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## **S.F. No. 4 - Recommendations of Governor's Task Force on the Protection of Children (Delete-Everything Amendment SCS0004A- 4)**

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The A-4 delete-everything amendment contains the statutory changes necessary to implement the initial recommendations from the Governor's Task Force on the Protection of Children. The sections in this bill amend the Maltreatment of Minors Act.

**Section 1 (626.556, subd. 1)** modifies the public policy statement, by striking language stating that family assessment is the preferred response to alleged maltreatment reports, and providing that the health and safety of the children must be of paramount concern and it is the intent of the Legislature to protect children and promote child safety.

**Section 2 (626.556, subd. 2)** amends the definition of "physical abuse." Current law provides that the actions listed under this section are not reasonable or moderate if they are "done in anger or without regard to the safety of the child." The amendment strikes the qualifying language.

**Section 3 (626.556, subd. 3)** amends the headnote to reflect the content of the subdivision, strikes language that is moved to section 5 and section 7, and adds a paragraph referencing the language moved to section 7, regarding mandatory notification between law enforcement and local welfare agency.

**Section 4 (626.556, subd. 6a)** amends the statute that imposes disciplinary action for failing to report under section 7 by updating a cross-reference.

**Section 5 (626.556, subd. 7)** allows the agency receiving the report to consider collateral information, as narrowly defined in this subdivision, and previous reports that were not accepted for investigation or assessment when making screening decisions. This section strikes language passed last legislative session prohibiting the use of screened-out reports (reports that were not accepted for assessment or investigation) for any purpose other than offering social services, and adds language requiring that reports not accepted for assessment or investigation be maintained according to section 11. It also includes language providing for certain information regarding the disposition of reports to be given to reporters, which is moved from current law in section 3.

**Section 6 (626.556, subd. 7a)** requires child protection workers to follow the guidance provided in the child maltreatment screening guidelines when screening reports, and implement updated procedures and protocols. Any modifications to the screening guidelines by the county agency must be preapproved by the Commissioner of Human Services.

**Section 7 (626.556, subd. 10)** moves existing language from section 3 to this subdivision, requiring law enforcement and local welfare agencies to notify each other orally and in writing upon receipt of a report. One modification to this language is clarifying that a "report" includes those that were not accepted for assessment or investigation. The law enforcement and local welfare agencies are required to designate a person responsible for ensuring that the notification duties under this section are carried out.

**Section 8 (626.556, subd. 10e)** strikes language that allowed counties to modify definitions or criteria under this section.

**Section 9 (626.556, subd. 10j)** amends the law authorizing the release of relevant private data to mandated reporters with ongoing responsibility for the child to require the release of the data to a mandated reporter who made the report, unless the agency determines that providing the data would not be in the best interests of the child.

**Section 10 (626.556, subd. 10m)** requires the local welfare agency to consult with the county attorney to determine the appropriateness of filing a CHIPS petition if the family does not comply with a plan for child protective services or voluntary services may not provide sufficient protection for the child.

**Section 11 (626.556, subd. 11c)** requires all reports under this paragraph, which includes reports that were not accepted for assessment or investigation, family assessment cases, and investigation cases that did not result in a finding of maltreatment, to be maintained by the local welfare agency for five years. Requires the county agency to document why a report was not accepted for assessment or investigation.

**Section 12 (626.556, subd. 16)** requires the commissioner to develop a plan to perform quality assurance reviews of county screening practices and decisions, and provide oversight and guidance to ensure the consistent application of screening guidelines, thorough and appropriate screening decisions, and correct documentation and maintenance of reports. The commissioner must also produce an annual report of summary results of reviews, which must be provided to the chairs and ranking minority members of appropriate legislative committees.

**Section 13** requires the commissioner to update the child maltreatment screening guidelines by August 1, 2015, to require agencies to consider prior reports that were not accepted for assessment or investigation when screening a new report. This section also requires the commissioner to publish and distribute the updated guidelines by September 30, 2015, and ensure that agency staff have received training on updated guidelines. Agency staff must

implement the guidelines by October 1, 2015.

**Section 14** requires the commissioner to establish requirements for competency-based initial training, support, and continuing education for child protection supervisors.

**Section 15** is a revisor instructions, requiring the revisor to alphabetize the definitions in subdivision 2 of the act.