



**SF 2225 - Mandatory Child Abuse Reporting Training Review Committee
Meeting Minutes: October 23, 2012**

Members:

Tina Flaherty, private practice (via telephone)
Joel Fry, Iowa House of Representatives
Carol Gutchewsky, Department of Human Services
David Hicks, Youth and Shelter Services
Diana Nicholls-Blomme, Iowa Department of Public Health (Facilitator)
Matt O'Loughlin, Starmont Consolidated School District
Stephen Scott, Prevent Child Abuse Iowa
Virginia Traxler, Des Moines Public Schools
Karin Ward, Mercy Child Advocacy Centers (via telephone)
Nancy Wells, Iowa Chapter Child Advocacy Centers

Other Attendees:

Kris Bell, Senate Democratic Caucus	Robin Misel, IDPH (Minutes)
Lori Brass, Des Moines Public Schools	Kathy Stone, IDPH (Minutes)
Amber DeSmet, Legislative Service Agency	Deborah Thompson, IDPH
Bridget Godes, Senate Democratic Caucus	Aaron Todd, Legislative Service Agency
Carrie Kobrinetz, Republican Caucus Staff	

1. Welcome and Introductions

The Review Committee convened in the Ola Babcock Miller Building in Des Moines, at 9:00 a.m. Introductions were made and Nicholls-Blomme welcomed attendees.

2. Overview of Senate File 2225

Nicholls Blomme provided an overview of SF 2225 and the legislative directive (*italics added*) to the Review Committee:

Senate File 2225 Sec. 7 Mandatory Child Abuse Reporter Training – Committee Review: A stakeholder committee shall be convened and staffed by the Department of Public Health to review the training resources for mandatory reporters of child abuse. *The review shall address the current training resources and identify options for increasing the frequency of the training and the availability of profession-specific training and for enhancing the effectiveness and quality of the training. The results of the review, including findings, recommendations, and cost projections, shall be submitted to the governor and general assembly on or before December 15, 2012.*

Handouts were provided and reviewed:

- Agenda
- Committee members contact list
- Letter from Governor Branstad dated March 30, 2012, approving SF 2225
- Codes on Training Hours
- Required Components for a New Abuse Curricula
- Child Abuse Curricula Used
- Combined Child and Dependent Adult Abuse Curricula Used

Current training resources were referenced and reviewed:

- Department of Public Health 93—Abuse Education Review Panel; Curricula Criteria
- Department of Human Services 232.69—Child Abuse Training; Child Abuse: A Guide for Mandatory Reporters
- Department of Human Services 235B.16—Dependent Adult Abuse Training; Dependent Adult Abuse: A Guide for Mandatory Reporters
- Usage of Approved Curricula

Nicholls-Blomme advised that all Committee materials would be posted to IDPH’s website. She also advised that she was a member of the Elder Abuse workgroup convened by the Department on Aging in response to the legislative directive in House File 2387 and that she would support alignment between the Committee and that workgroup.

The Committee discussed:

- a. the importance of accurate understanding of laws and legal definitions related to child abuse and mandatory reporting
- b. DHS responsibilities, processes, staff, and training
- c. issues that do not fall under DHS purview, such as children perpetrating against children or requests for welfare checks, and the potential roles of law enforcement and county attorneys
- d. the lack of services and supports in rural areas
- e. how these issues and “potential barriers and options” might be built into training

3. SF 2225 Directive: Identify Options for Increasing the Frequency of Training

Nicholls-Blomme reviewed requirements for two hours of training on child abuse and two hours of training on dependent adult abuse and explained that combined child/dependent adult training is also two hours. The following materials were referenced:

- Department of Human Services 232.69.3.b—Child Abuse Training
- Department of Human Services 235B.16.5.b—Dependent Adult Abuse Training
- Department of Human Services 235B.16.5.e—Combined Abuse Training
- Child Sexual Abuse Prevention Task Force 2012 Letter to the General Assembly

Committee members expressed concern about the quality of mandatory reporter training. It was suggested that some trainings that meet minimum requirements may not be high quality because

the trainer is not knowledgeable about the subject matter and can't respond adequately to attendee questions and concerns and real-life situations. Approval of training curricula is based on review of the curricula only and does not consider the qualifications of the trainer. On-line trainings are common and can be time-effective for practitioners, but may not be structured to support discussion, response to questions, or problem-solving.

Action: *Committee consensus was that training methods should meet the intent of the law, be effective, support engagement (as opposed to being just a check-off), and be faithful to curricula content, whether provided on-line, in-house or through general training. The Committee will discuss training effectiveness and quality and recommendations for improvement at the December meeting.*

Committee discussion on the **frequency of training** addressed:

- a. eliminating the two-hour combined child and dependent abuse training option
- b. inclusion of basic problem-solving in trainings, e.g. how to talk to parents/caregivers when a situation does not meet the definition of abuse
- c. requirements for orienting new employees to abuse reporting policies within the first 30 days of employment, with initial full training by a provider with an IDPH approval number within six months and subsequent full training every five years thereafter.
- d. need for clarification on situations where re-training in less than five years might be required, e.g. not required when changing employers but required if changing professions?

Action: *Clarify legal requirements for re-taking training, if any, and include in training curricula.*

- e. establishing tiers or levels of training depending on a person's practice or work setting, frequency of reporting, etc. The specific criteria could be difficult to determine?
- f. "renewal" or "booster" training at some point following a new employee's initial full training, with curricula content that would make the renewal training more specific to attendees' work settings and responsibilities
- g. complex scenarios such as:
 - infrequent reporters who miss a case of abuse and don't make a report
 - poorly trained individuals making frequent, inappropriate reports
 - individuals who try to make appropriate, required reports but are "overruled" by "interveners" like a supervisor or hospital administrator or school principal. (The legislature has attempted to address similar concerns by saying employers can't have policies that deter or limit reporting.)
 - a nurse making a report because the doctor who should be making the report has directed the nurse to do it instead
 - staff reluctance to report "good families"

There are about 300,000 mandatory reporters in Iowa, representing many different categories of workers: coaches, counselors, dieticians, maintenance staff, nurses, teachers, therapists, etc.

Action: *Carol Gutchewsky will see if a report is available that breaks down reporting by type of worker making the report.*

- h. mandatory reporting requirements for specific professions (social work, teaching, etc.) and professional continuing education requirements. The current 5-year training requirement may not always be a good fit with re-credentialing timeframes and

clarification is needed on whether mandatory reporting training hours count toward specific professions' continuing education hours.

- i. tracking training hours is the responsibility of the employer and the employer can take disciplinary action if an employee doesn't meet requirements. Who tracks training if an employee leaves one job or profession and goes to another?

Action: *Committee consensus was that each individual should be responsible to ensure their training requirements are met and that employers should request documentation of training from new employees.*

Review Committee Recommendations: Frequency of Training

- 1. **Add a 90-minute “Booster” training** at 24-36 months to the current mandatory reporting training requirements for those employees who are certified, licensed, or otherwise approved to provide services to youth and families. Resultant required trainings would be as follows:

Requirement	Current or New?	Impacted Staff	Timeframe
Orientation to Mandatory Reporting Policies	Current	All new employees subject to reporting requirements	Within 30 days of hire
Initial Mandatory Reporting Training	Current	All new employees subject to reporting requirements	2 hours within 6 months of hire
<i>Booster Mandatory Reporting Training</i>	<i>New</i>	<i>Employees certified, licensed, or otherwise approved to provide services to youth and families</i>	<i>90 minutes within 24-36 months of Initial Mandatory Reporting Training</i>
Mandatory Reporting Training	Current	All employees subject to reporting requirements	2 hours within 5 years of Initial or Booster Mandatory Reporting Training

- 2. **Booster Training will differ from Mandatory Reporting Training** as follows:
 - a. Booster Training will emphasize interaction and problem-solving.
 - b. Booster Training will focus on the following specific Required Components for a New Abuse Curriculum:
 - “2. A description of the physical, psychological, behavioral, environmental, and other relevant indicators of child abuse, or dependent adult abuse, or both.”
 - “3. A review of the requirements and procedures for reporting suspected cases of abuse, including when to report, how to report, and to whom to report.” *The review should address attendee questions, concerns, and experiences to-date.*

- “6. An evaluation component to assess the understanding, knowledge, and skills acquired by the participants.”
- “7. Resource materials or information in each of the following areas:
 - (a.) The causes and risk factors of child abuse, or dependent adult abuse, or both;
 - (b.) Assisting individuals and families who have experienced child abuse, or dependent adult abuse, or both, including information on local resources and available referral services;
 - (c.) Prevention of child abuse, or dependent adult abuse, or both.”

c. include a standardized hand-out, preferably a “wallet card”, on Required Components 1, 3, and 4 (described below) with training specifically addressing any Code changes.

- “1. ... the meaning of child abuse as defined in Iowa Code section 232.68(2) or the meaning of dependent adult abuse as defined in Iowa Code section 235B.2(5), or both.”
- “3. ... the requirements and procedures for reporting suspected cases of abuse, including when to report, how to report, and to whom to report.”
- “4. ... the Code of Iowa and the Iowa Administrative Code pertaining to child abuse, or dependent adult abuse, or both, including a review of the classifications of mandatory reporters, confidentiality provisions, immunity provisions, and penalties for failure to report.”

3. While specifically required for employees who are certified, licensed, or otherwise approved to work with youth and families, the Committee recommends that **Booster training should be available to any individual subject to mandatory reporting requirements.**

4. The Committee acknowledges that certifying, licensing, and credentialing entities hold final authority for their specific continuing education requirements, but further recommends that **Booster training should be accepted as professional continuing education hours, but should not lead to an expansion in the number of hours of continuing education required.**

4. SF 2225 Directive: Identify Options for Increasing Availability of Profession-Specific Training

The Committee began discussion of profession-specific training, with continued discussion planned for December 4 meeting.

5. Next Meeting

The second Committee meeting will be December 4, from Noon-4:30 pm, in Room 310 (Forrest Spaulding Conference Room) in the Ola Babcock Miller Building on the Capitol Complex. Call-in capability will be available.

Agenda items will include:

- Availability of Profession-Specific Training - Discussion and Recommendations
- Enhancing the Effectiveness and Quality of Training - Discussion and Recommendations (Including: additions to training content/curricula, on-line training, trainer qualifications and standards, corollary activities for DHS)