

2024 Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 335

BY REPRESENTATIVES CARVER, ADAMS, AMEDEE, BERAULT, BILLINGS,
BRAUD, BRYANT, CARLSON, CHASSION, CHENEVERT, COX, DAVIS,
DEWITT, DICKERSON, EGAN, FISHER, FREIBERG, GLORIOSO, HILFERTY,
HUGHES, MIKE JOHNSON, KNOX, LARVADAIN, LYONS, MOORE,
NEWELL, SELDERS, STAGNI, TAYLOR, THOMPSON, AND WYBLE AND
SENATOR MCMATH

1 AN ACT

2 To amend and reenact Children's Code Articles 603(17)(d) and (e) and 610(A), relative to
3 mandatory reporting of child abuse or neglect; to provide for definitions; to provide
4 for mandatory reporters who are teaching or child care providers and police officers
5 or law enforcement officials; to provide for mandatory reporting procedures and
6 training requirements; to prohibit employers from preventing mandatory reporters
7 from complying with the law; to provide for penalties for employers who prevent
8 mandatory reporters from complying with the law; to provide for an effective date;
9 and to provide for related matters.

10 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

11 Section 1. Children's Code Articles 603(17)(d) and (e) and 610(A) are hereby
12 amended and reenacted to read as follows:

13 Art. 603. Definitions

14 As used in this Title:

15 * * *

16 (17) "Mandatory reporter" is any of the following individuals:

17 * * *

18 (d) "Teaching or child care provider" is any person who provides or assists
19 in the teaching, training and supervision of a child, including any public or private

1 teacher, teacher's aide, instructional aide, school principal, school staff member,
 2 school resource officer, bus driver, coach, professor, technical or vocational
 3 instructor, technical or vocational school staff member, college or university
 4 administrator, college or university staff member, social worker, probation officer,
 5 foster home parent, group home or other child care institutional staff member,
 6 personnel of residential home facilities, a licensed or unlicensed day care provider,
 7 or any individual who provides ~~such~~ these services to a child in a voluntary or
 8 professional capacity.

9 (e) Police officers or law enforcement officials. Any police officer or law
 10 enforcement official who works as a school resource officer shall be considered a
 11 mandatory reporter. A school resource officer shall not receive information from
 12 another mandatory reporter or commence or oversee any investigation into the
 13 report.

14 * * *

15 Art. 610. Reporting procedure; reports to the legislature and the United States
 16 Department of Defense Family Advocacy Program

17 A.(1) ~~Reports of~~ A reporter shall immediately report suspected child abuse
 18 or neglect or that ~~such~~ child abuse or neglect was a contributing factor in a child's
 19 death; in the following ways: where the abuser is believed to be

20 (a) To the Department of Children and Family Services if the reporter has
 21 reason to believe that the perpetrator is a parent or caretaker, a person who maintains
 22 an interpersonal dating or engagement relationship with the parent or caretaker, or
 23 a person living in the same residence with the parent or caretaker as a spouse
 24 whether married or not, ~~shall be made immediately to the department. A permitted~~
 25 ~~reporter shall make a report through the designated state child protection reporting~~
 26 ~~hotline telephone number or in person at any child welfare office. A mandatory~~
 27 ~~reporter shall make a report through the designated state child protection reporting~~
 28 ~~hotline telephone number, via the Louisiana Department of Children and Family~~
 29 ~~Services Mandated Reporter Portal online, or in person at any child welfare office.~~
 30 ~~Reports in which~~

1 **(b) To a local or state law enforcement agency if the reporter has reason to**
2 **believe that the abuse or neglect is ~~believed to be~~ being perpetrated by someone other**
3 **than a caretaker, a person who maintains an interpersonal dating or engagement**
4 **relationship with the parent or caretaker, or a person living in the same residence**
5 **with the parent or caretaker as a spouse whether married or not, and the caretaker is**
6 **not believed to have any responsibility for the abuse or neglect shall be made**
7 **immediately to a local or state law enforcement agency the individuals provided for**
8 **in Subparagraph (a) of this Paragraph. Abuse or neglect perpetrated on a student by**
9 **a teaching or child care provider, as defined by Article 603, shall be immediately**
10 **reported to local or state law enforcement.**

11 **(c) Dual reporting to both the department and the local or state law**
12 **enforcement agency is permitted.**

13 **(2) Reports to the department shall be made as follows:**

14 **(a) A mandatory reporter shall make a report of suspected abuse or neglect**
15 **requiring immediate assistance via the designated state child protection reporting**
16 **hotline telephone number. A report of suspected abuse or neglect which is of a non-**
17 **emergency nature may be reported via the Louisiana Department of Children and**
18 **Family Services Mandated Reporter Portal online. Reports may also be made in**
19 **person at any child welfare office.**

20 **(b) If a report involves alleged sex trafficking, all mandatory reporters shall**
21 **report via the hotline telephone number to the department regardless of whether there**
22 **is alleged parental or caretaker culpability.**

23 **(c) A permitted reporter shall make a report through the designated state**
24 **child protection reporting hotline telephone number or in person at any child welfare**
25 **office.**

26 **(3) If a mandatory reporter is prohibited from immediately making the report**
27 **required by this Chapter to the department or local or state law enforcement because**
28 **of an employer's policies or employee manual, the mandatory reporter shall file a**
29 **complaint with local or state law enforcement. Local or state law enforcement shall**
30 **investigate the complaint and an employer violating this Chapter shall be subject to**

1 the penalties provided for in R.S. 14:131.1 and 403. An employer shall not
2 discriminate or retaliate against an employee who is a mandatory reporter for
3 complying with this Article. If an employer is found discriminating or retaliating
4 against an employee for complying with this Article, the employer shall be subject
5 to double the fines provided for in R.S. 14:131.1 and 403.

6 (2) (4) In an investigation of a report of abuse or neglect allegedly committed
7 by a ~~person responsible for a child's care, custody, or welfare;~~ parent or caretaker,
8 the department shall determine whether the person is an active duty member of the
9 United States Armed Forces or the spouse of a member on active duty. If the
10 department determines the person is an active duty member of the United States
11 Armed Forces or the spouse of a member on active duty, the department shall notify
12 the United States Department of Defense Family Advocacy Program at the closest
13 active duty military installation of the investigation.

14 ~~(3) A report made to the department by facsimile does not relieve the~~
15 ~~reporter of his duty to report in accordance with the applicable requirements of this~~
16 ~~Article.~~

17 * * *

18 Section 2. This Act shall become effective upon signature by the governor or, if not
19 signed by the governor, upon expiration of the time for bills to become law without signature
20 by the governor, as provided by Article III, Section 18 of the Constitution of Louisiana. If
21 vetoed by the governor and subsequently approved by the legislature, this Act shall become
22 effective on the day following such approval.

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF LOUISIANA

APPROVED: _____