

Representative Christine F. Watkins proposes the following substitute bill:

CHILD ABUSE AND ENDANGERMENT AMENDMENTS

2020 GENERAL SESSION

STATE OF UTAH

Chief Sponsor: Christine F. Watkins

Senate Sponsor: _____

LONG TITLE

General Description:

This bill modifies provisions relating to child abuse and neglect and endangerment of a child or vulnerable adult.

Highlighted Provisions:

This bill:

- ▶ defines terms;
- ▶ for the offense of endangerment of a child or vulnerable adult:
 - modifies the circumstances under which an individual may be found guilty of the offense; and
 - clarifies the circumstances under which an affirmative defense is applicable;
- ▶ modifies provisions relating to a finding of abuse or neglect in a child welfare case based on the parent's or guardian's use of cannabis; and
- ▶ makes technical changes.

Money Appropriated in this Bill:

None

Other Special Clauses:

None

Utah Code Sections Affected:



26 AMENDS:

27 **76-5-112.5**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2011, Chapter 320

28 **78A-6-115**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2019, First Special Session, Chapter 5

29

30 *Be it enacted by the Legislature of the state of Utah:*

31 Section 1. Section **76-5-112.5** is amended to read:

32 **76-5-112.5. Endangerment of a child or vulnerable adult.**

33 (1) As used in this section:

34 (a) (i) "Chemical substance" means:

35 (A) a substance intended to be used as a precursor in the manufacture of a controlled
36 substance;

37 (B) a substance intended to be used in the manufacture of a controlled substance; or

38 (C) any fumes or by-product resulting from the manufacture of a controlled substance.

39 (ii) Intent under this Subsection (1)(a) may be demonstrated by:

40 (A) the use, quantity, or manner of storage of the substance; or

41 (B) the proximity of the substance to other precursors or to manufacturing equipment.

42 (b) "Child" means ~~[a human being]~~ an individual who is under 18 years of age.

43 (c) "Controlled substance" ~~[is as]~~ means the same as that term is defined in Section
44 **58-37-2**.

45 (d) "Drug paraphernalia" ~~[is as]~~ means the same as that term is defined in Section
46 **58-37a-3**.

47 (e) "Exposed to" means that the child or vulnerable adult:

48 (i) is able to access ~~[or view]~~ an unlawfully possessed:

49 (A) controlled substance; or

50 (B) chemical substance;

51 (ii) has the reasonable capacity to access drug paraphernalia; or

52 (iii) is able to smell an odor produced during, or as a result of, the manufacture or
53 production of a controlled substance.

54 (f) "Prescription" ~~[is as]~~ means the same as that term is defined in Section **58-37-2**.

55 (g) "Vulnerable adult" ~~[is as]~~ means the same as that term is defined in Subsection
56 **76-5-111(1)**.

57 (2) Unless a greater penalty is otherwise provided by law:

58 (a) except as provided in ~~[Subsection]~~ Subsections (2)(b) ~~[or]~~, (c), ~~[a person]~~, and (3),
59 an individual is guilty of a felony of the third degree if the ~~[person]~~ individual knowingly or
60 intentionally causes or permits a child or a vulnerable adult to be exposed to, inhale, ingest, or
61 have contact with a controlled substance, chemical substance, or drug paraphernalia;

62 (b) except as provided in Subsection (2)(c) and (3), ~~[a person]~~ an individual is guilty of
63 a felony of the second degree, if:

64 (i) the ~~[person]~~ individual engages in the conduct described in Subsection (2)(a); and

65 (ii) as a result of the conduct described in Subsection (2)(a)~~[-a]~~, the child or [a] the
66 vulnerable adult suffers bodily injury, substantial bodily injury, or serious bodily injury; or

67 (c) ~~[a person]~~ an individual is guilty of a felony of the first degree, if:

68 (i) the ~~[person]~~ individual engages in the conduct described in Subsection (2)(a); and

69 (ii) as a result of the conduct described in Subsection (2)(a)~~[-a]~~, the child or [a] the
70 vulnerable adult dies.

71 (3) Notwithstanding Subsection (2), a child may not be subjected to delinquency
72 proceedings for a violation of Subsection (2) unless:

73 (a) the child is 15 years old or older; and

74 (b) the other child who is exposed to or inhales, ingests, or has contact with the
75 controlled substance, chemical substance, or drug paraphernalia, is under 12 years old.

76 ~~[(3)]~~ (4) It is an affirmative defense to a violation of this section that the controlled
77 substance:

78 (a) was obtained by lawful prescription or in accordance with Title 26, Chapter 61a,
79 Utah Medical Cannabis Act; and

80 (b) is used or possessed by the ~~[person]~~ individual to whom ~~[it]~~ the controlled
81 substance was lawfully prescribed or recommended to under Title 26, Chapter 61a, Utah
82 Medical Cannabis Act.

83 (4) The penalties described in this section are separate from, and in addition to, the
84 penalties and enhancements described in Title 58, Occupations and Professions.

85 Section 2. Section **78A-6-115** is amended to read:

86 **78A-6-115. Hearings -- Record -- County attorney or district attorney**
87 **responsibilities -- Attorney general responsibilities -- Disclosure -- Admissibility of**

88 **evidence -- Medical cannabis.**

89 (1) (a) A verbatim record of the proceedings shall be taken in all cases that might result
90 in deprivation of custody as defined in this chapter. In all other cases a verbatim record shall
91 also be made unless dispensed with by the court.

92 (b) (i) For purposes of this Subsection (1)(b):

93 (A) "Record of a proceeding" does not include documentary materials of any type
94 submitted to the court as part of the proceeding, including items submitted under Subsection
95 (4)(a).

96 (B) "Subjects of the record" includes the child's guardian ad litem, the child's legal
97 guardian, the Division of Child and Family Services, and any other party to the proceeding.

98 [(i)] (ii) Notwithstanding any other provision, including Title 63G, Chapter 2,
99 Government Records Access and Management Act, the court shall release a record of a
100 proceeding made under Subsection (1)(a) [~~shall be released by the court~~] to any person upon a
101 finding on the record for good cause.

102 [(ii)] (iii) Following a petition for a record of a proceeding made under Subsection
103 (1)(a), the court shall:

104 (A) provide notice to all subjects of the record that a request for release of the record
105 has been made; and

106 (B) allow sufficient time for the subjects of the record to respond before making a
107 finding on the petition.

108 [(iii)] (iv) A record of a proceeding may not be released under this Subsection (1)(b) if
109 the court's jurisdiction over the subjects of the proceeding ended more than 12 months before
110 the day on which the request is made.

111 [~~(iv) For purposes of this Subsection (1)(b):]~~

112 [~~(A) "record of a proceeding" does not include documentary materials of any type~~
113 ~~submitted to the court as part of the proceeding, including items submitted under Subsection~~
114 ~~(4)(a), and]~~

115 [~~(B) "subjects of the record" includes the child's guardian ad litem, the child's legal~~
116 ~~guardian, the Division of Child and Family Services, and any other party to the proceeding.]~~

117 (2) (a) Except as provided in Subsection (2)(b), the county attorney or, if within a
118 prosecution district, the district attorney shall represent the state in any proceeding in a minor's

119 case.

120 (b) Subject to the attorney general's prosecutorial discretion in civil enforcement
121 actions, the attorney general shall enforce all provisions of Title 62A, Chapter 4a, Child and
122 Family Services, and this chapter, relating to:

123 (i) protection or custody of an abused, neglected, or dependent child; and

124 (ii) petitions for termination of parental rights.

125 (c) The attorney general shall represent the Division of Child and Family Services in
126 actions involving a minor who is not adjudicated as abused or neglected, but who is receiving
127 in-home family services under Section 78A-6-117.5. Nothing in this Subsection (2)(c) may be
128 construed to affect the responsibility of the county attorney or district attorney to represent the
129 state in those matters, in accordance with Subsection (2)(a).

130 (3) The board may adopt special rules of procedure to govern proceedings involving
131 violations of traffic laws or ordinances, wildlife laws, and boating laws. However, proceedings
132 involving offenses under Section 78A-6-606 are governed by that section regarding suspension
133 of driving privileges.

134 (4) (a) For the purposes of determining proper disposition of the minor in dispositional
135 hearings and establishing the fact of abuse, neglect, or dependency in adjudication hearings and
136 in hearings upon petitions for termination of parental rights, written reports and other material
137 relating to the minor's mental, physical, and social history and condition may be received in
138 evidence and may be considered by the court along with other evidence. The court may require
139 that the [person] individual who wrote the report or prepared the material appear as a witness if
140 the [person] individual is reasonably available.

141 (b) For the purpose of determining proper disposition of a minor alleged to be or
142 adjudicated as abused, neglected, or dependent, dispositional reports prepared by the division
143 under Section 78A-6-315 may be received in evidence and may be considered by the court
144 along with other evidence. The court may require any [person] individual who participated in
145 preparing the dispositional report to appear as a witness, if the [person] individual is reasonably
146 available.

147 (5) (a) In an abuse, neglect, or dependency proceeding occurring after the
148 commencement of a shelter hearing under Section 78A-6-306 or the filing of a petition under
149 Section 78A-6-304, each party to the proceeding shall provide in writing to the other parties or

150 their counsel any information which the party:

151 (i) plans to report to the court at the proceeding; or

152 (ii) could reasonably expect would be requested of the party by the court at the
153 proceeding.

154 (b) The disclosure required under Subsection (5)(a) shall be made:

155 (i) for dispositional hearings under Sections 78A-6-311 and 78A-6-312, no less than
156 five days before the proceeding;

157 (ii) for proceedings under Chapter 6, Part 5, Termination of Parental Rights Act, in
158 accordance with Utah Rules of Civil Procedure; and

159 (iii) for all other proceedings, no less than five days before the proceeding.

160 (c) If a party to a proceeding obtains information after the deadline in Subsection
161 (5)(b), the information is exempt from the disclosure required under Subsection (5)(a) if the
162 party certifies to the court that the information was obtained after the deadline.

163 (d) Subsection (5)(a) does not apply to:

164 (i) pretrial hearings; and

165 (ii) the frequent, periodic review hearings held in a dependency drug court case to
166 assess and promote the parent's progress in substance use disorder treatment.

167 (6) For the purpose of establishing the fact of abuse, neglect, or dependency, the court
168 may, in [its] the court's discretion, consider evidence of statements made by a child under eight
169 years of age to [~~a person~~] an individual in a trust relationship.

170 (7) (a) As used in this Subsection (7):

171 (i) "Cannabis" means the same as that term is defined in Section 26-61a-102.

172 [(i)] (ii) "Cannabis product" means the same as that term is defined in Section
173 26-61a-102.

174 (iii) (A) "Chronic" means repeated or patterned.

175 (B) "Chronic" does not mean an isolated incident.

176 [(i)] (iv) "Dosing parameters" means the same as that term is defined in Section
177 26-61a-102.

178 [(i)] (v) "Medical cannabis" means the same as that term is defined in Section
179 26-61a-102.

180 [(i)] (vi) "Medical cannabis cardholder" means the same as that term is defined in

181 Section 26-61a-102.

182 ~~[(v)]~~ (vii) "Qualified medical provider" means the same as that term is defined in
183 Section 26-61a-102.

184 (b) In any child welfare proceeding in which the court makes a finding, determination,
185 or otherwise considers an individual's possession or use of medical cannabis, a cannabis
186 product, or a medical cannabis device, the court may not consider or treat the individual's
187 possession or use any differently than the lawful possession or use of any prescribed controlled
188 substance if the individual's use or possession complies with:

- 189 (i) Title 4, Chapter 41a, Cannabis Production Establishments;
- 190 (ii) the individual's possession or use complies with Subsection 58-37-3.7(2) or (3); or
- 191 (iii) (A) the individual's possession or use complies with Title 26, Chapter 61a, Utah
192 Medical Cannabis Act; and

193 (B) the individual reasonably complies with the dosing parameters determined by the
194 individual's qualified medical provider or through a consultation described in Subsection
195 26-61a-502(4) or (5).

196 (c) A parent's or guardian's use of cannabis or a cannabis product is not abuse or
197 neglect of a child under Section 78A-6-105 if:

- 198 (i) there is no evidence showing that:
- 199 (A) the child is harmed because of the child's inhalation or ingestion of cannabis, or
200 because of cannabis being introduced to the child's body in another manner; or
- 201 (B) the child is at an unreasonable risk of harm because of chronic inhalation or
202 ingestion of cannabis or chronic introduction of cannabis to the child's body in another manner;

203 or

204 (ii) there is no evidence showing a nexus between the parent's or guardian's use of
205 cannabis or a cannabis product and behavior that would separately constitute abuse or neglect
206 of the child.

207 ~~[(e)]~~ (d) A parent's or guardian's use of medical cannabis or a cannabis product is not
208 ~~[abuse or neglect of a child under Section 78A-6-105, nor is it]~~ contrary to the best interests of
209 a child~~;~~ if:

210 (i) ~~[(A)]~~ for a medical cannabis cardholder after January 1, 2021, the parent's or
211 guardian's possession or use complies with Title 26, Chapter 61a, Utah Medical Cannabis Act,

212 and there is no evidence that the parent's or guardian's use of medical cannabis unreasonably
213 deviates from the dosing parameters determined by the parent's or guardian's qualified medical
214 provider or through a consultation described in Subsection 26-61a-502(4) or (5); or

215 ~~[(B)]~~ (ii) before January 1, 2021, the parent's or guardian's possession or use complies
216 with Subsection 58-37-3.7(2) or (3)~~;~~~~and~~].

217 ~~[(ii) (A) there is no evidence showing that the child has inhaled, ingested, or otherwise
218 had cannabis introduced to the child's body; or]~~

219 ~~[(B) there is no evidence showing a nexus between the parent's or guardian's use of
220 medical cannabis or a cannabis product and behavior that would separately constitute abuse or
221 neglect of the child.]~~