



PA 26-25—sSB 157
Committee on Children

AN ACT CONCERNING MUNICIPAL CAMP SAFETY

SUMMARY: This act specifies that the existing mandated reporter requirement for youth camp staff applies to camps operated by a municipal agency. By law, people in many designated occupations or professions who have contact with children are mandated reporters with a legal duty to report suspected cases of child abuse and neglect (see BACKGROUND).

Prior law designated all paid youth camp staff (including a director or assistant director) age 21 or older as mandated reporters, but it did not specify if this applied to both licensed and license-exempt municipal camps. The act expressly states that it does.

The act also requires the Office of Early Childhood (OEC), in consultation with three state-wide organizations, to develop a report with details about each municipal youth camp in the state and submit it to the Committee on Children by January 1, 2027.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2026, except the youth camp report requirement is effective upon passage.

YOUTH CAMP REPORT

The act requires OEC, in consultation with a state-wide (1) association advocating on behalf of municipal parks and recreation departments, (2) organization advocating for small towns, and (3) organization of municipal leaders, to submit a report on Connecticut municipal youth camps to the Committee on Children. The report is due by January 1, 2027, and must at least include a list of each municipal youth camp in the state and details for each camp about:

1. the physical environment, facilities, and settings;
2. the number and age range of children served in the prior year;
3. the number of employees in the prior year;
4. the operating schedule for the prior year, including the dates when children attended;
5. any requirements for employee training, including frequency, in emergency first aid or cardiopulmonary resuscitation;
6. whether employees are authorized to administer medication to children and if they offer employee training for administering medication;
7. whether child care assistance subsidy payments are accepted (Care 4 Kids);
8. whether it has written policies and procedures for (a) employee hiring and training, including if they do criminal background checks on prospective or current employees, and (b) facilities and equipment safety and maintenance; and

OLR PUBLIC ACT SUMMARY

9. the extent to which these written policies and procedures meet the regulatory requirements for OEC-licensed youth camps.

BACKGROUND

Mandated Reporters

The mandated reporter law imposes a legal duty on specified occupations or individuals (for example, doctors, nurses, athletic coaches, social workers, and school employees) to report to the appropriate authorities any reasonable suspicion or belief that a child is being abused or neglected.

By law, a mandated reporter's failure to report suspected child abuse or neglect within a statutorily set time is a class A misdemeanor. But it is a class E felony if the (1) violation is a repeat violation; (2) violation is willful, intentional, or due to gross negligence; or (3) mandated reporter had actual knowledge that a child was abused or neglected, or a student was the victim of sexual assault (CGS § 17a-101o(d)).