

By Mr. Johnston of Marshfield, petition of Philip W. Johnston that the Department of Public Welfare be required to accept anonymous protective services referrals and establish a toll free telephone for such protective services and referrals. Human Services and Elderly Affairs.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the Year One Thousand Nine Hundred and Eighty.

AN ACT REQUIRING THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WELFARE TO ACCEPT ANONYMOUS PROTECTIVE SERVICES REFERRALS AND TO ESTABLISH A TOLL FREE TELEPHONE FOR PROTECTIVE SERVICES REFERRALS.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Section 51A of chapter 119, as established by
2 section 5 of chapter 1076 of the acts of 1973, is hereby amended by
3 striking out the second paragraph of said section and inserting in
4 place thereof the following: —

5 Said reports shall contain the names and addresses of the child
6 and his parents or other person responsible for his care, if known;
7 the child's age; the child's sex; the nature and extent of the child's
8 injuries, abuse, maltreatment, or neglect, including any evidence of
9 prior injuries, abuse, maltreatment, or neglect; the circumstances
10 under which the person required to report first became aware of
11 the child's injuries, abuse, maltreatment or neglect; whatever
12 action, if any, was taken to treat, shelter, or otherwise assist the
13 child; the name of the person or persons, if known, making such
14 report; and any other information which the person reporting
15 believes might be helpful in establishing the cause of the injuries;
16 the identity of the person or persons responsible therefor; and
17 such other information as shall be required by the department.

1 SECTION 1. Said section 51A of said chapter 119, as so
2 established, is hereby further amended by striking out in the fourth
3 paragraph the first sentence and inserting in place thereof the
4 following: —

5 In addition to those persons required to report pursuant to this
6 section, any other person, including those who wish to remain
7 anonymous, may make such a report if any such person has
8 reasonable cause to believe that a child is suffering from or has died
9 as a result of such abuse or neglect.

1 SECTION 3. Section 51B of said chapter 119, as established by
2 section 5 of chapter 1076 of the acts of 1973, is hereby amended, in
3 line 2, by inserting after the word "reported" the following
4 words:— ,including those reports made by persons who wish to
5 remain anonymous.

1 SECTION 4. Said section 51B of said chapter 119, as so
2 established, is hereby further amended by inserting after
3 subparagraph (7), the following:—
4 (8) provided regional toll-free telephone lines for the purposes
5 of providing on a continual twenty-four basis access to the
6 department for any person making a report subject to the
7 provisions of section fifty-one A and for any parent or legal
8 guardian claiming he or she is about to be abusive. Crisis
9 intervention shall be provided to said parent or legal guardian and
10 may include telephone counselling, home visitation, and any other
11 service or referral deemed necessary by the parent and counsellor.