

## CHAPTER 259

---

**HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT**

---

**HOUSE BILL 19-1133**

BY REPRESENTATIVE(S) Caraveo and Pelton, Arndt, Benavidez, Bird, Buckner, Buentello, Cutter, Duran, Esgar, Exum, Froelich, Galindo, Gonzales-Gutierrez, Gray, Herod, Hooton, Jackson, Jaquez Lewis, Kipp, Kraft-Tharp, Lontine, McCluskie, Melton, Michaelson Jenet, Mullica, Roberts, Sandridge, Singer, Sirota, Snyder, Sullivan, Titone, Valdez A., Will, Wilson, Becker; also SENATOR(S) Fields, Bridges, Court, Crowder, Ginal, Hisey, Moreno, Pettersen, Priola, Rankin, Smallwood, Story, Tate, Todd, Williams A., Winter.

**AN ACT**

**CONCERNING THE CREATION OF A COLORADO CHILD ABUSE RESPONSE AND EVALUATION NETWORK, AND, IN CONNECTION THEREWITH, MAKING AN APPROPRIATION.**

*Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Colorado:*

**SECTION 1. Legislative declaration.** (1) The general assembly finds and declares:

(a) Historically, there are over one hundred thousand suspected child abuse and neglect referrals to child welfare in Colorado each year, and, of those referrals, approximately one-third are screened in for an assessment;

(b) It is estimated that forty percent of the screened-in referrals involve suspected child abuse and neglect of children under the age of five, and twenty percent involve sexual abuse;

(c) However, expertise to conduct medical exams to evaluate suspected child abuse and neglect and to conduct behavioral health assessments is extremely limited. There are only seven board-certified specialists in the field of child abuse pediatrics in Colorado, five of whom are located in Denver, one of whom is located in Colorado Springs, and one of whom is located in Fort Morgan.

(d) Distances limit access to expert evaluations in most of the state's sixty-four counties, resulting in a serious problem with a lack of providers willing and able to conduct medical exams for suspected physical or sexual abuse or neglect and to conduct behavioral health assessments;

---

*Capital letters or bold & italic numbers indicate new material added to existing law; dashes through words or numbers indicate deletions from existing law and such material is not part of the act.*

(e) All children at risk of child abuse and neglect deserve access to appropriate medical and behavioral health assessments;

(f) Engaging health care professionals and behavioral health providers in the protection of children experiencing maltreatment will expand the safety net for children with the goal of reducing severe child maltreatment and fatalities; and

(g) Educating and training health care and behavioral health providers about signs that children may be at risk of maltreatment and about resources available to families will position the providers to recognize community-specific needs and help prevent child maltreatment.

**SECTION 2.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, **add** part 9 to article 20.5 of title 25 as follows:

**PART 9  
COLORADO CHILD ABUSE RESPONSE  
AND EVALUATION NETWORK (CARENWORK)**

**25-20.5-901. Short title.** THE SHORT TITLE OF THIS PART 9 IS THE "COLORADO CHILD ABUSE RESPONSE AND EVALUATION NETWORK (CARENWORK) ACT".

**25-20.5-902. Definitions.** AS USED IN THIS PART 9, UNLESS THE CONTEXT OTHERWISE REQUIRES:

(1) "COLORADO CHILD ABUSE RESOURCE AND EVALUATION NETWORK" OR "CARENWORK" MEANS A NETWORK COMPRISED OF A RESOURCE CENTER, DESIGNATED PROVIDERS, AND OTHER COMMUNITY PARTNERS, INCLUDING CHILDREN'S ADVOCACY CENTERS, THAT COLLABORATE TO DEVELOP AND MAINTAIN A STANDARDIZED, COORDINATED HEALTH CARE RESPONSE TO THE PREVENTION AND TREATMENT OF SUSPECTED PHYSICAL OR SEXUAL ABUSE OR NEGLECT.

(2) "DESIGNATED PROVIDER" MEANS A PHYSICIAN, NURSE, ADVANCED PRACTICE PROVIDER, OR BEHAVIORAL HEALTH PROVIDER WHO IS LICENSED IN THIS STATE AND WHO MEETS THE CRITERIA ESTABLISHED TO BE A DESIGNATED PROVIDER IN THE CARENWORK.

(3) "RESOURCE CENTER" MEANS A NATIONALLY RECOGNIZED ORGANIZATION WITH BOARD-CERTIFIED SPECIALISTS IN THE FIELD OF CHILD ABUSE PEDIATRICS AND WITH EXPERTISE TO ESTABLISH STANDARDS OF MEDICAL AND BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CARE FOR THE CARENWORK AND PROVIDE EDUCATION AND TRAINING FOR DESIGNATED PROVIDERS.

**25-20.5-903. CARENwork - structure - resource center.** (1) THERE IS CREATED IN THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT THE COLORADO CHILD ABUSE RESPONSE AND EVALUATION NETWORK TO PROVIDE MEDICAL EXAMS AND BEHAVIORAL HEALTH ASSESSMENTS TO CHILDREN UNDER SIX YEARS OF AGE FOR SUSPECTED CASES OF PHYSICAL OR SEXUAL ABUSE OR NEGLECT AND CHILDREN UNDER THIRTEEN YEARS OF AGE FOR SUSPECTED SEXUAL ABUSE. IN IMPLEMENTING THE CARENWORK, THE DEPARTMENT SHALL COORDINATE WITH

THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES, EXISTING ADVISORY COMMITTEES, AND INTERESTED STAKEHOLDERS TO ALIGN THE WORK OF THE CARENetwork WITH OTHER STATE AND LOCAL EFFORTS FOCUSED ON PREVENTING CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT AND ADDRESSING THE HEALTH AND SOCIAL NEEDS OF FAMILIES AT RISK OF EXPERIENCING CHILD ABUSE OR NEGLECT.

(2) ON OR BEFORE NOVEMBER 1, 2019, THE DEPARTMENT SHALL AWARD A CONTRACT TO A RESOURCE CENTER TO ESTABLISH THE CARENetwork. THE RESOURCE CENTER SHALL:

(a) WORK TO INCREASE LOCAL CAPACITY OF HEALTH CARE AND BEHAVIORAL HEALTH PROVIDERS TO PERFORM MEDICAL AND BEHAVIORAL HEALTH ASSESSMENTS FOR SUSPECTED CASES OF PHYSICAL OR SEXUAL ABUSE OR NEGLECT BY USING CURRENT OR BY BUILDING APPROPRIATE INFRASTRUCTURE FOR AND PROVIDING TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO THE CARENetwork;

(b) DEVELOP BEST PRACTICE STANDARDS ACROSS THE STATE FOR THE CARENetwork, INCLUDING A REVIEW OF CURRENT NATIONAL ACCREDITATION STANDARDS, FOR MEDICAL EXAMS AND BEHAVIORAL HEALTH ASSESSMENTS FOR CHILDREN DESCRIBED IN SUBSECTION (1) OF THIS SECTION;

(c) DEVELOP A STREAMLINED MEDICAL AND BEHAVIORAL HEALTH REFERRAL PROCESS TO DESIGNATED PROVIDERS FOR CHILDREN TO RECEIVE APPROPRIATE CARE, INCLUDING COORDINATED HAND-OFFS TO AVAILABLE RESOURCES;

(d) ESTABLISH AN EFFICIENT STRUCTURE, CONSIDERING GEOGRAPHY AND IDENTIFIED COMMUNITY NEEDS, TO ENSURE A COORDINATED RESPONSE TO SUSPECTED CASES OF PHYSICAL OR SEXUAL ABUSE OR NEGLECT;

(e) ENCOURAGE PARTICIPATION AND ENHANCE THE ROLE OF MEDICAL PROVIDERS IN MULTIDISCIPLINARY TEAMS IN LOCAL COMMUNITIES TO PROVIDE INPUT FOR THE CARENetwork;

(f) COLLABORATE WITH EXISTING PROGRAMS IN LOCAL COMMUNITIES TO PROVIDE EDUCATION AND TRAINING, COLLABORATIVE MENTORSHIP, AND SUPPORT FOR DESIGNATED PROVIDERS SERVING CHILDREN IN THEIR COMMUNITIES, INCLUDING EDUCATION AND TRAINING ABOUT RISKS AND PROTECTIVE FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT AND RESOURCES FOR FAMILIES TO ADDRESS THEIR HEALTH AND SOCIAL NEEDS;

(g) COLLECT AND ANALYZE DATA TO IDENTIFY AND MONITOR OUTCOMES OF THE CARENetwork AND TO GUIDE ONGOING PROGRAM ANALYSES, RESULTING IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF BEST PRACTICES THAT ENCOURAGE CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT AND FIDELITY OF THE CARENetwork'S STANDARD OF CARE; AND

(h) REPORT ANNUALLY TO THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS OF THE DEPARTMENT AND THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES ON ACTIVITIES OF THE CARENetwork.

(3) NOTHING IN THIS SECTION SUPERSEDES THE AUTHORITY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES OR A COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN OR SOCIAL SERVICES TO RECEIVE REPORTS AND COORDINATE THE OFFICIAL INVESTIGATION AND RESPONSE

TO REPORTS OF CHILD ABUSE OR NEGLECT. NOTHING IN THE SECTION RELIEVES THE PARTICIPANTS IN THE CARE NETWORK FROM MANDATED REPORTING REQUIREMENTS PURSUANT TO SECTION 19-3-304.

**SECTION 3. Appropriation.** For the 2019-20 state fiscal year, \$632,717 is appropriated to the department of public health and environment for use by the prevention services division. This appropriation is from the general fund and is based on an assumption that the division will require an additional 0.6 FTE. The division may use this appropriation to implement this act.

**SECTION 4. Safety clause.** The general assembly hereby finds, determines, and declares that this act is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, and safety.

Approved: May 23, 2019