**A** **BILL**

TO AMEND SECTION 63‑7‑310, AS AMENDED, CODE OF LAWS OF SOUTH CAROLINA, 1976, RELATING TO PERSONS REQUIRED TO REPORT CHILD ABUSE OR NEGLECT, SO AS TO REQUIRE ANY PERSON IN THIS STATE TO REPORT SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE OR NEGLECT; TO AMEND SECTION 63‑7‑360, RELATING TO MANDATORY REPORTING TO THE CORONER, SO AS TO MAKE CONFORMING CHANGES; AND TO AMEND SECTION 63‑7‑450, RELATING TO INFORMATION THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES MUST PROVIDE TO PERSONS REQUIRED TO REPORT, SO AS TO MAKE CONFORMING CHANGES.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of South Carolina:

SECTION 1. Section 63‑7‑310 of the 1976 Code, as last amended by Act 227 of 2010, is further amended to read:

“Section 63‑7‑310. (A)(1) A physician, nurse, dentist, optometrist, medical examiner, or coroner, or an employee of a county medical examiner’s or coroner’s office, or any other medical, emergency medical services, mental health, or allied health professional, member of the clergy including a Christian Science Practitioner or religious healer, school teacher, counselor, principal, assistant principal, school attendance officer, social or public assistance worker, substance abuse treatment staff, or childcare worker in a childcare center or foster care facility, foster parent, police or law enforcement officer, juvenile justice worker, undertaker, funeral home director or employee of a funeral home, persons responsible for processing films, computer technician, judge, or a volunteer non‑attorney guardian ad litem serving on behalf of the South Carolina Guardian Ad Litem Program or on behalf of Richland County CASA must report in accordance with this section when in the person’s professional capacity the person has received information which gives the person reason to believe that a child has been or may be abused or neglected as defined in Section 63‑7‑20.

(2) In addition to the reporting requirement pursuant to item (1), when any other person in this State has received information which gives the person reason to believe that a child has been or may be abused or neglected as defined in Section 63‑7‑20, the person must report in accordance with this section.

(B) If a person required to report pursuant to subsection (A) has received information ~~in the person’s professional capacity~~ which gives the person reason to believe that a child’s physical or mental health or welfare has been or may be adversely affected by acts or omissions that would be child abuse or neglect if committed by a parent, guardian, or other person responsible for the child’s welfare, but the reporter believes that the act or omission was committed by a person other than the parent, guardian, or other person responsible for the child’s welfare, the reporter must make a report to the appropriate law enforcement agency.

(C) ~~Except as provided in subsection (A), a person, including, but not limited to, a volunteer non‑attorney guardian ad litem serving on behalf of the South Carolina Guardian Ad Litem Program or on behalf of Richland County CASA, who has reason to believe that a child’s physical or mental health or welfare has been or may be adversely affected by abuse and neglect may report, and is encouraged to report, in accordance with this section.~~

~~(D)~~ Reports of child abuse or neglect may be made orally by telephone or otherwise to the county department of social services or to a law enforcement agency in the county where the child resides or is found.”

SECTION 2. Section 63‑7‑360 of the 1976 Code is amended to read:

“Section 63‑7‑360. A person required under Section 63‑7‑310 to report cases of suspected child abuse or neglect, including workers of the department, who has reason to believe a child has died as the result of child abuse or neglect, shall report this information to the appropriate medical examiner or coroner. ~~Any other person who has reason to believe that a child has died as a result of child abuse or neglect may report this information to the appropriate medical examiner or coroner.~~ The medical examiner or coroner shall accept the report for investigation and shall report his findings to the appropriate law enforcement agency, circuit solicitor’s office, the county department of social services and, if the institution making a report is a hospital, to the hospital.”

SECTION 3. Section 63‑7‑450(A) of the 1976 Code is amended to read:

“(A) The Department of Social Services Protective Services shall inform all persons required to report ~~under this subarticle~~ pursuant to section 63‑7‑310(A)(1), of the nature, problem, and extent of child abuse and neglect and of their duties and responsibilities in accordance with this article. The department also, on a continuing basis, shall conduct training programs for department staff and appropriate training for persons required to report ~~under this subarticle~~ pursuant to Section 63‑7‑310(A)(1).”

SECTION 4. This act takes effect upon approval by the Governor.

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