

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2020 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
First Reader

House Bill 1551
Judiciary

(Delegate Rose, *et al.*)

Health Practitioners - Minor Patients - Child Abuse Reporting

This bill requires health practitioners to inform minor patients that they may report “abuse” to the health practitioner.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: None.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: Minimal.

Analysis

Current Law: “Abuse” means the physical or mental injury of a child younger than age 18 that indicate the child’s health or welfare is harmed or at substantial risk of being harmed by a (1) parent; (2) family or household member; (3) person who has permanent or temporary custody of the child; (4) person who has responsibility for supervision of the child; or (5) a person who exercises authority over the child because of their position or occupation. Abuse is also the sexual abuse of a child, whether physical injuries are sustained or not. Sexual abuse of a child can include sex trafficking, sexual molestation, or sexual exploitation.

Mandatory reporters of child abuse include health practitioners, police officers, educators, and human service workers who are acting in a professional capacity and who have reason to believe that a child has been subjected to abuse or neglect. Mandatory reporters must notify the local department of social services or the appropriate law enforcement agency.

In general, a person other than a mandatory reporter who has reason to believe that a child has been subjected to abuse or neglect must notify the local department of social services or the appropriate law enforcement agency.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Designated Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Maryland Department of Health; Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - February 26, 2020
mm/jc

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