



2020 South Dakota Legislature

Senate Bill 20

Introduced by: The Committee on Health and Human Services at the request of the Department of Social Services

1 **An Act to create a monitor to review and respond to complaints related to the care**
 2 **provided to youth in the custody or care of certain care facilities, treatment**
 3 **centers, and programs.**

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF SOUTH DAKOTA:

5 **Section 1.** That a NEW SECTION be added:

6 **26-6-1.2. Definitions.**

7 Terms used in this chapter mean:

- 8 (1) "Shelter care facility," a group care center that provides short-term, full-time care
 9 for children often placed under emergency conditions;
 10 (2) "Records," reports prepared or received by any staff of a licensed shelter care
 11 facility, group care center, residential treatment center, intensive residential
 12 treatment center, or independent living preparation program.

13 **Section 2.** That a NEW SECTION be added:

14 **26-6-51. Monitor--Designation--Primary duty.**

15 The secretary of the Department of Social Services may designate a person or
 16 entity to serve as the monitor and whose primary responsibility is to receive and resolve
 17 complaints related to the quality of care provided to youth placed in the custody or care
 18 of any of the following:

- 19 (1) An intensive residential treatment center, a residential treatment center, or a group
 20 care center, as defined in § 26-6-14;
 21 (2) An independent living preparation program as defined in § 26-6-14; or
 22 (3) A shelter care facility as defined in this section.

23 **Section 3.** That a NEW SECTION be added:

1 **26-6-52. Monitor--Powers and duties.**

2 The monitor designated as provided in § 26-6-51 shall:

- 3 (1) Investigate and resolve complaints related to the quality of care provided to youth
4 placed in the custody or care of a facility, center, or program as provided in § 26-
5 6-51;
- 6 (2) Access any youth in the custody or care of a facility, center, or program as provided
7 in § 26-6-51 and any person in the employ of a facility, center, or program as
8 provided in § 26-6-51;
- 9 (3) Access any records of or relating to any youth in the custody or care of a facility,
10 center, or program as provided in § 26-6-51;
- 11 (4) Provide an annual report to the secretary of the Department of Social Services that
12 reflects the number of referrals to the monitor, the number of investigations
13 completed, and a summary of other activities performed by the monitor;
- 14 (5) Provide reasonable notification of the existence and role of the monitor to any
15 youth in the custody or care of a facility, center, or program as provided in § 26-
16 6-51, and to the youth's custodial parent or guardian; and
- 17 (6) Provide recommendations for corrective action to address any complaint received
18 related to the quality of care provided to the youth.

19 **Section 4.** That a NEW SECTION be added:

20 **26-6-53. Findings of abuse or neglect--Report.**

21 If the monitor has reasonable cause to suspect that a youth under the age of
22 eighteen has been abused or neglected as defined in § 26-8A-2, the monitor shall
23 immediately report that information to the Division of Child Protection of the Department
24 of Social Services. Any investigation conducted by the monitor shall be independent and
25 separate from any investigation required in § 26-8A-9.

26 **Section 5.** That a NEW SECTION be added:

27 **26-6-54. Persons requesting assistance--Identity--Confidentiality.**

28 For purposes of any audit, report, evaluation, or public testimony that may be
29 permitted or required under §§ 26-6-52 to 26-6-57, inclusive, no disclosure of the identity
30 of, or any other personally identifiable information related to, any youth or any person
31 requesting assistance under §§ 26-6-52 to 26-6-57, inclusive, may be required. The
32 identity of any person making a report to the monitor is confidential.

1 **Section 6.** That a NEW SECTION be added:

2 **26-6-55. Hinderance of monitor--Violation as misdemeanor.**

3 A person who knowingly hinders the lawful actions of the monitor is guilty of a
4 Class 1 misdemeanor.

5 **Section 7.** That a NEW SECTION be added:

6 **26-6-56. Retaliatory acts--Prohibition--Violation as misdemeanor.**

7 No state agency, facility, center, or program as provided in § 26-6-51, and no
8 individual acting for a state agency or a facility, center, or program as provided in § 26-
9 6-51 may take any adverse action against an individual in retaliation because the
10 individual cooperated with or provided information to the monitor. A violation of this
11 section is a Class 1 misdemeanor.

12 **Section 8.** That a NEW SECTION be added:

13 **26-6-57. Persons making report--Identity--Confidentiality.**

14 The identity of the youth and of any person or agency making a report to the
15 monitor is confidential.