

FIRST REGULAR SESSION  
HOUSE COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE FOR  
**HOUSE BILL NO. 1276**  
**101ST GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

2170H.03C

DANA RADEMAN MILLER, Chief Clerk

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**AN ACT**

To repeal section 210.115, RSMo, and to enact in lieu thereof two new sections relating to unaccompanied youth.

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*Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the state of Missouri, as follows:*

Section A. Section 210.115, RSMo, is repealed and two new sections enacted in lieu thereof, to be known as sections 210.115 and 210.121, to read as follows:

210.115. 1. When any physician, medical examiner, coroner, dentist, chiropractor, optometrist, podiatrist, resident, intern, nurse, hospital or clinic personnel that are engaged in the examination, care, treatment or research of persons, and any other health practitioner, psychologist, mental health professional, social worker, day care center worker or other child-care worker, juvenile officer, probation or parole officer, jail or detention center personnel, teacher, principal or other school official, minister as provided by section 352.400, peace officer or law enforcement official, volunteer or personnel of a community service program that offers support services for families in crisis to assist in the delegation of any powers regarding the care and custody of a child by a properly executed power of attorney pursuant to sections 475.600 to 475.604, or other person with responsibility for the care of children has reasonable cause to suspect that a child has been or may be subjected to abuse or neglect or observes a child being subjected to conditions or circumstances which would reasonably result in abuse or neglect, that person shall immediately report to the division in accordance with the provisions of sections 210.109 to 210.183. No internal investigation shall be initiated until such a report has been made. As used in this section, the term "abuse" is not limited to abuse inflicted by a person responsible for the child's care, custody and control as specified in section 210.110, but shall also include abuse inflicted by any other person.

EXPLANATION — Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets [thus] in the above bill is not enacted and is intended to be omitted from the law. Matter in **bold-face** type in the above bill is proposed language.

18           2. If two or more members of a medical institution who are required to report jointly  
19 have knowledge of a known or suspected instance of child abuse or neglect, a single report may  
20 be made by a designated member of that medical team. Any member who has knowledge that  
21 the member designated to report has failed to do so shall thereafter immediately make the report.  
22 Nothing in this section, however, is meant to preclude any person from reporting abuse or  
23 neglect.

24           3. The reporting requirements under this section are individual, and no supervisor or  
25 administrator may impede or inhibit any reporting under this section. No person making a report  
26 under this section shall be subject to any sanction, including any adverse employment action, for  
27 making such report. Every employer shall ensure that any employee required to report pursuant  
28 to subsection 1 of this section has immediate and unrestricted access to communications  
29 technology necessary to make an immediate report and is temporarily relieved of other work  
30 duties for such time as is required to make any report required under subsection 1 of this section.

31           4. Notwithstanding any other provision of sections 210.109 to 210.183, any child who  
32 does not receive specified medical treatment by reason of the legitimate practice of the religious  
33 belief of the child's parents, guardian, or others legally responsible for the child, for that reason  
34 alone, shall not be found to be an abused or neglected child, and such parents, guardian or other  
35 persons legally responsible for the child shall not be entered into the central registry. However,  
36 the division may accept reports concerning such a child and may subsequently investigate or  
37 conduct a family assessment as a result of that report. Such an exception shall not limit the  
38 administrative or judicial authority of the state to ensure that medical services are provided to  
39 the child when the child's health requires it.

40           5. In addition to those persons and officials required to report actual or suspected abuse  
41 or neglect, any other person may report in accordance with sections 210.109 to 210.183 if such  
42 person has reasonable cause to suspect that a child has been or may be subjected to abuse or  
43 neglect or observes a child being subjected to conditions or circumstances which would  
44 reasonably result in abuse or neglect.

45           6. Any person or official required to report pursuant to this section, including employees  
46 of the division, who has probable cause to suspect that a child who is or may be under the age  
47 of eighteen, who is eligible to receive a certificate of live birth, has died shall report that fact to  
48 the appropriate medical examiner or coroner. If, upon review of the circumstances and medical  
49 information, the medical examiner or coroner determines that the child died of natural causes  
50 while under medical care for an established natural disease, the coroner, medical examiner or  
51 physician shall notify the division of the child's death and that the child's attending physician  
52 shall be signing the death certificate. In all other cases, the medical examiner or coroner shall  
53 accept the report for investigation, shall immediately notify the division of the child's death as

54 required in section 58.452 and shall report the findings to the child fatality review panel  
55 established pursuant to section 210.192.

56 7. Any person or individual required to report may also report the suspicion of abuse or  
57 neglect to any law enforcement agency or juvenile office. Such report shall not, however, take  
58 the place of reporting to the division.

59 8. If an individual required to report suspected instances of abuse or neglect pursuant to  
60 this section has reason to believe that the victim of such abuse or neglect is a resident of another  
61 state or was injured as a result of an act which occurred in another state, the person required to  
62 report such abuse or neglect may, in lieu of reporting to the Missouri children's division, make  
63 such a report to the child protection agency of the other state with the authority to receive such  
64 reports pursuant to the laws of such other state. If such agency accepts the report, no report is  
65 required to be made, but may be made, to the children's division.

66 **9. For the purposes of providing supportive services or verifying the status of a**  
67 **youth as unaccompanied or homeless for the purposes of accessing supportive services, the**  
68 **fact that a child is an unaccompanied youth as defined in 42 U.S.C. Section 11434a(6) is**  
69 **not, in and of itself, a sufficient basis for reporting child abuse or neglect, unless the child**  
70 **is under sixteen years of age or is an incapacitated person, as defined in section 475.010.**  
71 **Nothing in this subsection shall limit a mandated reporter from making a report under this**  
72 **section if the mandated reporter knows or has reasonable cause to suspect that an**  
73 **unaccompanied youth has been or may be a victim of abuse or neglect.**

**210.121. 1. As used in this section, the following terms mean:**

2 **(1) "Service provider", a public or private nonprofit organization that provides**  
3 **age-appropriate shelter or supportive services to unaccompanied youth and whose director**  
4 **or designee is a licensed mental health professional, licensed social worker, or licensed**  
5 **counselor;**

6 **(2) "Shelter", an emergency shelter, transitional living program, or independent**  
7 **living program services;**

8 **(3) "Supportive services", interventions, services, or resources necessary to assist**  
9 **an unaccompanied youth. "Supportive services" shall include, but are not limited to, the**  
10 **following:**

11 **(a) Food and access to an overnight shelter;**

12 **(b) Housing search, counseling, rental assistance, financial assistance with eviction**  
13 **prevention, utilities, security deposit, relocation, and other housing support services;**

14 **(c) Services for families to prevent separation and support reunification if safe and**  
15 **appropriate;**

16 **(d) Employment assistance, job training, and job placement;**

- 17 (e) Assistance and advocacy to ensure access to federal, state, and local benefits;
- 18 (f) Assistance and advocacy to ensure access to education;
- 19 (g) Services to prevent and treat violence and crime victimization;
- 20 (h) Child care operations and vouchers;
- 21 (i) Legal services;
- 22 (j) Life skills training;
- 23 (k) Outpatient health, behavioral health, and substance abuse treatment services;
- 24 (l) Transportation;
- 25 (m) Outreach services; and
- 26 (n) Homelessness prevention services;
- 27 (4) "Unaccompanied youth", the same meaning as such term is defined in 42 U.S.C.

28 Section 11434a(6).

29 2. An unaccompanied youth may access supportive services so long as the youth is  
30 verified as an unaccompanied youth as provided under subsection 3 of this section.

31 3. Acceptable documentation to verify the status of an unaccompanied youth shall  
32 include, but is not limited to, the following:

33 (1) A statement documenting the youth as an unaccompanied youth that is signed  
34 by a licensed mental health professional, licensed social worker, or licensed counselor of  
35 a government or nonprofit agency that receives public or private funding to provide  
36 services to homeless people and is currently licensed as a case management service  
37 provider;

38 (2) A statement documenting the youth as an unaccompanied youth that is signed  
39 by a local educational agency liaison for homeless children and youth designated under 42  
40 U.S.C. Section 11432(g)(1)(J)(ii), or a school social worker or counselor; or

41 (3) A statement documenting that the youth is an unaccompanied youth that is  
42 signed by an attorney representing the youth in any legal matter.

43 4. A person who in good faith accepts a written statement under subdivision (1) of  
44 subsection 3 of this section and who is without actual knowledge that the statement is  
45 fraudulent or otherwise invalid may rely upon the statement as if it were genuine and shall  
46 not be held liable in any civil or criminal action for providing shelter or supportive services  
47 without having obtained permission from the minor's parent or guardian. The service  
48 provider shall not be relieved from liability for negligence or criminal acts on the basis of  
49 this section.

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