

232.77 Photographs, X rays, and medically relevant tests.

1. *a.* A person who is required to report suspected child abuse may take or perform, or may cause to be taken or performed, at public expense, photographs, X rays, physical assessments, or other tests of a child which would provide medical indication of allegations arising from an assessment.

b. A health practitioner may, if medically indicated, cause to be performed a radiological examination, physical assessment, or other test of the child.

c. A person who takes any photographs or X rays or performs any physical assessments or other tests pursuant to [this section](#) shall notify the department that the photographs or X rays have been taken or the physical assessments or other tests have been performed, and shall retain the photographs, X rays, or physical assessment or other test findings for a reasonable time following the notification.

d. Whenever the person is required to report under [section 232.69](#) in that person's capacity as a member of the staff of a medical or other private or public institution, agency or facility, that person shall immediately notify the person in charge of the institution, agency, or facility or that person's designated delegate of the need for photographs, X rays, physical assessments, or other tests.

2. *a.* If a health practitioner discovers in a child physical or behavioral symptoms of the effects of exposure to cocaine, heroin, amphetamine, methamphetamine, or other illegal drugs, or combinations or derivatives thereof, which were not prescribed by a health practitioner, or if the health practitioner has determined through examination of the natural mother of the child that the child was exposed in utero, the health practitioner may perform or cause to be performed a medically relevant test, as defined in [section 232.73](#), on the child. The practitioner shall report any positive results of such a test on the child to the department. The department shall begin an assessment pursuant to [section 232.71B](#) upon receipt of such a report. A positive test result obtained prior to the birth of a child shall not be used for the criminal prosecution of a parent for acts and omissions resulting in intrauterine exposure of the child to an illegal drug.

b. If a health practitioner involved in the delivery or care of a newborn or infant discovers in the newborn or infant physical or behavioral symptoms that are consistent with the effects of prenatal drug exposure or a fetal alcohol spectrum disorder, the health practitioner shall report such information to the department in a manner prescribed by rule of the department.

[C75, 77, §235A.11; C79, 81, §232.77]

[83 Acts, ch 96, §157, 159; 90 Acts, ch 1264, §29; 93 Acts, ch 93, §3; 94 Acts, ch 1130, §6; 96 Acts, ch 1092, §4; 97 Acts, ch 35, §10, 25; 2013 Acts, ch 115, §9, 19; 2017 Acts, ch 86, §3; 2025 Acts, ch 86, §23](#)

Referred to in [§232.68, 232.73](#)
Subsection 1 amended