

620.040 Duties of prosecutor, police, and cabinet -- Prohibition as to school personnel -- Procedures -- Military status of parent or legal guardian -- Multidisciplinary teams.

- (1) (a) Upon receipt of a report alleging abuse or neglect of a child as defined in KRS 600.020 by a parent, guardian, fictive kin, person in a position of authority, person in a position of special trust, or person exercising custodial control or supervision, pursuant to KRS 620.030(1) or (2), or a report alleging a child is a victim of human trafficking pursuant to KRS 620.030(3), the recipient of the report shall immediately notify the cabinet or its designated representative, the local law enforcement agency or the Department of Kentucky State Police, and the Commonwealth's or county attorney of the receipt of the report. If any agency listed above is the reporting source, the recipient shall immediately notify the cabinet or its designated representative, the local law enforcement agency, the Department of Kentucky State Police, and the Commonwealth's or county attorney of the receipt of the report.
- (b) Based upon the allegation in the report, the cabinet shall immediately make an initial determination as to the risk of harm and immediate safety of the child. Based upon the level of risk determined, the cabinet shall investigate the allegation or accept the report for an assessment of family needs and, if appropriate, may provide or make referral to any community-based services necessary to reduce risk to the child and to provide family support. A report of sexual abuse or human trafficking of a child shall be considered high risk and shall not be referred to any other community agency.
- (c) In making the initial determination as to the risk of harm and immediate safety of the child pursuant to paragraph (b) of this subsection, the cabinet shall at a minimum:
 1. Consider the age and vulnerability of a child, particularly for ages five (5) years of age and under, when assessing allegations of abuse and neglect;
 2. Automatically accept for investigation a subsequent report from a professional reporting source, who makes a report pursuant to the requirements in KRS Chapter 620 that a child is abused or neglected and identifies himself or herself by name, title, and employer, when the same or similar allegation has been reported by one (1) or more unique professional reporting sources within the past thirty (30) days. For the purposes of this subparagraph "professional reporting source" means an individual who is a social worker, therapist, medical professional, educator, judge, attorney, law enforcement officer, or any other individual holding a degree or position in a field related to the safety and care of children; and
 3. Automatically accept for investigation a report from a court of appropriate jurisdiction that makes a report pursuant to the requirements in KRS Chapter 620 that a child is abused or neglected or identifies that the child is a plaintiff in an active emergency protective order or interpersonal protection order case.

- (d) The cabinet shall, within seventy-two (72) hours, exclusive of weekends and holidays, make a written report, including but not limited to electronic submissions, to the Commonwealth's or county attorney and the local law enforcement agency or the Department of Kentucky State Police concerning the action that has been taken on the investigation.
 - (e) If the report alleges abuse or neglect by someone other than a parent, guardian, fictive kin, person in a position of authority, person in a position of special trust, or person exercising custodial control or supervision, or the human trafficking of a child, the cabinet shall immediately notify the Commonwealth's or county attorney and the local law enforcement agency or the Department of Kentucky State Police.
- (2)
- (a) Upon receipt of a report alleging dependency pursuant to KRS 620.030(1) and (2), the recipient shall immediately notify the cabinet or its designated representative.
 - (b) Based upon the allegation in the report, the cabinet shall immediately make an initial determination as to the risk of harm and immediate safety of the child. Based upon the level of risk, the cabinet shall investigate the allegation or accept the report for an assessment of family needs and, if appropriate, may provide or make referral to any community-based services necessary to reduce risk to the child and to provide family support. A report of sexual abuse or human trafficking of a child shall be considered high risk and shall not be referred to any other community agency.
 - (c) In making the initial determination as to the risk of harm and immediate safety of the child pursuant to paragraph (b) of this subsection, the cabinet shall at a minimum:
 1. Consider the age and vulnerability of a child, particularly for ages five (5) years of age and under, when assessing allegations of dependency;
 2. Automatically accept for investigation a subsequent report from a professional reporting source, who makes a report pursuant to the requirements in KRS Chapter 620 that a child is dependent and identifies himself or herself by name, title, and employer, when the same or similar allegation has been reported by one (1) or more unique professional reporting sources within the past thirty (30) days. For the purposes of this subparagraph "professional reporting source" means an individual who is a social worker, therapist, medical professional, educator, judge, attorney, law enforcement officer, or any other individual holding a degree or position in a field related to the safety and care of children; and
 3. Automatically accept for investigation a report from a court of appropriate jurisdiction that makes a report pursuant to the requirements in KRS Chapter 620 that a child is dependent or identifies that the child is a plaintiff in an active emergency protective order or interpersonal protection order case.
 - (d) The cabinet need not notify the local law enforcement agency or the Department of Kentucky State Police or Commonwealth's or county attorney

of reports made under this subsection unless the report involves the human trafficking of a child, in which case the notification shall be required.

- (3) If the cabinet or its designated representative receives a report of abuse by a person other than a parent, guardian, fictive kin, person in a position of authority, person in a position of special trust, or other person exercising custodial control or supervision of a child, it shall immediately notify the local law enforcement agency or the Department of Kentucky State Police and the Commonwealth's or county attorney of the receipt of the report and its contents, and they shall investigate the matter. The cabinet or its designated representative shall participate in an investigation of noncustodial physical abuse or neglect at the request of the local law enforcement agency or the Department of Kentucky State Police. The cabinet shall participate in all investigations of reported or suspected sexual abuse or human trafficking of a child.
- (4) School personnel or other persons listed in KRS 620.030(2) do not have the authority to conduct internal investigations in lieu of the official investigations outlined in this section.
- (5)
 - (a) If, after receiving the report, the law enforcement officer, the cabinet, or its designated representative cannot gain admission to the location of the child, a search warrant shall be requested from, and may be issued by, the judge to the appropriate law enforcement official upon probable cause that the child is dependent, neglected, or abused. If, pursuant to a search under a warrant, a child is discovered and appears to be in imminent danger, the child may be removed by the law enforcement officer.
 - (b) If a child who is in a hospital or under the immediate care of a physician appears to be in imminent danger if he or she is returned to the persons having custody of him or her, the physician or hospital administrator may hold the child without court order, provided that a request is made to the court for an emergency custody order at the earliest practicable time, not to exceed seventy-two (72) hours.
 - (c) Any appropriate law enforcement officer may take a child into protective custody and may hold that child in protective custody without the consent of the parent or other person exercising custodial control or supervision if there exist reasonable grounds for the officer to believe that the child is in danger of imminent death or serious physical injury, is being sexually abused, or is a victim of human trafficking and that the parents or other person exercising custodial control or supervision are unable or unwilling to protect the child. The officer or the person to whom the officer entrusts the child shall, within twelve (12) hours of taking the child into protective custody, request the court to issue an emergency custody order.
 - (d) When a law enforcement officer, hospital administrator, or physician takes a child into custody without the consent of the parent or other person exercising custodial control or supervision, he or she shall provide written notice to the parent or other person stating the reasons for removal of the child. Failure of the parent or other person to receive notice shall not, by itself, be cause for civil or criminal liability.

- (e) 1. If a report includes a child fatality or near fatality, and the law enforcement officer has reasonable grounds to believe any parent or person exercising custodial control or supervision of the child was under the influence of alcohol or drugs at the time the fatality or near fatality occurred, the law enforcement officer shall request a test of blood, breath, or urine from that person.
 2. If, after making the request, consent is not given for the test of blood, breath, or urine, a search warrant shall be requested from and may be issued by the judge to the appropriate law enforcement official upon probable cause that a child fatality or near fatality has occurred and that the person exercising custodial control or supervision of the child at the time of the fatality or near fatality was under the influence.
 3. Any test requested under this section shall be conducted pursuant to the testing procedures and requirements in KRS 189A.103.
 - (6) The cabinet shall make efforts as soon as practicable to determine any military status of a parent or legal guardian of a child who is the subject of an investigation or assessment pursuant to this section. If the cabinet determines that the parent or legal guardian is a member of the United States Armed Forces, the cabinet shall notify the Department of Defense family advocacy program operating within the service member's assigned installation of the investigation or assessment and provide case information.
 - (7) To the extent practicable and when in the best interest of a child alleged to have been abused, interviews with the child shall be conducted at a children's advocacy center.
 - (8)
 - (a) One (1) or more multidisciplinary teams may be established in every county or group of contiguous counties.
 - (b) Membership of the multidisciplinary team shall include but shall not be limited to social service workers employed by the Cabinet for Health and Family Services and law enforcement officers. Additional team members may include Commonwealth's and county attorneys, children's advocacy center staff, mental health professionals, medical professionals, victim advocates including advocates for victims of human trafficking, educators, and other related professionals, as deemed appropriate.
 - (c) The multidisciplinary team shall review child sexual abuse cases and child human trafficking cases involving commercial sexual activity referred by participating professionals, including those in which the alleged perpetrator does not have custodial control or supervision of the child or is not responsible for the child's welfare. The purpose of the multidisciplinary team shall be to review investigations, assess service delivery, and to facilitate efficient and appropriate disposition of cases through the criminal justice system.
 - (d) The team shall hold regularly scheduled meetings if new reports of sexual abuse or child human trafficking cases involving commercial sexual activity are received or if active cases exist. At each meeting, each active case shall be presented and the agencies' responses assessed.

- (e) The multidisciplinary team shall provide an annual report to the public of nonidentifying case information to allow assessment of the processing and disposition of child sexual abuse cases and child human trafficking cases involving commercial sexual activity.
 - (f) Multidisciplinary team members and anyone invited by the multidisciplinary team to participate in a meeting shall not divulge case information, including information regarding the identity of the victim or source of the report. Team members and others attending meetings shall sign a confidentiality statement that is consistent with statutory prohibitions on disclosure of this information.
 - (g) The multidisciplinary team shall, pursuant to KRS 431.600 and 431.660, develop a local protocol consistent with the model protocol issued by the Kentucky Multidisciplinary Commission on Child Sexual Abuse. The local team shall submit the protocol to the commission for review and approval.
 - (h) The multidisciplinary team review of a case may include information from reports generated by agencies, organizations, or individuals that are responsible for investigation, prosecution, or treatment in the case, KRS 610.320 to KRS 610.340 notwithstanding.
 - (i) To the extent practicable, multidisciplinary teams shall be staffed by the local children's advocacy center.
- (9) Nothing in this section shall limit the cabinet's investigatory authority under KRS 620.050 or any other obligation imposed by law.

Effective: July 15, 2024

History: Amended 2024 Ky. Acts ch. 133, sec. 1, effective July 15, 2024; and ch. 144, sec. 6, effective July 15, 2024. -- Amended 2023 Ky. Acts ch. 107, sec. 3, effective June 29, 2023. -- Amended 2022 Ky. Acts ch. 139, sec. 1, effective July 14, 2022. -- Amended 2019 Ky. Acts ch. 33, sec. 10, effective June 27, 2019. -- Amended 2013 Ky. Acts ch. 25, sec. 3, effective June 25, 2013. -- Amended 2007 Ky. Acts ch. 85, sec. 331, effective June 26, 2007. -- Amended 2005 Ky. Acts ch. 99, sec. 665, effective June 20, 2005. -- Amended 2000 Ky. Acts ch. 14, sec. 63, effective July 14, 2000; ch. 144, sec. 6, effective July 14, 2000; and ch. 164, sec. 1, effective July 14, 2000. -- Amended 1998 Ky. Acts ch. 426, sec. 617, effective July 15, 1998. -- Amended 1996 Ky. Acts ch. 18, sec. 5, effective July 15, 1996. -- Amended 1994 Ky. Acts ch. 217, sec. 1, effective July 15, 1994. -- Amended 1992 Ky. Acts ch. 434, sec. 2, effective July 14, 1992. -- Amended 1990 Ky. Acts ch. 39, sec. 1, effective July 13, 1990. -- Amended 1988 Ky. Acts ch. 258, sec. 3, effective July 15, 1988; and ch. 350, sec. 44, effective April 10, 1988. -- Created 1986 Ky. Acts ch. 423, sec. 65, effective July 1, 1987.

Legislative Research Commission Note (7/15/2024). This statute was amended by 2024 Ky. Acts chs. 133 and 144, which do not appear to be in conflict and have been codified together.