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WELFARE AND INSTITUTIONS CODE - WIC

DIVISION 9. PUBLIC SOCIAL SERVICES [10000 - 18999.98] (*Division 9 added by Stats. 1965, Ch. 1784.*)

PART 4. SERVICES FOR THE CARE OF CHILDREN [16000 - 16589] (*Heading of Part 4 amended by Stats. 1978, Ch. 429.*)

CHAPTER 5.2. Commercially Sexually Exploited Children Program [16524.6 - 16524.11] (*Chapter 5.2 added by Stats. 2014, Ch. 29, Sec. 79.*)

16524.6. The Legislature finds and declares that in order to reduce the vulnerability of all children in California communities to incidents of commercial sexual exploitation, and adequately serve children who have been sexually exploited, it is necessary that counties develop and utilize a multidisciplinary team approach to early identification, prevention education, case management, service planning, and provision of services, and that counties develop and utilize interagency protocols to ensure services are provided as needed to this population.

(Amended by Stats. 2017, Ch. 558, Sec. 5. (AB 1227) Effective January 1, 2018.)

16524.7. (a) (1) There is hereby established the Commercially Sexually Exploited Children Program. This program shall be administered by the State Department of Social Services.

(2) The department, in consultation with the County Welfare Directors Association of California, shall develop an allocation methodology to distribute funding for the program. Funds allocated pursuant to this section shall be utilized to cover expenditures related to the costs of implementing the program, prevention and intervention services, and training related to children who are, or may become, victims of commercial sexual exploitation.

(3) (A) Funds shall be provided to counties that elect to participate in the program for the provision of training to county children's services workers to identify, intervene, and provide case management services to children who are victims of commercial sexual exploitation and trafficking, as applicable, and to foster caregivers for the prevention and identification of potential victims.

(B) The department shall contract to provide training for county workers and foster caregivers. Training shall be selected and contracted for in consultation with the County Welfare Directors Association, county children's services representatives, and other stakeholders. The department shall consult and collaborate with the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office to provide training for foster parents of licensed foster family homes.

(4) Funds provided to the counties electing to participate in the program shall be used for prevention activities, which includes training county workers, intervention activities, and services to children who are victims, or at risk of becoming victims, of commercial sexual exploitation. These activities and services may include, but are not limited to, all of the following:

(A) Educating foster children to help recognize and help avoid commercial sexual exploitation. Counties may target educational activities to foster children who are at higher risk of commercial sexual exploitation.

(B) Engaging survivors of commercial sexual exploitation to do all of the following:

(i) Provide support to county staff who serve children who are victims of commercial sexual exploitation.

(ii) Participate in activities that may include education, training, and technical assistance.

(iii) Serve as advocates for and perform outreach and support to children who are victims of commercial sexual exploitation.

(C) Consulting and coordinating with homeless youth shelters and other service providers who work with children who are disproportionately at risk of, or involved in, commercial sexual exploitation, including, but not limited to, lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender youth organizations, regarding outreach and support to children who are victims of commercial sexual exploitation.

(D) Hiring county staff trained and specialized to work with children who are victims of commercial sexual exploitation to support victims and their caregivers, and to provide case management to support interagency and cross-departmental response.

(E) Providing supplemental foster care rates for placement of child victims of commercial sexual exploitation adjudged to be within the definition of Section 300, to foster homes, relatives, foster family agency certified homes, or other specialized placements for the increased care and supervision needs of the victim in accordance with Section 11460.

(b) Funds allocated for the program shall not supplant funds for existing programs.

(c) (1) In order to ensure timely access to services to which commercially sexually exploited children are entitled as dependents in foster care, in participating counties, county agency representatives from mental health, probation, public health, and substance abuse disorders shall participate in the case planning and assist in linking commercially sexually exploited children to services that serve children who are in the child welfare system and that are identified in the child's case plan and may include other stakeholders as determined by the county.

(2) The entities described in paragraph (1) shall provide input to the child welfare services agency regarding the services and supports needed for these children to support treatment needs and aid in their recovery and may assist in linking these children to services that are consistent with their county plans submitted to the department pursuant to subdivision (d).

(d) (1) A county electing to receive funding from the Commercially Sexually Exploited Children Program pursuant to this chapter shall submit a plan describing how the county intends to utilize the funds allocated pursuant to paragraph (4) of subdivision (a).

(2) (A) The county shall submit a plan to the department pursuant to a process developed by the department, in consultation with the County Welfare Directors Association. The plan shall include documentation indicating the county's collaboration with county partner agencies, educational entities, and children-focused entities, which shall include the formation of a multidisciplinary team to serve children pursuant to this chapter.

(B) A multidisciplinary team serving a child pursuant to this chapter shall include, but is not limited to, appropriate staff from the county child welfare, probation, mental health, substance abuse disorder, and public health departments. Staff from a local provider of services to this population, local education agencies, and local law enforcement, and survivors of commercial sexual exploitation and trafficking may be included on the team.

(Amended by Stats. 2017, Ch. 558, Sec. 6. (AB 1227) Effective January 1, 2018.)

16524.8. (a) (1) Each county electing to receive funds from the Commercially Sexually Exploited Children Program pursuant to this chapter shall develop an interagency protocol to be utilized in serving sexually exploited children. The county protocol shall be developed by a team led by a representative of the county human services department and shall include representatives from each of the following agencies:

(A) The county probation department.

(B) The county mental health department.

(C) The county public health department.

(D) The juvenile court in the county.

(E) The county office of education.

(F) The county sheriff's department.

(2) The team may include, but shall not be limited to, representatives from local education agencies, local law enforcement, survivors of sexual exploitation, and other providers as necessary.

(b) At a minimum, the interagency protocol shall address the provision of services to children who have been sexually exploited and are within the definition of Section 300, including, but not limited to, the use of a multidisciplinary team approach to provide coordinated case management, service planning, and services to these children.

(c) Counties that developed a protocol prior to the inclusion of county offices of education and county sheriff's departments as required partners pursuant to this section may, but are not required to, revise protocols to reflect input by these entities.

(Amended by Stats. 2017, Ch. 558, Sec. 7. (AB 1227) Effective January 1, 2018.)

16524.9. (a) The State Department of Social Services, in consultation with the County Welfare Directors Association, shall ensure that the statewide child welfare information system is capable of collecting data concerning children who are commercially sexually exploited, including children who are referred to the child abuse hotline and children currently served by county child welfare and probation departments who are subsequently identified as victims of commercial sexual exploitation.

(b) The department shall disseminate any necessary instructions on data entry to the county child welfare and probation department staff.

(c) The department shall implement this section no later than June 1, 2018.

(Amended by Stats. 2022, Ch. 50, Sec. 77. (SB 187) Effective June 30, 2022.)

16524.10. The State Department of Social Services, no later than April 1, 2017, shall provide the following information to the Legislature regarding the implementation of this chapter:

(a) The participating counties.

(b) The number of victims served by each county.

(c) The types of services provided.

(d) Innovative strategies relating to collaboration with children, child service providers, and survivors of commercial sexual exploitation regarding prevention, training, and services.

(e) The identification of further barriers and challenges to preventing and serving commercially sexually exploited children.

(Added by Stats. 2014, Ch. 29, Sec. 79. (SB 855) Effective June 20, 2014. Operative January 1, 2015, pursuant to Section 16524.11.)

16524.11. This chapter shall become operative on January 1, 2015.

(Added by Stats. 2014, Ch. 29, Sec. 79. (SB 855) Effective June 20, 2014. Note: This section prescribes a delayed operative date (January 1, 2015) for Chapter 5.2, commencing with Section 16524.6.)