**A** **BILL**

TO AMEND SECTION 63‑7‑310, AS AMENDED, CODE OF LAWS OF SOUTH CAROLINA, 1976, RELATING TO MANDATORY REPORTING OF CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT, SO AS TO REQUIRE REPORTS BE MADE WITHIN A CERTAIN PERIOD OF TIME AFTER RECEIPT OF INFORMATION THAT GIVES CERTAIN PEOPLE REASON TO BELIEVE A CHILD HAS BEEN OR MAY BE ABUSED OR NEGLECTED; AND TO MAKE CONFORMING CHANGES AND TECHNICAL CORRECTIONS.

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~~ Cass Elias McCarter Guardian Ad Litem Program or on behalf of Richland County CASA must report in accordance with this ~~section~~ subsection 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) A person required to report child abuse or neglect in accordance with this subsection must make the report 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.

(B) If a person required to report pursuant to subsection (A)(1) 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~~ orally by telephone or otherwise to a law enforcement agency in the county where the child resides or is found.

(C) Except as provided in ~~subsection~~ subsections (A) and (B), 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.~~ A person required to report pursuant to subsection (A) or (B) must make the report within twenty‑four hours or the next working day after receiving the information that gives the person reason to believe that a child has been or may be abused or neglected.”

SECTION 2. This act takes effect upon approval by the Governor.

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