

SB 210 -2 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Senate Committee On Human Services

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Meeting Dates: 3/1, 3/6

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Requires the Department of Human Services (DHS) to study exceptions to mandatory abuse reporting requirements for department employees that provide assistance to victims of domestic abuse and report to the Legislative Assembly by September 15, 2024. Creates exception to certain confidentiality protections of DHS records for the purposes of mandatory reporters making a report of suspected abuse. Sunsets January 2, 2025.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Protecting confidentiality and privacy of survivors
- Risk to vulnerable populations
- Mandatory reporting requirements

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

-2 Clarifies that information received by the department of Human Services when victims of domestic violence apply for or receive temporary assistance for needy families can be disclosed for the purposes of making a report of suspected abuse by mandatory reporters.

BACKGROUND:

Oregon Law prohibits the Department of Human Services to disclose or use the contents of any public assistance records, files, papers or communications and considers these records confidential (ORS 411.320). When victims of domestic violence apply for or receive assistance under the temporary assistance for needy families program (TANF), the Department of Human Services (DHS) must ensure that appropriate individuals on the local level who provide assistance to domestic violence victims participate in individualized case management, and refer individuals identified under this subsection to appropriate counseling and support services. DHS also must waive or modify any requirements that may make it more difficult for these individuals to escape domestic violence or place those individuals at risk of further or future domestic violence. Any information received by DHS in these processes about victims of domestic violence must be kept confidential (ORS 411.117)

Senate Bill 210 would require the Department of Human Services (DHS) to study exceptions to mandatory abuse reporting requirements for department employees that provide assistance to victims of domestic abuse and creates exception to certain confidentiality protections of DHS records for the purposes of mandatory reporters making a report of suspected abuse.