

**House File 2256 - Enrolled**

House File 2256

AN ACT

EXEMPTING A PARENT'S OR LEGAL GUARDIAN'S INABILITY TO ACCESS  
APPROPRIATE BEHAVIORAL OR MENTAL HEALTH TREATMENT FOR THEIR  
CHILD FROM THE DEFINITION OF CHILD ABUSE.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF IOWA:

Section 1. Section 232.68, subsection 2, paragraph a,  
subparagraph (4), Code 2026, is amended by adding the following  
new subparagraph division:

NEW SUBPARAGRAPH DIVISION. (d) If a child has a diagnosed  
behavioral health condition and, despite reasonable attempts, the  
child's parent or legal guardian is unable to provide necessary  
care for the child's health and welfare solely because the parent  
or legal guardian is unable to access appropriate behavioral  
or mental health treatment for the child, the department shall  
not consider the lack of provision of appropriate behavioral  
or mental health treatment as child abuse. This subparagraph  
division shall not be construed to prohibit the department  
from assessing a child's situation and facilitating appropriate  
intervention the department deems is in the best interests of the  
child.

Sec. 2. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES —  
INCORPORATION INTO POLICIES. The department of health and human  
services shall adjust the department's child abuse

assessment policies, including the department's policy manuals, to incorporate the provisions of section 232.68, subsection 2, paragraph "a", subparagraph (4), subparagraph division (d), as enacted in this Act.

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PAT GRASSLEY  
Speaker of the House

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AMY SINCLAIR  
President of the Senate

I hereby certify that this bill originated in the House and is known as House File 2256, Ninety-first General Assembly.

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MEGHAN NELSON  
Chief Clerk of the House

Approved \_\_\_\_\_, 2026

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KIM REYNOLDS  
Governor