
SENATE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY

Senator Jesse Arreguín, Chair
2025 - 2026 Regular

Bill No: AB 653 **Hearing Date:** July 1, 2025
Author: Lackey
Version: May 23, 2025
Urgency: No **Fiscal:** Yes
Consultant: SU

Subject: *Child abuse: mandated reporters: talent agents, managers, and coaches*

HISTORY

Source: 11:11 Media Impact

Prior Legislation: AB 506 (L. Gonzalez) Ch. 169, Stats. of 2021
AB 1963 (Chu), Ch. 243, Stats. 2020
AB 189 (Kamlager-Dove), Ch. 674, Stats. 2019
SB 360 (Hill), failed in Assembly Public Safety, 2019
AB 2338 (Levine), Ch. 967, Stats. of 2018

Support: 11:11 Media Impact; Arcadia Police Officers' Association; Association of Talent Agents; Brea Police Association; Burbank Police Officers' Association; California Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation & Dance; California Association of School Police Chiefs; California Coalition of School Safety Professionals; California Narcotic Officers' Association; California Reserve Peace Officers Association; Claremont Police Officers Association; Corona Police Officers Association; Culver City Police Officers' Association Fullerton Police Officers' Association; Los Angeles School Police Management Association; Los Angeles School Police Officers Association; Murrieta Police Officers' Association; National Association of Voice Actors; Newport Beach Police Association; Palos Verdes Police Officers Association; Placer County Deputy Sheriffs' Association; Pomona Police Officers' Association; Riverside Police Officers Association; Riverside Sheriffs' Association; SAG-AFTRA Unsilenced

Opposition: None known

Assembly Floor Vote: 77 - 0

PURPOSE

The purpose of this bill is to makes talent agents, talent managers, and talent coaches working with minors mandated reporters under the Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Act.

Existing law establishes the Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Act (CANRA) and states that the intent and purpose of the Act is to protect children from abuse and neglect. (Pen. Code, § 11164.)

Existing law defines "child" under CANRA to mean person under the age of 18 years. (Pen. Code, § 11165.)

Existing law defines "child abuse or neglect" under CANRA to include physical injury or death inflicted by other than accidental means upon a child by another person, sexual abuse as defined, neglect as defined, the willful harming or injuring of a child or the endangering of the person or health of a child as defined, and unlawful corporal punishment or injury, as defined. (Pen. Code, § 11165.6.)

Existing law enumerates close to 50 categories of mandatory child abuse reporters. Specific occupations that are mandated reporters include, but are not limited to, teachers, athletic coaches, social workers, peace officers, firefighters, physicians, psychologists, psychiatrists, emergency medical technicians, licensed family therapists, child visitation monitors, and clergy. (Pen. Code, § 11165.7, subd. (a).)

Existing law requires a mandated reporter to make a report to a specified agency whenever the mandated reporter, in their professional capacity or within the scope of their employment, has knowledge of or observes a child whom the mandated reporter knows or reasonably suspects has been the victim of child abuse or neglect to report that incident immediately to a specified child protection agency by telephone, and further requires a written report be sent within 36 hours. (Pen. Code, § 11166, subd. (a).)

Existing law states that, unless otherwise specifically provided, the absence of training shall not excuse a mandated reporter from the duties imposed by the CANRA. (Pen. Code, § 11165.7, subd. (f).)

Existing law makes it a misdemeanor for a mandated reporter to fail to report an incident of known or reasonably suspected child abuse or neglect as required by the CANRA. The offense is punishable by up to six months confinement in a county jail, or by a fine of \$1,000, or by both. (Pen. Code, § 11166, subd. (c).)

Existing law states that if a mandated reporter intentionally conceals his or her failure to report an incident known by the mandated reporter to be abuse or severe neglect, the failure to report is a continuing offense until a specified agency discovers the offense. (Pen. Code, § 11166, subd. (c).)

This bill adds an individual employed as a talent agent, talent manager, or talent coach, who provides services to a minor to the list of mandated reporters.

This bill names these provisions the Child Abuse Mandated Entertainment Reporter Act (CAMERA).

COMMENTS

1. Need for This Bill

According to the author:

AB 653 is an important child protection measure for children in the entertainment industry. This bill creates a greater safeguard by having talent agents, talent managers and talent coaches be mandated reporters. No child should ever be subjected to any form of abuse, and this bill creates a system to protect them from it.

2. Mandated Reporters:

California's mandated reporter statutes require that certain individuals who, in a professional capacity or within the scope of employment, have knowledge of or observe a child whom the mandated reporter knows or reasonably suspects has been the victim of child abuse or neglect to make an immediate report to a law enforcement agency, as specified. The statute defines what constitutes reasonable suspicion and lists 49 specific categories of employees that are defined as mandated reporters, including teachers, coaches, child care workers, social workers and probation officers, firefighters, specific medical personnel, commercial film and photographic image processors, and others. It requires that mandated reporters be trained about their responsibilities and duties to report, including specifying that the first report must be made by telephone and a subsequent written report must be made within 36 hours of receiving information about the incident. (Pen. Code, §§ 11165.7 & 11166.)

The statute specifies that the reporting duties are individual and states that no supervisor or administrator may impede or inhibit the reporting duties, and no person making a report shall be subject to any sanction for making the report. (Pen. Code, § 11166, subd. (i)(1).)

The penalty for a mandated reporter who fails to report an incident in a timely manner is up to six months in jail and a fine of up to \$1,000, or both. (Pen. Code, § 11166, subd. (c).) The punishment for a mandated reporter who either willfully fails to report or who impedes or inhibits a report of abuse or neglect – where the abuse or neglect results in the death or great bodily injury of a child – is up to one year in a county jail, or a fine of not more than \$5,000, or both. (Pen. Code, § 11166.01, subd. (b).)

This bill makes an individual employed as a talent agent, talent manager, or talent coach, who provides services to a minor a mandated reporter under CANRA.

3. Argument in Support

According to 11:11 Media Impact:

California has long led the nation in child protection laws, including an extensive list of professionals required to report suspected child abuse. Yet, notably absent from this list are key figures in the entertainment industry—despite their regular and often unsupervised interactions with children.

Children working in entertainment face unique vulnerabilities: long hours, high-pressure environments, and close interactions with adults in positions of power. In recent years, a growing number of former child performers have bravely come forward with stories of abuse. A common thread among them is the absence of a trusted adult who was obligated to intervene or report the abuse.

AB 653 helps change that. By adding talent agents, managers, and coaches to the roster of mandated reporters, California can ensure that these professionals are legally required to report suspected child abuse or neglect—offering children in entertainment another critical layer of protection.

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