RCW 26.44.210 Alleged child abuse or neglect at certain facilities and schools—Investigation by department—Investigation report. (1)(a) The department shall investigate all referrals of alleged child abuse or neglect occurring at the Washington center for deaf and hard of hearing youth, substance use disorder treatment facilities licensed under chapter 71.24 RCW that treat patients on a residential basis, entities that provide behavioral health services as defined in RCW 71.24.025 on a residential basis, host homes as described in RCW 74.15.020(2)(o), residential private schools as defined in this section, and family home providers located in the surrounding metropolitan area of a federal military reservation as described in *RCW 43.216.010(2)(m).

(b) After investigating an allegation of child abuse or neglect under this section, the department shall determine whether there is a finding of abuse or neglect, and determine whether a referral to law enforcement is appropriate under this chapter.

(c) The department must adopt rules to implement this section.

(d) Any facilities referenced under (a) of this subsection where the department is investigating child abuse or neglect shall share records and any other information that is relevant to the department's investigation. Any records or information shared with the department retains any otherwise existing confidentiality protections under state or federal law.

(2) The department must send a copy of the investigation report, including the finding, regarding any incidents of alleged child abuse or neglect to the administration of the facility in which the incident occurred and to the state agency which provides licensure, oversight, or accreditation to the program at the facility in which the incident occurred.

(3) "Residential private school" means a nonpublic school or nonpublic school district subject to approval by the state board of education pursuant to RCW 28A.305.130 and chapter 28A.195 RCW that provides sleeping and living facilities or residential accommodations for enrolled students. [2025 c 181 s 2; 2023 c 441 s 3; 2019 c 266 s 13; 2009 c 381 s 23; 2002 c 208 s 1.]

***Reviser's note:** RCW 43.216.010 was amended by 2026 c 54 s 1, changing subsection (2)(m) to subsection (2)(n).

Effective date—2023 c 441 s 3: "Section 3 of this act takes effect January 1, 2024." [2023 c 441 s 9.]

Finding—Intent—2023 c 441: See note following RCW 74.15.325.

Findings—Intent—2009 c 381: See note following RCW 72.40.015.