
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO HUMAN SERVICES.

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

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that sudden unexpected
2 infant death is a broad term that refers to the sudden death of
3 an infant less than one year of age where the specific cause of
4 death is not immediately obvious prior to investigation.
5 According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention,
6 more than 4,500 sudden unexpected infant deaths occur in the
7 United States every year. The specific cause of death may
8 include but not be limited to sudden infant death syndrome,
9 infection, accidental suffocation, poisoning or overdose, or
10 metabolic disorders. Sudden infant death syndrome, the sudden
11 death of an infant less than one year of age where the death
12 cannot be explained even after a thorough investigation is
13 conducted, accounts for half of the sudden unexpected infant
14 deaths that occur in the United States every year and is the
15 leading cause of death among infants one year of age or younger.
16 According to a Mayo Clinic web article, "[T]he exact cause is
17 unknown, but sudden infant death syndrome may be associated with
18 abnormalities in the portion of an infant's brain that controls



1 breathing and arousal from sleep. Although all babies are
2 vulnerable, certain sleep environments have been linked to
3 increased risk. Perhaps the most important way to reduce the
4 risk of sudden infant death syndrome is to place your baby on
5 his or her back to sleep, on a firm crib mattress covered by a
6 fitted sheet. Nothing else should go in the crib with your baby
7 – no blanket, pillow, bumper pads or toys." The Centers for
8 Disease Control and Prevention, Division of Reproductive Health,
9 recognizes sudden infant death syndrome and sudden unexpected
10 infant deaths as a public health issue and has established the
11 Sudden Unexpected Infant Death Initiative to address the problem
12 by improving investigation and reporting practices of sudden
13 infant death syndrome and sudden unexpected infant deaths. The
14 Initiative includes improving data collection and reporting
15 regarding sudden unexpected infant deaths, using improved data
16 to identify those at risk of sudden unexpected infant death, and
17 training professionals to conduct comprehensive infant death
18 investigations, with the hope that better data and the
19 consistent classification of causes of death will result in a
20 greater ability to prevent these types of deaths.

21 The legislature also finds that sudden unexpected infant
22 deaths and sudden infant death syndrome are preventable through



1 safe sleep policies that address causes of death that are
2 associated with sudden unexpected infant deaths, such as
3 accidental suffocation, and incorporate elements of the Sudden
4 Unexpected Infant Death Initiative. However, Hawaii is one of
5 nine states that do not regulate the proper sleep positions of
6 infants and toddlers under the care of child care centers or
7 family care homes.

8 The purpose of this Act is to require child care
9 facilities, which include family child care homes, group child
10 care centers, group child care homes, and infant and toddler
11 child care centers, that care for children one year of age or
12 younger to implement and maintain safe sleep policies to prevent
13 the occurrence of sudden unexpected infant deaths and sudden
14 infant death syndrome.

15 SECTION 2. Chapter 346, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
16 amended by adding a new section to part VIII to be appropriately
17 designated and to read as follows:

18 "§346- Safe sleep policy. (a) All child care
19 facilities, which include family child care homes, group child
20 care centers, and group child care homes, as those terms are
21 defined in section 346-151, and infant and toddler child care
22 centers, that are registered or licensed by the department to



1 provide care for children one year of age or younger shall
2 implement and maintain a written safe sleep policy in accordance
3 with any rules that may be adopted by the department to
4 implement the provisions of this section. The purpose of the
5 safe sleep policy shall be to maintain a safe sleep environment
6 that prevents the occurrence of sudden infant death syndrome and
7 sudden unexpected infant deaths in children one year of age or
8 younger.

9 (b) Each safe sleep policy shall require operators of each
10 respective child care facility, which includes family child care
11 homes, group child care centers, group child care homes, and
12 infant and toddler child care centers, to place a child one year
13 of age or younger on the child's back for sleeping, unless the
14 operator of the respective child care facility obtains a written
15 waiver of this requirement from a health care professional, as
16 defined in rules adopted by the department.

17 (c) The operator of the child care facility, family child
18 care home, group child care center, group child care home, or
19 infant and toddler child care center, as applicable, shall
20 discuss the safe sleep policy with the child's parent or legal
21 guardian before the child is enrolled in the child care
22 facility, home, or center. The child's parent or legal guardian



1 shall sign a statement attesting that the parent or legal
2 guardian received a copy of the safe sleep policy and that the
3 policy was discussed with the parent or legal guardian before
4 the child's enrollment.

5 (d) The operator and all employees of an operator of a
6 child care facility, which includes family child care homes,
7 group child care centers, group child care homes, and infant and
8 toddler child care centers, shall complete training in safe
9 sleep practices. The department shall conduct the training.

10 (e) Every child care facility, family child care home,
11 group child care center, group child care home, and infant and
12 toddler child care center shall promptly report to the
13 department the death of a child one year of age or younger that
14 occurs while in the facility, home, or center's care.

15 (f) As used in this section:

16 "Sudden infant death syndrome" means the sudden death of an
17 infant less than one year of age that cannot be explained after
18 a thorough investigation has been conducted, including a
19 complete autopsy, an examination of the death scene, and a
20 review of the clinical history.

21 "Sudden unexpected infant death" means the sudden and
22 unexpected death of an infant less than one year of age in which



1 the manner and cause of death are not immediately obvious prior
2 to investigation. Causes of sudden unexpected infant death
3 include but are not limited to metabolic disorders, hypothermia
4 or hyperthermia, neglect or homicide, poisoning, and accidental
5 suffocation."

6 SECTION 3. New statutory material is underscored.

7 SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.

8



Report Title:

Sudden Infant Death Syndrome; Sudden Unexpected Infant Death;
Safe Sleep Policy

Description:

Requires child care facilities, including family child care homes, group child care centers, and group child care homes, and infant and toddler child care centers that care for children one year of age or younger to implement and maintain safe sleep policies to prevent sudden unexpected infant deaths and sudden infant death syndrome in accordance with rules adopted by the Department of Human Services. Makes certain requirements of operators. (SD1)

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