) The State may institute a prosecution for the misdemeanor at any time;
12 and

13 (2) For purposes of the Maryland Constitution, the person:

14 (i) Shall be deemed to have committed a misdemeanor whose
15 punishment is confinement in the penitentiary; and

16 (ii) May reserve a point or question for in banc review as provided
17 under Article IV, § 22 of the Maryland Constitution.

18 **Article – Family Law**

19 5–704.

20 (a) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, including any law on privileged
21 communications, each health practitioner, police officer, educator, or human service
22 worker, acting in a professional capacity in this State:

23 (1) who has reason to believe that a child has been subjected to abuse or
24 neglect, shall notify the local department or the appropriate law enforcement agency; and

25 (2) if acting as a staff member of a hospital, public health agency, child care
26 institution, juvenile detention center, school, or similar institution, shall immediately
27 notify and give all information required by this section to the head of the institution or the
28 designee of the head.

29 5–705.1.

30 (c) (1) If suspected abuse or neglect is alleged to have occurred outside of this
31 State and the victim is currently a child who lives outside of this State, a person who would
32 be required to report suspected abuse or neglect under the provisions of § 5–704 or § 5–705

1 of this subtitle shall report the suspected abuse or neglect to any local department in
2 accordance with paragraph (2) of this subsection.

3 (2) A person described in § 5-704 of this subtitle shall make:

4 (i) an oral report, by telephone or direct communication, as soon as
5 possible; and

6 (ii) a written report not later than 48 hours after the contact,
7 examination, attention, or treatment that caused the person to believe that the child had
8 been subjected to abuse or neglect.

9 5-705.2.

10 (a) An individual may not intentionally prevent or interfere with the making of a
11 report of suspected abuse or neglect required by § 5-704 or § 5-705.1(c)(2) of this subtitle.

12 (b) A person who violates this section is guilty of a misdemeanor and on conviction
13 is subject to imprisonment not exceeding 5 years or a fine not exceeding \$10,000 or both.

14 (c) **A PERSON WHO VIOLATES THIS SECTION WITH RESPECT TO A REPORT**
15 **OF SUSPECTED SEXUAL ABUSE OF A CHILD IS SUBJECT TO § 5-106(B) OF THE**
16 **COURTS ARTICLE.**

17 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect
18 October 1, 2020.

Approved:

Governor.

President of the Senate.

Speaker of the House of Delegates.