

Senate Engrossed House Bill

child services; abuse reporting; jurisdiction

State of Arizona  
House of Representatives  
Fifty-fifth Legislature  
Second Regular Session  
2022

**CHAPTER 275**

**HOUSE BILL 2647**

AN ACT

AMENDING SECTION 8-455, ARIZONA REVISED STATUTES; RELATING TO THE  
DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SAFETY.

(TEXT OF BILL BEGINS ON NEXT PAGE)

1 Be it enacted by the Legislature of the State of Arizona:

2 Section 1. Section 8-455, Arizona Revised Statutes, is amended to  
3 read:

4 8-455. Centralized intake hotline; purposes; report of  
5 possible crime; DCS report; risk assessment tools;  
6 access to information; public awareness; definitions

7 A. The department shall operate and maintain a centralized intake  
8 hotline to protect children by receiving at all times communications  
9 concerning suspected abuse or neglect. If a person communicates suspected  
10 abuse or neglect to a department employee other than through the hotline,  
11 the employee shall refer the person or communication to the hotline.

12 B. The hotline is the first step in the safety assessment and  
13 investigation process and must be operated to:

14 1. Record communications made concerning suspected abuse or  
15 neglect.

16 2. Immediately take steps necessary to identify and locate prior  
17 communications and DCS reports related to the current communication using  
18 the department's data system and the central registry system of this  
19 state.

20 3. Quickly and efficiently provide information to a law enforcement  
21 agency or prepare a DCS report as required by this section.

22 4. Determine the proper initial priority level of investigation  
23 based on the report screening assessment and direct the DCS report to the  
24 appropriate part of the department based on this determination.

25 C. If a communication provides a reason to believe that a criminal  
26 offense has been committed and the communication does not meet the  
27 criteria for a DCS report, the hotline worker shall immediately provide  
28 the information to the appropriate law enforcement agency.

29 D. A hotline worker shall prepare a DCS report if the identity or  
30 current location of the child victim, the child's family or the person  
31 suspected of abuse or neglect is known or can be reasonably ascertained  
32 and all of the following are alleged:

33 1. The suspected conduct would constitute abuse or neglect.

34 2. The suspected victim of the conduct is under eighteen years of  
35 age.

36 3. The suspected victim of the conduct is a resident of or present  
37 in this state.

38 4. The person suspected of committing the abuse or neglect is the  
39 parent, guardian or custodian of the victim or an adult member of the  
40 victim's household.

41 E. Except for criminal conduct allegations, the department is not  
42 required to prepare a DCS report if all of the following apply:

43 1. The suspected conduct occurred more than three years before the  
44 communication to the hotline.

1           2. There is no information or indication that a child is currently  
2 being abused or neglected.

3           F. Investigations of DCS reports shall be conducted as provided in  
4 section 8-456 except for investigations containing allegations of criminal  
5 conduct, which shall be conducted as provided in section 8-471.

6           G. THE DEPARTMENT IS NOT REQUIRED TO PREPARE A DCS REPORT  
7 CONCERNING ALLEGED ABUSE OR NEGLECT IF THE ALLEGED ACT OR ACTS OCCURRED IN  
8 A FOREIGN COUNTRY AND THE CHILD IS IN THE CUSTODY OF THE FEDERAL  
9 GOVERNMENT.

10          ~~H.~~ H. The department shall develop and train hotline workers to  
11 use uniform risk assessment tools to determine:

12           1. Whether the suspected conduct constitutes abuse or neglect and  
13 the severity of the suspected abuse or neglect.

14           2. Whether the suspected abuse or neglect involves criminal  
15 conduct, even if the communication does not result in the preparation of a  
16 DCS report.

17           3. The appropriate investigative track for referral based on the  
18 risk to the child's safety.

19          ~~I.~~ I. A DCS report must include, if available, all of the  
20 following:

21           1. The name, address or contact information for the person making  
22 the communication.

23           2. The name, address and other location or contact information for  
24 the parent, guardian or custodian of the child or other adult member of  
25 the child's household who is suspected of committing the abuse or neglect.

26           3. The name, address and other location or contact information for  
27 the child.

28           4. The nature and extent of the indications of the child's abuse or  
29 neglect, including any indication of physical injury.

30           5. Any information regarding possible prior abuse or neglect,  
31 including reference to any communication or DCS report involving the  
32 child, the child's siblings or the person suspected of committing the  
33 abuse or neglect.

34          ~~J.~~ J. Information gathered through the hotline must be made  
35 available to an employee of the department in order to perform the  
36 employee's duties. The office of child welfare investigations and the  
37 inspections bureau must have immediate access to all records of the  
38 hotline.

39          ~~K.~~ K. A representative of the:

40           1. Office of child welfare investigations must be embedded in the  
41 hotline to carry out the purposes of section 8-471.

42           2. Inspections bureau must be embedded in the hotline to carry out  
43 the purposes of section 8-458.

44          ~~L.~~ L. The department shall publicize the availability and the  
45 purposes of the centralized intake hotline.

1           ~~L.~~ M. For the purposes of this section:

2           1. "Centralized intake hotline" means the system developed pursuant  
3 to this section regardless of the communication methods or technologies  
4 used to implement the system.

5           2. "Criminal offense" means an allegation of conduct against a  
6 child by a person other than a parent, guardian or custodian of the child  
7 victim or another adult member of the child's household that, if true,  
8 would constitute a felony offense.

APPROVED BY THE GOVERNOR JUNE 6, 2022.

FILED IN THE OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE JUNE 6, 2022.