
SENATE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Senator Anna Caballero, Chair
2025 - 2026 Regular Session

AB 601 (Jackson) - Child abuse: reporting

Version: April 10, 2025

Policy Vote: HUMAN S. 5 - 0, PUB. S. 6 - 0

Urgency: No

Mandate: Yes

Hearing Date: August 18, 2025

Consultant: Agnes Lee

Bill Summary: AB 601 would require the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) to develop a standardized curriculum, as specified, for mandated reporters; and would require certain employers to ensure completion of the training.

Fiscal Impact:

- The CDSS estimates General Fund costs of \$620,000 in 2025-26, \$250,000 in 2026-27, \$5.6 million in 2027-28, and \$969,000 annually ongoing thereafter. These costs reflect: (1) the one-time contract cost of updating the mandated reporter training, (2) the annual maintenance cost of the contract, (3) the one-time administrative cost for training existing county staff on the new curriculum, (4) the ongoing administrative cost for training new county staff after implementation, and (5) the certificate costs for documenting completion of the training.
- Unknown potential General Fund costs to state agencies to ensure mandated reporters, such as peace officers, fire fighters, public health employees, and others, who are not otherwise exempt under the bill, to complete the required training.
- Unknown potential costs to local agencies to comply with the training requirements. Costs would be potentially reimbursable by the state, subject to a determination by the Commission on State Mandates.
- The Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) anticipates minor and absorbable costs for state administration related to providing joint updates with CDSS to the Legislature regarding federal funding issues.

Background: California's mandated reporter statutes require that certain individuals who, in a professional capacity or within the scope of employment, have knowledge of or observe a child whom the mandated reporter knows or reasonably suspects has been the victim of child abuse or neglect to make an immediate report to a law enforcement agency, as specified. The statute defines what constitutes reasonable suspicion and lists 49 specific categories of employees that are defined as mandated reporters, including teachers, coaches, child care workers, social workers, probation officers, firefighters, specific medical personnel, commercial film and photographic image processors, and others. Current law requires certain mandated reporters to receive training, including: school personnel, business employees that have direct contact with and supervision of minors, child care providers, employees of youth service organizations, and others.

Currently, online mandated reporter training is offered through the Child Abuse Mandated Reporter Training Project which is supported by CDSS. Along with a general training for all mandated reporters, the website includes profession-specific training for school personnel, child care providers, medical professionals, law enforcement, mental health professionals, social workers, clergy, and volunteers. This online training course is not required, but completion of the training course will satisfy the statutory training requirements for specified mandated reporters.

Proposed Law: Specific provisions of the bill would:

- Require the existing California Child Welfare Council, through its Prevention and Early Intervention Committee, to establish a Mandated Reporting Advisory Committee, as specified.
- Require the CDSS and the DHCS to jointly provide an update to the Assembly Committee on Budget and the Senate Committee on Budget and Fiscal Review, and to the subcommittees that have oversight of human services, on or before April 1, 2026, and every 90 days thereafter, on guidance to counties with respect to payer of last resort federal requirements and revenue maximization of Medicaid and Title IV-E funding to support services under the Family First Prevention Services program, as specified.
- Require CDSS to, by no later than July 1, 2027, develop a standardized curriculum, as specified, for mandated reporters; and require CDSS to make the training available on its internet website.
- Require, except as provided, an employer having one or more mandated reporters, as described, to ensure completion of the training within the first three months of their employment, or on or before March 1, 2030, whichever is later; and require that completion of the training be documented in a manner that would allow the CDSS to verify completion upon request.

Related Legislation: SB 119 (Committee on Budget and Fiscal Review, Chapter 79, Statutes of 2025) was a budget social services trailer bill and includes provisions similar to provisions in AB 601.

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