

**SENATE BILL NO. 2161
with House Amendments
SENATE BILL NO. 2161**

Sixty-third
Legislative Assembly
of North Dakota

Introduced by

Senators J. Lee, Berry, Krebsbach

Representatives Porter, Weisz, Hogan

1 A BILL for an Act to amend and reenact sections 50-25.1-02, 50-25.1-04.3, and 50-25.1-04.5 of
2 the North Dakota Century Code, relating to the child fatality review panel.

3 **BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF NORTH DAKOTA:**

4 **SECTION 1. AMENDMENT.** Section 50-25.1-02 of the North Dakota Century Code is
5 amended and reenacted as follows:

6 **50-25.1-02. Definitions.**

7 In this chapter, unless the context or subject matter otherwise requires:

- 8 1. "A person responsible for the child's welfare" means a person who has responsibility
9 for the care or supervision of a child and who is the child's parent, an adult family
10 member of the child, any member of the child's household, the child's guardian, or the
11 child's foster parent; or an employee of, or any person providing care for the child in, a
12 public or private school or child care setting.
- 13 2. "Abuse of alcohol", "alcohol abuse", or "abused alcohol" means alcohol abuse or
14 dependence as defined in the current diagnostic and statistical manual published by
15 the American psychiatric association or a maladaptive use of alcohol with negative
16 medical, sociological, occupational, or familial effects.
- 17 3. "Abused child" means an individual under the age of eighteen years who is suffering
18 from abuse as defined in subdivision a of subsection 1 of section 14-09-22 caused by
19 a person responsible for the child's welfare and "sexually abused child" means an
20 individual under the age of eighteen years who is subjected by a person responsible
21 for the child's welfare, or by any individual who acts in violation of sections 12.1-20-01
22 through 12.1-20-07, sections 12.1-20-11 through 12.1-20-12.2, or chapter 12.1-27.2.

- 1 4. "Assessment" means a factfinding process designed to provide information that
2 enables a determination to be made that services are required to provide for the
3 protection and treatment of an abused or neglected child.
- 4 5. "Authorized agent" means the county social service board, unless another entity is
5 designated by the department.
- 6 6. "Children's advocacy center" means a full or associate member of the national
7 children's alliance which assists in the coordination of the investigation in response to
8 allegations of child abuse by providing a dedicated child-friendly location at which to
9 conduct forensic interviews, forensic medical examinations, and other appropriate
10 services and which promotes a comprehensive multidisciplinary team response to
11 allegations of child abuse. The team response may include forensic interviews,
12 forensic medical examinations, mental health and related support services, advocacy,
13 and case review.
- 14 7. "Citizen review committee" means a committee appointed by the department to review
15 the department's provision of child welfare services.
- 16 8. "Department" means the department of human services or its designee.
- 17 9. "Institutional child abuse or neglect" means situations of known or suspected child
18 abuse or neglect when the institution responsible for the child's welfare is a residential
19 child care facility, a treatment or care center for individuals with intellectual disabilities,
20 a public or private residential educational facility, a maternity home, or any residential
21 facility owned or managed by the state or a political subdivision of the state.
- 22 10. "Local child protection team" means a multidisciplinary team consisting of the
23 designee of the director of the regional human service center, together with such other
24 representatives as that director might select for the team with the consent of the
25 director of the county social service board. All team members, at the time of their
26 selection and thereafter, must be staff members of the public or private agencies they
27 represent or shall serve without remuneration. An attorney member of the child
28 protection team may not be appointed to represent the child or the parents at any
29 subsequent court proceeding nor may the child protection team be composed of fewer
30 than three members. The department shall coordinate the organization of local child
31 protection teams on a county or multicounty basis.

1 11. "Near death" means an act which, as certified by a physician, places a child in serious
2 or critical condition.

3 12. "Neglected child" means a deprived child as defined in chapter 27-20.

4 ~~12.~~13. "Prenatal exposure to a controlled substance" means use of a controlled substance as
5 defined in chapter 19-03.1 by a pregnant woman for a nonmedical purpose during
6 pregnancy as evidenced by withdrawal symptoms in the child at birth, results of a
7 toxicology test performed on the mother at delivery of the child at birth, or medical
8 effects or developmental delays during the child's first year of life that medically
9 indicate prenatal exposure to a controlled substance.

10 ~~13.~~14. "Protective services" includes services performed after an assessment of a report of
11 child abuse or neglect has been conducted, such as social assessment, service
12 planning, implementation of service plans, treatment services, referral services,
13 coordination with referral sources, progress assessment, monitoring service delivery,
14 and direct services.

15 ~~14.~~15. "State child protection team" means a multidisciplinary team consisting of the
16 designee of the department and, where possible, of a physician, a representative of a
17 child-placing agency, a representative of the state department of health, a
18 representative of the attorney general, a representative of the superintendent of public
19 instruction, a representative of the department of corrections and rehabilitation, one or
20 more representatives of the lay community, and, as an ad hoc member, the designee
21 of the chief executive official of any institution named in a report of institutional abuse
22 or neglect. All team members, at the time of their selection and thereafter, must be
23 staff members of the public or private agency they represent or shall serve without
24 remuneration. An attorney member of the child protection team may not be appointed
25 to represent the child or the parents at any subsequent court proceeding nor may the
26 child protection team be composed of fewer than three persons.

27 **SECTION 2. AMENDMENT.** Section 50-25.1-04.3 of the North Dakota Century Code is
28 amended and reenacted as follows:

29 **50-25.1-04.3. Child fatality review panel - Duties.**

30 The child fatality review panel shall meet at least semiannually to review the deaths and
31 near deaths of all minors which occurred in the state during the preceding six months and to

- 1 identify trends or patterns in the deaths and near deaths of minors. The panel may review near
2 deaths alleged to have resulted only from child abuse and neglect. The panel shall promote:
- 3 1. Interagency communication for the management of child death cases and for the
4 management of future nonfatal cases.
 - 5 2. Effective criminal, civil, and social intervention for families with fatalities.
 - 6 3. Intervention and counseling of surviving and at-risk siblings, and offer the same.
 - 7 4. Interagency use of cases to audit the total health and social service systems and to
8 minimize misclassification of cause of death.
 - 9 5. Evaluation of the impact of specific risk factors including substance abuse, domestic
10 violence, and prior child abuse.
 - 11 6. Interagency services to high-risk families.
 - 12 7. Data collection for surveillance of deaths and the study of categories of causes of
13 death.
 - 14 8. The use of media to educate the public about child abuse prevention.
 - 15 9. Intercounty and interstate communications regarding child death.
 - 16 10. Use of local child protection team members as local child fatality review panelists.
 - 17 11. Information that apprises a parent or guardian of the parent's or guardian's rights and
18 the procedures taken after the death of a child.

19 **SECTION 3. AMENDMENT.** Section 50-25.1-04.5 of the North Dakota Century Code is
20 amended and reenacted as follows:

21 **50-25.1-04.5. Child fatality review panel - Confidentiality of meetings, documentation,**
22 **and reports.**

- 23 1. Notwithstanding section 44-04-19, all meetings of the panel are closed to the public.
24 Notwithstanding section 44-04-18, all documentation and reports of the panel are
25 confidential, except for an annual report, ~~of the panel are confidential reports.~~ The
26 annual report involving child abuse and neglect deaths and near deaths must include
27 the following:
- 28 a. The cause of and circumstances regarding the death or near death;
 - 29 b. The age and gender of the child;

- 1 c. Information describing any previous child abuse and neglect reports or
2 assessments that pertain to the child abuse or neglect that led to the death or
3 near death;
- 4 d. The result of any such assessments; and
- 5 e. The services provided in accordance with section 50-25.1-06, unless disclosure
6 is otherwise prohibited by law.
- 7 2. The panel shall make available to the persons designated in section 50-25.1-11 the
8 documentation and reports of the panel.