

Representative Keven J. Stratton proposes the following substitute bill:

ABUSIVE CONDUCT REPORTING AMENDMENTS

2019 GENERAL SESSION

STATE OF UTAH

Chief Sponsor: Keven J. Stratton

Senate Sponsor: Jacob L. Anderegg

LONG TITLE

General Description:

This bill enacts the Utah Public Employees Healthy Workplace Act and amends existing provisions related to state employee reporting of abusive conduct.

Highlighted Provisions:

This bill:

- ▶ defines terms;
- ▶ allows all state employees rather than state executive branch agency employees to report abusive conduct to the employee's respective human resources department;
- ▶ requires an abusive conduct investigation in relation to an abusive conduct complaint;
- ▶ requires certain employers to provide an administrative review process;
- ▶ requires the Department of Human Resource Management (department) to provide certain training;
- ▶ requires certain employers to provide supplemental training;
- ▶ requires certain employers to annually report to the department on implementation, numbers, and outcomes of abusive conduct complaints;
- ▶ requires the department to annually report to the Economic Development and Workforce Services Interim Committee regarding implementation and



26 recommendations; and
27 ▶ makes technical changes and conforming.

28 **Money Appropriated in this Bill:**

29 None

30 **Other Special Clauses:**

31 This bill provides a special effective date.

32 **Utah Code Sections Affected:**

33 AMENDS:

34 **67-19a-101**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2018, Chapter 390

35 **67-19a-102**, as enacted by Laws of Utah 2018, Chapter 390

36 **67-19a-202**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2018, Chapter 390

37 **67-19a-501**, as enacted by Laws of Utah 2018, Chapter 390

38 ENACTS:

39 **67-26-101**, Utah Code Annotated 1953

40 **67-26-102**, Utah Code Annotated 1953

41 **67-26-103**, Utah Code Annotated 1953

42 **67-26-201**, Utah Code Annotated 1953

43 **67-26-202**, Utah Code Annotated 1953

44 RENUMBERS AND AMENDS:

45 **67-26-301**, (Renumbered from 67-19-44, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2018,
46 Chapter 390)



48 *Be it enacted by the Legislature of the state of Utah:*

49 Section 1. Section **67-19a-101** is amended to read:

50 **67-19a-101. Definitions.**

51 As used in this chapter:

52 (1) "Abusive conduct" means the same as that term is defined in Section [~~67-19-44~~]

53 [67-26-102](#).

54 (2) "Administrator" means the person appointed under Section **67-19a-201** to head the
55 Career Service Review Office.

56 (3) "Career service employee" means a person employed in career service as defined in

57 Section 67-19-3.

58 (4) "Department" means the Department of Human Resource Management.

59 (5) "Employer" means the state of Utah and all supervisory personnel vested with the
60 authority to implement and administer the policies of an agency.

61 (6) "Excusable neglect" means harmless error, mistake, inadvertence, surprise, a failure
62 to discover evidence that, through due diligence, could not have been discovered in time to
63 meet the applicable time period, misrepresentation or misconduct by the employer, or any other
64 reason justifying equitable relief.

65 (7) "Grievance" means:

66 (a) a complaint by a career service employee concerning any matter touching upon the
67 relationship between the employee and the employer;

68 (b) any dispute between a career service employee and the employer;

69 (c) a complaint by a reporting employee that a public entity has engaged in retaliatory
70 action against the reporting employee; and

71 (d) a complaint that the employer subjected the employee to conditions that a
72 reasonable person would consider intolerable, including abusive conduct.

73 (8) "Office" means the Career Service Review Office created under Section
74 67-19a-201.

75 (9) "Public entity" means the same as that term is defined in Section 67-21-2.

76 (10) "Reporting employee" means an employee of a public entity who alleges that the
77 public entity engaged in retaliatory action against the employee.

78 (11) "Retaliatory action" means to do any of the following to an employee in violation
79 of Section 67-21-3:

80 (a) dismiss the employee;

81 (b) reduce the employee's compensation;

82 (c) fail to increase the employee's compensation by an amount that the employee is
83 otherwise entitled to or was promised;

84 (d) fail to promote the employee if the employee would have otherwise been promoted;

85 or

86 (e) threaten to take an action described in Subsections (11)(a) through (d).

87 (12) "Supervisor" means the person:

- 88 (a) to whom an employee reports; or
 - 89 (b) who assigns and oversees an employee's work.
- 90 Section 2. Section **67-19a-102** is amended to read:

91 **67-19a-102. Work environment policy.**

92 As recognized and provided in Section [~~67-19-44~~] [67-26-201](#), it is the policy of the
93 state of Utah to provide and maintain a work environment free from abusive conduct.

94 Section 3. Section **67-19a-202** is amended to read:

95 **67-19a-202. Powers -- Scope of authority.**

96 (1) The office shall serve as the final administrative body to review a grievance from a
97 career service employee and an agency of a decision regarding:

- 98 (a) a dismissal;
- 99 (b) a demotion;
- 100 (c) a suspension;
- 101 (d) a reduction in force;
- 102 (e) a dispute concerning abandonment of position;
- 103 (f) a wage grievance if an employee is not placed within the salary range of the
104 employee's current position;
- 105 (g) a violation of a rule adopted under Chapter 19, Utah State Personnel Management
106 Act; or
- 107 (h) except as provided by Subsection [~~(1)(c)(iii)~~] [\(4\)\(c\)](#), equitable administration of the
108 following benefits:
 - 109 (i) long-term disability insurance;
 - 110 (ii) medical insurance;
 - 111 (iii) dental insurance;
 - 112 (iv) post-retirement health insurance;
 - 113 (v) post-retirement life insurance;
 - 114 (vi) life insurance;
 - 115 (vii) defined contribution retirement;
 - 116 (viii) defined benefit retirement; and
 - 117 (ix) a leave benefit.

118 (2) The office shall serve as the final administrative body to review a grievance by a

119 reporting employee alleging retaliatory action.

120 (3) The office shall serve as the final administrative body to review, without an
121 evidentiary hearing, the findings of an abusive conduct investigation [~~without an evidentiary~~
122 ~~hearing.~~] described in Section 67-26-202.

123 (4) The office may not review or take action on:

124 (a) a personnel matter not listed in Subsections (1) through (3);

125 (b) a personnel matter listed in Subsections (1) through (3) that alleges discrimination
126 or retaliation related to a claim of discrimination that is a violation of a state or federal law for
127 which review and action by the office is preempted by state or federal law; or

128 (c) a personnel matter related to a claim for which an administrative review process is
129 provided by statute and administered by:

130 (i) the Utah State Retirement Systems under Title 49, Utah State Retirement and
131 Insurance Benefit Act;

132 (ii) the Public Employees' Benefit and Insurance Program under Title 49, Chapter 20,
133 Public Employees' Benefit and Insurance Program Act; or

134 (iii) the Public Employees' Long-Term Disability Program under Title 49, Chapter 21,
135 Public Employees' Long-Term Disability Act.

136 (5) The time limits established in this chapter supersede the procedural time limits
137 established in Title 63G, Chapter 4, Administrative Procedures Act.

138 Section 4. Section **67-19a-501** is amended to read:

139 **67-19a-501. Procedural steps to be followed in an administrative review of an**
140 **abusive conduct investigation.**

141 (1) An employee may initiate an administrative review of the findings of an abusive
142 conduct investigation described in Section 67-19a-202 that the department conducts within 10
143 days after the day on which the employee receives notification of the investigative findings.

144 (2) (a) An employee bringing an administrative review of the findings described in
145 Subsection (1) may file the request for the administrative review directly with the office.

146 (b) The request for administrative review may set forth the reasons for the [~~appeal~~]
147 administrative review and include any submissions the employee desires to submit.

148 (3) (a) When an employee initiates the review described in Subsection (2) with the
149 office:

150 (i) the role of the administrative review is to review and rule upon the [department's]
151 findings [~~and decision~~] of the abusive conduct investigation; and

152 (ii) an evidentiary hearing is not required.

153 (b) The department shall make the abusive conduct investigative file available for the
154 [administrator's] office's in camera review.

155 (c) The [administrator] office may:

156 (i) request additional relevant documents from the department or the affected
157 employee; and

158 (ii) interview the [department's] investigators who conducted the investigation.

159 (4) (a) If the [administrator] office determines that the investigator's findings are not
160 reasonable, rational, and sufficiently supported by the record, the [administrator] office may
161 overturn the findings and remand to the agency for appropriate action.

162 (b) The [administrator] office may uphold the [department's] investigative findings if,
163 based on the administrative review, the [administrator] office determines that the investigator's
164 findings are reasonable, rational, and sufficiently supported by the record.

165 (5) (a) Within 30 days after the day on which an employee initiates an administrative
166 review under this section, the [administrator] office shall issue a notice stating whether the
167 [administrator] office upheld or overturned the investigative findings.

168 (b) The office's determination upon administrative review of the findings resulting
169 from an abusive conduct investigation is final and not subject to appeal.

170 (c) The following are classified as protected under Title 63G, Chapter 2, Government
171 Records Access and Management Act, and any other applicable confidentiality provisions:

172 (i) the request for administrative review and any accompanying documents;

173 (ii) documents that any party provides;

174 (iii) the contents of the administrative review file; and

175 (iv) the office's determination.

176 Section 5. Section **67-26-101** is enacted to read:

177 **CHAPTER 26. UTAH PUBLIC EMPLOYEES HEALTHY WORKPLACE ACT**

178 **Part 1. General Provisions**

179 **67-26-101. Title.**

180 This chapter shall be known as "Utah Public Employees Healthy Workplace Act."

181 Section 6. Section **67-26-102** is enacted to read:

182 **67-26-102. Definitions.**

183 As used in this chapter:

184 (1) (a) "Abusive conduct" means verbal, nonverbal, or physical conduct of an
185 employee to another employee that, based on its severity, nature, and frequency of occurrence,
186 a reasonable person would determine:

187 (i) is intended to cause intimidation, humiliation, or unwarranted distress;

188 (ii) results in substantial physical or psychological harm as a result of intimidation,
189 humiliation, or unwarranted distress; or

190 (iii) exploits an employee's known physical or psychological disability.

191 (b) "Abusive conduct" does not mean a single act unless the act is an especially severe
192 and egregious act that meets the standard under Subsection (1)(a)(i), (ii), or (iii).

193 (2) "Abusive conduct complaint process" means the process described in Section
194 [67-26-202](#).

195 (3) "Administrative review process" means a process that allows an employee, in
196 relation to the findings of an abusive conduct investigation, to seek an administrative review
197 that:

198 (a) an employer conducts in accordance with Section [67-26-202](#); or

199 (b) in relation to a state executive branch agency, the office conducts in accordance
200 with Section [67-19a-501](#).

201 (4) "Department" means the Department of Human Resource Management.

202 (5) "Employee" means an employee of an employer.

203 (6) "Employer means the following:

204 (a) the state executive branch, including:

205 (i) a state executive branch agency;

206 (ii) an employer within the Utah System of Higher Education, including each member
207 institution, the Board of Regents, and the office of the commissioner of higher education; and

208 (iii) an independent entity, as defined in Section [63E-1-102](#);

209 (b) the state legislative branch; and

210 (c) the state judicial branch.

211 (7) "Office" means the Career Service Review Office created under Section

212 [67-19a-201.](#)

213 (8) "Physical harm" means the impairment of an individual's physical health or bodily
214 integrity, as established by competent evidence.

215 (9) "Psychological harm" means the impairment of an individual's mental health, as
216 established by competent evidence.

217 Section 7. Section **67-26-103** is enacted to read:

218 **67-26-103. Effect of chapter.**

219 This chapter does not:

220 (1) exempt or relieve a person from a liability, duty, or penalty provided by another
221 federal or state law;

222 (2) create a private right of action;

223 (3) expand or diminish rights or remedies available to a person before July 1, 2019; or

224 (4) expand or diminish grounds for discipline that existed before July 1, 2019.

225 Section 8. Section **67-26-201** is enacted to read:

226 **Part 2. Abusive Conduct**

227 **67-26-201. State policy on abusive conduct.**

228 It is the policy of the state of Utah to provide and maintain a work environment free
229 from abusive conduct.

230 Section 9. Section **67-26-202** is enacted to read:

231 **67-26-202. Abusive conduct complaint, investigation, administrative review**
232 **process.**

233 (1) An employee may file a written complaint of abusive conduct with the respective
234 human resources department of the employee's employer.

235 (2) If an employee files a written complaint of abusive conduct under Subsection (1),
236 the respective human resources department of the employee's employer shall conduct an
237 abusive conduct investigation.

238 (3) (a) Each employer that is not a state executive branch agency:

239 (i) shall provide the employer's employees a process for:

240 (A) making an abusive conduct complaint, including an alternative process in the case
241 of a complaint involving an individual who would otherwise receive or review an abusive
242 conduct complaint; and

243 (B) an administrative review of the findings of an abusive conduct investigation
 244 described in Subsection (2) that is substantially similar to the administrative review process
 245 described in Section [67-19a-501](#); and

246 (ii) may request assistance from the department, at the department's current consultant
 247 rate, or the office, at a reasonable rate that the office sets, in developing a process described in
 248 this Subsection (3).

249 (b) The department shall provide the employees of state executive branch agencies a
 250 process for making an abusive conduct complaint, including an alternative process in the case
 251 of a complaint involving an individual who would otherwise receive or review an abusive
 252 conduct complaint.

253 (4) The complaint described in Subsection (1) and any subsequent abusive conduct
 254 investigation are subject to:

255 (a) in relation to an employer other than a state executive branch agency, the
 256 administrative review process described in Subsection (3); and

257 (b) in relation to a state executive branch agency, the office's administrative review
 258 process described in Section [67-19a-501](#).

259 Section 10. Section **67-26-301**, which is renumbered from Section 67-19-44 is
 260 renumbered and amended to read:

261 **Part 3. Training and Reporting**

262 ~~[67-19-44].~~ **67-26-301.** ~~67-19-44.~~ **Abusive conduct training.**

263 ~~[(1) As used in this section:]~~

264 ~~[(a) (i) "Abusive conduct" means verbal, nonverbal, or physical conduct of an~~
 265 ~~employee to another employee that, based on its severity, nature, and frequency of occurrence,~~
 266 ~~a reasonable person would determine:]~~

267 ~~[(A) is intended to cause intimidation, humiliation, or unwarranted distress;]~~

268 ~~[(B) results in substantial physical or psychological harm as a result of intimidation,~~
 269 ~~humiliation, or unwarranted distress; or]~~

270 ~~[(C) exploits an employee's known physical or psychological disability.]~~

271 ~~[(ii) A single act does not constitute abusive conduct, unless it is an especially severe~~
 272 ~~and egregious act that meets the standard under Subsection (1)(a)(i)(A), (B), or (C).]~~

273 ~~[(b) "Employee" means an employee of a state executive branch agency.]~~

274 ~~[(c) "Physical harm" means the impairment of a person's physical health or bodily~~
275 ~~integrity, as established by competent evidence.]~~

276 ~~[(d) "Psychological harm" means the impairment of a person's mental health, as~~
277 ~~established by competent evidence.]~~

278 ~~[(2) It is the policy of the state of Utah to provide and maintain a work environment~~
279 ~~free from abusive conduct.]~~

280 ~~[(3) An employee may file a written complaint of abusive conduct with the department~~
281 ~~and subject to further administrative review in accordance with Section [67-19a-501](#).]~~

282 ~~[(4) By July 1, 2019, the department shall amend the department's rule, in accordance~~
283 ~~with Title 63G, Chapter 3, Utah Administrative Rulemaking Act, consistent with the~~
284 ~~definitions in Subsection (1) and Title 67, Chapter 19a, Grievance Procedures.]~~

285 ~~[(5)] (1) (a) (i) The department shall provide biennial training to educate all state~~
286 ~~executive branch agency employees and supervisors about how to prevent abusive workplace~~
287 ~~conduct.~~

288 ~~[(b)] (ii) The training described in Subsection (1)(a)(i) shall include information on:~~

289 ~~[(i)] (A) what constitutes abusive conduct and the ramifications of abusive conduct;~~

290 ~~[(ii)] (B) resources available to employees who are subject to abusive conduct; and~~

291 ~~[(iii)] (C) the [grievance] abusive conduct complaint process described in Section~~
292 ~~[67-26-202](#).~~

293 ~~(b) (i) The department shall create a baseline training module for employers that are~~
294 ~~not state executive branch agencies to educate the employers' respective employees and~~
295 ~~supervisors about how to prevent abusive workplace conduct.~~

296 ~~(ii) The baseline training module described in Subsection (1)(b)(i) shall include~~
297 ~~information on what constitutes abusive conduct and the ramifications of abusive conduct.~~

298 ~~(c) (i) Each employer that is not a state executive branch agency shall create and~~
299 ~~provide supplemental training to educate the employer's respective employees and supervisors~~
300 ~~that supplements the department's baseline training module with information regarding:~~

301 ~~(A) resources available to employees who are subject to abusive conduct; and~~

302 ~~(B) the employer's abusive conduct complaint process described in Section [67-26-202](#).~~

303 ~~(ii) An employer may request assistance from the department, at the department's~~
304 ~~current consultant rate, in developing the training described in Subsection (1)(c)(i).~~

305 ~~[(6)]~~ (2) (a) Each ~~[state agency]~~ employer shall provide professional development
306 training ~~[approved by the department]~~ to promote:

- 307 (i) ethical conduct;
- 308 (ii) organizational leadership practices based in principles of integrity; and
- 309 (iii) the state policy described in ~~[Subsection (2)]~~ Section 67-26-103.

310 (b) ~~[A state agency]~~ An employer may request assistance from the department, at the
311 department's current consultant rate, in developing training under this Subsection ~~[(6)]~~ (2).

312 ~~[(7)]~~ (3) (a) Employers shall provide and employees shall participate in the training
313 described in Subsections ~~[(5)]~~ (1) and ~~[(6)]~~ (2);

314 (i) at the time the employee is hired or within a reasonable time after the employee
315 ~~[commences]~~ begins employment; and

316 (ii) in at least alternating years ~~[thereafter]~~ after the employee begins employment.

317 ~~[(b) The requirement in Subsection (7)(a) includes notification to all employees at the~~
318 ~~time of hiring or within a reasonable time after the employee commences employment and in~~
319 ~~alternating years thereafter of the abusive conduct complaint procedures and the grievance~~
320 ~~procedures provided in Title 67, Chapter 19a, Grievance Procedures.]~~

321 (b) An employer shall provide notification to all employees at the times described in
322 Subsection (3)(a) of the abusive conduct complaint process.

323 ~~[(8)]~~ (4) The department may use money appropriated to the department or access
324 support from outside resources to:

325 (a) develop policies against workplace abusive conduct; and

326 (b) enhance professional development training on topics such as:

- 327 (i) building trust;
- 328 (ii) effective motivation;
- 329 (iii) communication;
- 330 (iv) conflict resolution;
- 331 (v) accountability;
- 332 (vi) coaching;
- 333 (vii) leadership; or
- 334 (viii) ethics.

335 ~~[(9) This section does not:]~~

336 ~~[(a) exempt or relieve a person from a liability, duty, or penalty provided by another~~
337 ~~federal or state law;]~~

338 ~~[(b) create a private right of action;]~~

339 ~~[(c) expand or diminish rights or remedies available to a person before July 1, 2015;~~
340 ~~or]~~

341 ~~[(d) expand or diminish grounds for discipline that existed before July 1, 2015.]~~

342 (5) (a) Beginning in 2020, by July 31 annually, each employer that is not a state
343 executive branch agency shall report to the department regarding:

344 (i) the employer's implementation of this chapter, including the requirement to provide
345 a process under Section [67-26-202](#); and

346 (ii) the total number and outcomes of abusive conduct complaints that the employer's
347 employees made and that the employer investigated or reviewed.

348 ~~[(10)]~~ (b) The department shall annually report to the Economic Development and
349 Workforce Services Interim Committee by no later than the November interim meeting
350 regarding:

351 ~~[(a)]~~ (i) the department's implementation of this ~~[section]~~ chapter;

352 ~~[(b)]~~ (ii) the department's recommendations, if any, to:

353 (A) appropriately address and reduce workplace abusive conduct; or

354 (B) ~~[(t)]~~ change definitions or training required by this section; ~~[and]~~

355 ~~[(c)]~~ (iii) an annual report of the total number and outcomes of abusive conduct
356 complaints that employees ~~[filed]~~ made and the department investigated~~[-];~~ and

357 (iv) a summary of the reports the department receives under Subsection (5)(a).

358 Section 11. **Effective date.**

359 This bill takes effect on July 1, 2019.