

AN ACT

relating to the receipt and release of immunization information by the immunization registry in connection with a disaster; providing penalties.

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

SECTION 1. Subsections (a), (b), (b-1), and (j), Section 161.007, Health and Safety Code, are amended to read as follows:

(a) The department, for the primary purpose of establishing and maintaining a single repository of accurate, complete, and current immunization records to be used in aiding, coordinating, and promoting efficient and cost-effective childhood communicable disease prevention and control efforts, shall establish and maintain an immunization registry. The department by rule shall develop guidelines to:

(1) protect the confidentiality of patients in accordance with Section 159.002, Occupations Code;

(2) inform a parent, managing conservator, or guardian of each patient younger than 18 years of age about the registry and that registry information may be released under Section 161.00735;

(3) require the written consent of a parent, managing conservator, or guardian of a patient younger than 18 years of age before any information relating to the patient is included in the registry;

(4) permit a parent, managing conservator, or guardian

1 of a patient younger than 18 years of age to withdraw consent for  
2 the patient to be included in the registry; and

3 (5) determine the process by which consent is  
4 verified, including affirmation by a health care provider, birth  
5 registrar, regional health information exchange, or local  
6 immunization registry that consent has been obtained.

7 (b) The immunization registry must contain information on  
8 the immunization history that is obtained by the department under:

9 (1) this section of each person who is younger than 18  
10 years of age and for whom consent has been obtained in accordance  
11 with guidelines adopted under Subsection (a);

12 (2) Section 161.00705 of persons immunized to prepare  
13 for or in response to a declared disaster, public health emergency,  
14 terrorist attack, hostile military or paramilitary action, or  
15 extraordinary law enforcement emergency; ~~and~~

16 (3) Section 161.00706 of first responders or their  
17 immediate family members; and

18 (4) Section 161.00735 of persons evacuated or  
19 relocated to this state because of a disaster.

20 (b-1) The department shall remove from the registry  
21 information for any person for whom consent has been withdrawn. The  
22 department may not retain individually identifiable information  
23 about any person:

24 (1) for whom consent has been withdrawn;

25 (2) for whom a consent for continued inclusion in the  
26 registry following the end of the declared disaster, public health  
27 emergency, terrorist attack, hostile military or paramilitary

1 action, or extraordinary law enforcement emergency has not been  
2 received under Section 161.00705(f); ~~[or]~~

3 (3) for whom a request to be removed from the registry  
4 has been received under Section 161.00706(e);

5 (4) for whom consent for continued inclusion in the  
6 registry following the end of a disaster has not been received under  
7 Section 161.00735(f); or

8 (5) for whom a request to remove information from the  
9 registry has been received under Section 161.00735(g).

10 (j) Except as provided by Sections 161.00705, 161.00706,  
11 161.00735(b), and 161.008, information obtained by the department  
12 for the immunization registry is confidential and may be disclosed  
13 only with the written consent of the individual or, if a child, the  
14 child's parent, managing conservator, or guardian.

15 SECTION 2. Subsections (c) and (d), Section 161.00706,  
16 Health and Safety Code, are amended to read as follows:

17 (c) The executive commissioner of the Health and Human  
18 Services Commission shall:

19 (1) develop rules to ensure that immunization history  
20 submitted under Subsection (a)(2) is medically verified  
21 immunization information;

22 (2) develop guidelines for use by the department in  
23 informing first responders about the registry and that registry  
24 information may be released under Section 161.00735; and

25 (3) adopt rules necessary for the implementation of  
26 this section.

27 (d) Except as provided by Section 161.00735, a ~~[A]~~ person's

1 immunization history or data received by the department under this  
2 section may be released only on consent of the person or to any  
3 health care provider licensed or otherwise authorized to administer  
4 vaccines.

5 SECTION 3. Subsection (a), Section 161.0071, Health and  
6 Safety Code, is amended to read as follows:

7 (a) The first time the department receives registry data for  
8 a child for whom the department has received consent to be included  
9 in the registry, from a person other than the child's parent,  
10 managing conservator, or guardian, the department shall send a  
11 written notice to the child's parent, managing conservator, or  
12 guardian disclosing:

13 (1) that providers and payors may be sending the  
14 child's immunization information to the department;

15 (2) the information that is included in the registry;

16 (3) the persons to whom the information may be  
17 released under Sections 161.00735(b) and [Section] 161.008(d);

18 (4) the purpose and use of the registry;

19 (5) the procedure to exclude a child from the  
20 registry; and

21 (6) the procedure to report a violation if a parent,  
22 managing conservator, or guardian discovers a child is included in  
23 the registry after exclusion has been requested.

24 SECTION 4. Subsection (a), Section 161.0073, Health and  
25 Safety Code, is amended to read as follows:

26 (a) Except as provided by Sections [Section] 161.00705 and  
27 161.00735, information that individually identifies a child or

1 other individual that is received by the department for the  
2 immunization registry is confidential and may be used by the  
3 department for registry purposes only.

4 SECTION 5. Subchapter A, Chapter 161, Health and Safety  
5 Code, is amended by adding Section 161.00735 to read as follows:

6 Sec. 161.00735. RELEASE AND RECEIPT OF REGISTRY DATA IN  
7 DISASTER. (a) In this section, "disaster" means a disaster  
8 declared by the president of the United States, the governor of this  
9 state, or the governor of another state.

10 (b) If the department determines that residents of this  
11 state have evacuated or relocated to another state in response to a  
12 disaster, the department may release registry data, except registry  
13 data obtained under Section 161.00705, to the appropriate health  
14 authority of that state or to local health authorities in that  
15 state.

16 (c) The department may receive immunization information  
17 from a health authority of another state or from a local health  
18 authority in another state if the department determines that  
19 residents of that state have evacuated or relocated to this state in  
20 response to a disaster. The department shall include information  
21 received under this subsection in the registry. Notwithstanding  
22 Section 161.007, the department is not required to obtain written  
23 consent for the inclusion in the registry of information received  
24 under this subsection.

25 (d) Immunization information received under Subsection (c)  
26 is subject to Section 161.0073, and may not be released except as  
27 authorized by this chapter.

1       (e) The executive commissioner of the Health and Human  
2 Services Commission, by rule, shall determine the period during  
3 which the information collected under Subsection (c) must remain in  
4 the immunization registry following the end of the disaster.

5       (f) Unless an individual or, if a child, the child's parent,  
6 managing conservator, or guardian consents in writing to continued  
7 inclusion of the individual's or child's information in the  
8 registry, the department shall remove the immunization records  
9 collected under Subsection (c) from the registry on the expiration  
10 of the period prescribed by Subsection (e).

11       (g) If an individual or, if a child, the child's parent,  
12 managing conservator, or guardian requests in writing that the  
13 individual's or child's information obtained under Subsection (c)  
14 be removed from the registry, the department shall remove that  
15 information from the registry.

16       (h) The executive commissioner of the Health and Human  
17 Services Commission shall make every effort to enter into a  
18 memorandum of agreement with each state to which residents of this  
19 state are likely to evacuate in a disaster on:

20               (1) the release and use of registry information under  
21 this section to the appropriate health authority or local health  
22 authority of that state, including the length of time the  
23 information may be retained by that state; and

24               (2) the receipt and use of information submitted by  
25 the health authority or local health authority of that state for  
26 inclusion in the registry under this section.

27       SECTION 6. Subsection (a), Section 161.009, Health and

1 Safety Code, is amended to read as follows:

2 (a) A person commits an offense if the person:

3 (1) negligently releases or discloses immunization  
4 registry information in violation of Section 161.007, 161.0071,  
5 161.0073, or 161.008;

6 (2) fails to exclude a child's immunization  
7 information in violation of Section 161.0071;

8 (3) fails to remove a person's immunization  
9 information in violation of Section 161.00705, ~~[or]~~ 161.00706, or  
10 161.00735; or

11 (4) negligently uses information in the immunization  
12 registry to solicit new patients or clients or for other purposes  
13 that are not associated with immunization or quality-of-care  
14 purposes, unless authorized under this section.

15 SECTION 7. This Act takes effect September 1, 2009.

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President of the Senate

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Speaker of the House

I hereby certify that S.B. No. 347 passed the Senate on March 19, 2009, by the following vote: Yeas 31, Nays 0; and that the Senate concurred in House amendment on May 5, 2009, by the following vote: Yeas 29, Nays 0.

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Secretary of the Senate

I hereby certify that S.B. No. 347 passed the House, with amendment, on April 28, 2009, by the following vote: Yeas 144, Nays 0, two present not voting.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chief Clerk of the House

Approved:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Governor