

235B.19 Emergency order for protective services.

1. If the department determines that a dependent adult is suffering from dependent adult abuse which presents an immediate danger to the health or safety of the dependent adult or which results in irreparable harm to the physical or financial resources or property of the dependent adult, and that the dependent adult lacks capacity to consent to receive protective services and that no consent can be obtained, the department may petition the court with probate jurisdiction in the county in which the dependent adult resides for an emergency order authorizing protective services.

2. The petition shall be verified and shall include all of the following:

a. The name, date of birth, and address of the dependent adult who needs protective services.

b. The nature of the dependent adult abuse.

c. The services required.

3. a. The department shall serve a copy of the petition and any order authorizing protective services, if issued, on the dependent adult and on persons who are competent adults and reasonably ascertainable at the time the petition is filed in accordance with the following priority:

(1) An attorney in fact named by the dependent adult in a durable power of attorney for health care pursuant to [chapter 144B](#).

(2) The dependent adult's spouse.

(3) The dependent adult's children.

(4) The dependent adult's grandchildren.

(5) The dependent adult's siblings.

(6) The dependent adult's aunts and uncles.

(7) The dependent adult's nieces and nephews.

(8) The dependent adult's cousins.

b. When the department has served a person in one of the categories specified in paragraph "a", the department shall not be required to serve a person in any other category.

c. The department shall serve the dependent adult's copy of the petition and order personally upon the dependent adult. Service of the petition and all other orders and notices shall be in a sealed envelope with the proper postage on the envelope, addressed to the person being served at the person's last known post office address, and deposited in a mail receptacle provided by the United States postal service. The department shall serve such copies of emergency orders authorizing protective services and notices within three days after filing the petition and receiving such orders.

d. The department and all persons served by the department with notices under [this subsection](#) shall be prohibited from all of the following without prior court approval after the department's petition has been filed:

(1) Selling, removing, or otherwise disposing of the dependent adult's personal property.

(2) Withdrawing funds from any bank, savings association, credit union, or other financial institution, or from an account containing securities in which the dependent adult has an interest.

4. Upon finding that there is probable cause to believe that the dependent adult abuse presents an immediate threat to the health or safety of the dependent adult or which results in irreparable harm to the physical or financial resources or property of the dependent adult, and that the dependent adult lacks capacity to consent to the receipt of services, the court may do any of the following:

a. Order removal of the dependent adult to safer surroundings.

b. Order the provision of medical services.

c. Order the provision of other available services necessary to remove conditions creating the danger to health or safety, including the services of peace officers or emergency services personnel and the suspension of the powers granted to a guardian or conservator and the subsequent appointment of a new temporary guardian or new temporary conservator pursuant to [subsection 5](#) pending a decision by the court on whether the powers of the initial guardian or conservator should be reinstated or whether the initial guardian or conservator should be removed.

5. a. Notwithstanding [sections 633.552](#) and [633.573](#), upon a finding that there is probable cause to believe that the dependent adult abuse presents an immediate danger to the health or safety of the dependent adult or is producing irreparable harm to the physical or financial resources or property of the dependent adult, and that the dependent adult lacks capacity to consent to the receipt of services, the court may order the appointment of a temporary guardian or temporary conservator without notice to the dependent adult or the dependent adult's attorney if all of the following conditions are met:

(1) It clearly appears from specific facts shown by affidavit or by the verified petition that a dependent adult's decision-making capacity is so impaired that the dependent adult is unable to care for the dependent adult's personal safety or to attend to or provide for the dependent adult's basic necessities or that immediate and irreparable injury, loss, or damage will result to the physical or financial resources or property of the dependent adult before the dependent adult or the dependent adult's attorney can be heard in opposition.

(2) The department certifies to the court in writing any efforts the department has made to give the notice or the reasons supporting the claim that notice should not be required.

(3) The department files with the court a request for a hearing on the petition for the appointment of a temporary guardian or temporary conservator.

(4) The department certifies that the notice of the petition, order, and all filed reports and affidavits will be sent to the dependent adult by personal service within the time period the court directs but not more than seventy-two hours after entry of the order of appointment.

b. An order of appointment of a temporary guardian or temporary conservator entered by the court under paragraph "a" shall expire as prescribed by the court but within a period of not more than thirty days unless extended by the court for good cause.

c. A hearing on the petition for the appointment of a temporary guardian or temporary conservator shall be held within the time specified in paragraph "b". If the department does not proceed with a hearing on the petition, the court, on the motion of any party or on its own motion, may dismiss the petition.

6. The emergency order expires at the end of seventy-two hours from the time of the order unless the seventy-two-hour period ends on a Saturday, Sunday, or legal holiday in which event the order is automatically extended to 4:00 p.m. on the first succeeding business day. An order may be renewed for not more than fourteen additional days. A renewal order that ends on a Saturday, Sunday, or legal holiday is automatically extended to 4:00 p.m. on the first succeeding business day. The court may modify or terminate the emergency order on the petition of the department, the dependent adult, or any person interested in the dependent adult's welfare.

7. If the department cannot obtain an emergency order under [this section](#) due to inaccessibility of the court, the department may contact law enforcement to remove the dependent adult to safer surroundings, authorize the provision of medical treatment, and order the provision of or provide other available services necessary to remove conditions creating the immediate danger to the health or safety of the dependent adult or which are producing irreparable harm to the physical or financial resources or property of the dependent adult. The department shall obtain an emergency order under [this section](#) not later than 4:00 p.m. on the first succeeding business day after the date on which protective or other services are provided. If the department does not obtain an emergency order within the prescribed time period, the department shall cease providing protective services and, if necessary, make arrangements for the immediate return of the person to the place from which the person was removed, to the person's place of residence in the state, or to another suitable place. A person, agency, or institution acting in good faith in removing a dependent adult or in providing services under [this subsection](#), and an employer of or person under the direction of such a person, agency, or institution, shall have immunity from any liability, civil or criminal, that might otherwise be incurred or imposed as the result of the removal or provision of services.

8. Upon a finding of probable cause to believe that dependent adult abuse has occurred and is either ongoing or is likely to reoccur, the court may also enter orders as may be appropriate to third persons enjoining them from specific conduct. The orders may include

temporary restraining orders which impose criminal sanctions if violated. The court may enjoin third persons from any of the following:

- a. Removing the dependent adult from the care or custody of another.
- b. Committing dependent adult abuse on the dependent adult.
- c. Living at the dependent adult's residence.
- d. Contacting the dependent adult in person or by telephone.
- e. Selling, removing, or otherwise disposing of the dependent adult's personal property.
- f. Withdrawing funds from any bank, savings association, credit union, or other financial institution, or from a stock account in which the dependent adult has an interest.
- g. Negotiating any instruments payable to the dependent adult.
- h. Selling, mortgaging, or otherwise encumbering any interest that the dependent adult has in real property.
- i. Exercising any powers on behalf of the dependent adult through representatives of the department, any court-appointed guardian or guardian ad litem, or any official acting on the dependent adult's behalf.
- j. Engaging in any other specified act which, based upon the facts alleged, would constitute harm or a threat of imminent harm to the dependent adult or would cause damage to or the loss of the dependent adult's property.

9. **This section** shall not be construed and is not intended as and shall not imply a grant of entitlement for services to persons who are not otherwise eligible for the services or for utilization of services which do not currently exist or are not otherwise available.

96 Acts, ch 1130, §9; 2005 Acts, ch 50, §2 – 5; 2006 Acts, ch 1080, §1; 2008 Acts, ch 1187, §117, 118; 2011 Acts, ch 129, §91, 156; 2012 Acts, ch 1017, §59, 60; 2015 Acts, ch 29, §36

Referred to in §235B.16A, §235E.4, §633.573, §633.701

Subsection 7 amended