

CHAPTER 160--S.F.No. 2863

An act relating to public safety; establishing procedure for handling sexual assault examination kits; providing notice to victims; amending Minnesota Statutes 2016, section 144.6586, subdivision 2; proposing coding for new law in Minnesota Statutes, chapters 299C; 611A.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MINNESOTA:

Section 1. Minnesota Statutes 2016, section 144.6586, subdivision 2, is amended to read:

Subd. 2. **Contents of notice.** The commissioners of health and public safety, in consultation with sexual assault victim advocates and health care professionals, shall develop the notice required by subdivision 1. The notice must inform the victim, at a minimum, of:

(1) the obligation under section 609.35 of the county where the criminal sexual conduct occurred to pay for the examination performed for the purpose of gathering evidence, that payment is not contingent on the victim reporting the criminal sexual conduct to law enforcement, and that the victim may incur expenses for treatment of injuries; ~~and~~

(2) the victim's rights if the crime is reported to law enforcement, including the victim's right to apply for reparations under sections 611A.51 to 611A.68, information on how to apply for reparations, and information on how to obtain an order for protection or a harassment restraining order; and

(3) the opportunity under section 611A.27 to obtain status information about an unrestricted sexual assault examination kit, as defined in section 299C.106, subdivision 1, paragraph (h).

Sec. 2. **[299C.106] SEXUAL ASSAULT EXAMINATION KIT HANDLING.**

Subdivision 1. **Definitions.** (a) As used in this section, the terms in this subdivision have the meanings given.

(b) "Forensic laboratory" has the meaning given in section 299C.157, subdivision 1, clause (2).

(c) "Patient" has the meaning given in section 144.291, subdivision 2, paragraph (g), and means a person who consents to a sexual assault examination.

(d) "Release form" means a document provided by the hospital to the patient at the time of the sexual assault examination that gives the patient the option of authorizing, in writing, the release of the kit to law enforcement.

(e) "Restricted sexual assault examination kit" means a kit that does not have an accompanying release form signed by the patient authorizing law enforcement to submit the kit to a forensic laboratory. A health care professional shall provide the patient with information about how to convert a restricted sexual assault examination kit to unrestricted status.

(f) "Sexual assault examination kit" means a collection of evidence, including biological material, gathered from a patient by a health care professional.

(g) "Submitted sexual assault examination kit" means an unrestricted kit that has been submitted by law enforcement to a forensic laboratory.

(h) "Unrestricted sexual assault examination kit" means a kit that has an accompanying release form signed by the patient allowing law enforcement to submit the kit to a forensic laboratory.

(i) "Unsubmitted sexual assault examination kit" means an unrestricted kit that has not been submitted by law enforcement to a forensic laboratory.

Subd. 2. **Transfer of unrestricted sexual assault examination kit from health care professional to law enforcement agency.** When a sexual assault examination is performed, evidence is collected, and the patient requests that law enforcement officials be notified and signs a release form, the individual performing the examination, or the individual's designee, shall notify the appropriate law enforcement agency of the collection of the evidence in an unrestricted sexual assault examination kit. The agency must retrieve an unrestricted sexual assault examination kit from the health care professional within ten days of receiving notice that the kit is available for transfer. Notification to the agency shall be made in writing, by telephone, or by electronic communication.

Subd. 3. **Submission of unrestricted sexual assault examination kit.** Within 60 days of receiving an unrestricted sexual assault examination kit, a law enforcement agency shall submit the kit for testing to a forensic laboratory, unless the law enforcement agency deems the result of the kit would not add evidentiary value to the case. If a kit is not submitted during this time, the agency shall make a record, in consultation with the county attorney, stating the reasons why the kit was not submitted. Restricted sexual assault examination kits shall not be submitted for testing.

Subd. 4. **No basis for dismissal or bar to admissibility of evidence.** Failure to meet a deadline established in this section is not a basis for dismissal of a criminal action or a bar to the admissibility of the evidence in a criminal action.

Sec. 3. **[611A.27] VICTIM RIGHTS TO SEXUAL ASSAULT EVIDENCE INFORMATION.**

Subdivision 1. **Access to law enforcement data.** (a) Upon written request from the victim or victim's designee as described in subdivision 2, the investigating law enforcement agency shall release the following active investigative data, as defined in section 13.82, subdivision 7, to a victim of sexual assault about a submitted sexual assault examination kit, as defined in section 299C.106, subdivision 1, paragraph (g):

(1) the date that a sexual assault examination kit was submitted to a forensic laboratory, as defined in section 299C.157, subdivision 1, clause (2), and the date that the agency received notice of the results of that testing; and

(2) whether a DNA profile was obtained from the testing.

(b) The agency may refuse the request under paragraph (a) if the release of that data will interfere with the investigation.

Subd. 2. **Responding to a victim request for data.** No later than January 1, 2019, each law enforcement agency shall adopt policies and procedures subject to section 13.82, subdivision 7, to provide investigative data under this section that includes but is not limited to the following requirements:

(1) agency identification of a representative or representatives to respond to requests for data from sexual assault victims and to serve as a liaison between the agency and the forensic laboratory;

(2) agency response to inquiries within 30 days of receipt, unless the agency declines to provide the information under subdivision 1, paragraph (b);

(3) the sexual assault victim can designate another person to request information on the victim's behalf by providing written authorization to the agency except that an agency can decline to provide the information under subdivision 1, paragraph (b); and

(4) agency development of a procedure that allows a sexual assault victim to contact the agency representative to request that a restricted kit as defined in section 299C.106, subdivision 1, paragraph (e),

be reclassified as an unrestricted kit as defined in section 299C.106, subdivision 1, paragraph (h), if the restricted kit is in the possession of the agency.

Presented to the governor May 16, 2018

Signed by the governor May 19, 2018, 4:40 p.m.