

Introduced by

Senators Lee, K. Roers

Representative Dobervich

1 A BILL for an Act to amend and reenact sections 25-01.3-01, 25-01.3-06, and 25-01.3-08 of the  
2 North Dakota Century Code, relating to duties of the protection and advocacy project.

3 **BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF NORTH DAKOTA:**

4 **SECTION 1. AMENDMENT.** Section 25-01.3-01 of the North Dakota Century Code is  
5 amended and reenacted as follows:

6 **25-01.3-01. Definitions.**

7 In sections 25-01.3-01 through 25-01.3-12, unless the context otherwise requires:

8 1. "Abuse" means:

- 9 a. Willful use of offensive, abusive, or demeaning language by a caretaker that  
10 causes mental anguish of any person with developmental disabilities;
  - 11 b. Knowing, reckless, or intentional acts or failures to act which cause injury or  
12 death to a developmentally disabled or mentally ill person or which placed that  
13 person at risk of injury or death;
  - 14 c. Rape or sexual assault of a developmentally disabled or mentally ill person;
  - 15 d. Corporal punishment or striking of a developmentally disabled or mentally ill  
16 person;
  - 17 e. Unauthorized use or the use of excessive force in the placement of bodily  
18 restraints on a developmentally disabled or mentally ill person; and
  - 19 f. Use of bodily or chemical restraints on a developmentally disabled or mentally ill  
20 person which is not in compliance with federal or state laws and administrative  
21 regulations.
- 22 2. "Advocacy" means action to assist or represent a person or group of persons with  
23 developmental disabilities or mental illnesses in securing their rights, obtaining needed  
24 services, investigating complaints, and removing barriers to identified needs.

- 1       3. "Advocate" means an employee of the project.
- 2       4. "Caretaker" means a person, organization, association, or facility who has assumed  
3       legal responsibility or a contractual obligation for the care of a person with  
4       developmental disabilities or mental illness, or a parent, spouse, sibling, other relative,  
5       or person who has voluntarily assumed responsibility for the person's care.
- 6       5. "Committee" means the committee on protection and advocacy.
- 7       6. "Complaint" means an allegation of a violation of human or legal rights, or a lack of  
8       needed services, which is not a report of abuse, neglect, or exploitation.
- 9       7. "Developmental disability" is a disability as defined in section 25-01.2-01.
- 10      8. "Eligibility for services" means persons eligible for services of the project, including:  
11      a. An adult with developmental disabilities.  
12      b. An adult suffering from a mental illness who is an inpatient or resident in a facility  
13      rendering care or treatment, even if the location of the person is unknown.  
14      c. An adult suffering from a mental illness who is in the process of being admitted to  
15      a facility rendering care or treatment, including persons being transported to such  
16      a facility.  
17      d. An adult suffering from a mental illness who within the last ninety days was an  
18      inpatient or resident of a facility rendering care or treatment.  
19      e. A child with developmental disabilities or a child with mental illness who meets  
20      the criteria of subdivision b, c, or d is eligible for advocacy services.  
21      f. A child with developmental disabilities or mental illness who is not an abused or  
22      neglected child as defined in chapter 50-25.1 is eligible for protective services.
- 23      9. "Exploitation", when committed by a caretaker or relative of, or any person in a  
24      fiduciary relationship with, a person with developmental disabilities or mental illness,  
25      means:  
26      a. The taking or misuse of property or resources of a person with developmental  
27      disabilities or mental illness by means of undue influence, breach of fiduciary  
28      relationship, deception, harassment, criminal coercion, theft, or other unlawful or  
29      improper means;  
30      b. The use of the services of a person with developmental disabilities or mental  
31      illness without just compensation; or

- 1           c. The use of a person with developmental disabilities or mental illness for the  
2           entertainment or sexual gratification of others under circumstances that cause  
3           degradation, humiliation, or mental anguish to the person with developmental  
4           disabilities or mental illness.
- 5       10. "Facility" means a school, residence center, group home, nursing home, foster home,  
6       boarding home, or other facility operated by any public or private agency, organization,  
7       or institution, which provides services to a person with developmental disabilities or  
8       mental illness.
- 9       11. "Individually identifiable health information" and "personal representative" have the  
10      meaning set forth in title 45, Code of Federal Regulations, part 160, section 103 and  
11      part 164, section 5-02, subsection g, respectively.
- 12      12. "Mental health professional" means a mental health professional as defined in section  
13      25-03.1-02.
- 14      13. "Mental illness" means significant mental illness or emotional impairment as  
15      determined by a mental health professional.
- 16      14. "Neglect" means:
- 17           a. Inability of a person with developmental disabilities or mental illness to provide  
18           food, shelter, clothing, health care, or services necessary to maintain the mental  
19           and physical health of that person;
- 20           b. Failure by any caretaker of a person with developmental disabilities or mental  
21           illness to meet, either by commission or omission, any statutory obligation, court  
22           order, administrative rule or regulation, policy, procedure, or minimally accepted  
23           standard for care of persons with developmental disabilities or mental illnesses;
- 24           c. Negligent act or omission by any caretaker which causes injury or death to a  
25           person with developmental disabilities or mental illness or which places that  
26           person at risk of injury or death;
- 27           d. Failure by any caretaker, who is required by law or administrative rule, to  
28           establish or carry out an appropriate individual program or treatment plan for a  
29           person with developmental disabilities or mental illness;
- 30           e. Failure by any caretaker to provide adequate nutrition, clothing, or health care to  
31           a person with developmental disabilities or mental illness;

- 1 f. Failure by any caretaker to provide a safe environment for a person with  
2 developmental disabilities or mental illness; and  
3 g. Failure by any caretaker to maintain adequate numbers of appropriately trained  
4 staff at a facility providing care and services for persons with developmental  
5 disabilities or mental illnesses.

6 15. "Other appropriate remedies" means remedies achieved through alternative dispute  
7 resolution, such as discussion, education, conciliation, and mediation.

8 16. "Project" means the protection and advocacy project.

9 ~~16.~~17. "Protective services" means actions to assist persons with developmental disabilities  
10 or mental illnesses who are unable to manage their own resources or to protect  
11 themselves from abuse, neglect, exploitation, or other hazards.

12 ~~17.~~18. "Report" means a verbal or written communication, including an anonymous  
13 communication, alleging the abuse, neglect, or exploitation of a person with  
14 developmental disabilities or mental illness.

15 **SECTION 2. AMENDMENT.** Section 25-01.3-06 of the North Dakota Century Code is  
16 amended and reenacted as follows:

17 **25-01.3-06. Authority of project - Annual report.**

18 1. Pursuant to rules adopted by the committee, the project, within the limits of legislative  
19 appropriations, shall provide advocacy and protective services for persons with  
20 developmental disabilities and persons with mental illnesses. The rules adopted by the  
21 committee relating to the need for the consent of the client must balance the rights of  
22 persons with developmental disabilities or mental illnesses to privacy and to refuse  
23 services under section 25-01.3-11 with the committee's duties to protect the human  
24 and legal rights of persons eligible for services and to monitor facilities for compliance  
25 with federal and state laws and rules.

26 2. The project may:

27 ~~1.~~ a. Represent persons with developmental disabilities or mental illnesses so ~~that~~  
28 ~~they~~the persons may realize the rights and services to which they are entitled.

29 ~~2.~~ b. Investigate complaints and reports if the alleged incidents are reported to the  
30 committee or the project or if there is probable cause to believe ~~that~~ the incidents  
31 occurred.





- 1           d.   Coordinate investigations with other agencies, departments, or other entities  
2           providing services necessary or advisable for the person with developmental  
3           disabilities or mental illness.
- 4           e.   Delegate investigatory powers to the extent necessary and appropriate to any  
5           person~~person~~individual or entity.
- 6        2.   This section does not limit the responsibilities of law enforcement agencies to enforce  
7        the laws of this state or preclude law enforcement agencies from investigating, as  
8        appropriate, any alleged criminal conduct.
- 9        3.   This section does not prohibit the project from assessing the opportunity for voluntary  
10       compliance and other appropriate remedies in the course of investigating a report or  
11       complaint.