

Contact: Lucca Wang, Communications Coordinator  
Kansas Coalition Against Sexual and Domestic Violence (KCSDV)  
lwang@kcsdv.org  
785-232-9784 ext. 335



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: June 29, 2017

### **Kansas Lawmakers Pass Significant Violence- And Abuse-related Bills Into Law That Are Effective July 1, 2017**

TOPEKA, KS – This Saturday, July 1, 2017, new domestic violence-, sexual assault- and stalking-related laws will go into effect for Kansas. The Kansas Coalition Against Sexual and Domestic Violence (KCSDV) worked with legislatures, advocates and survivors for four years to pass some of these laws. The laws come into effect just two weeks after KCSDV celebrated 35 years of being a leading statewide voice and coalition for victims and survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault. The nonprofit was founded on June 22, 1982.

Many of these laws have been needed in Kansas for a long time, with many other states offering the same or similar protections. One example is the Protection from Stalking or Sexual Assault Act amendment, which adds sexual assault to the definition of abuse and more clearly defines sexual assault for the purpose of getting a protection order. Sexual assault will now be defined as “engaging in any sexual contact or attempted sexual contact with another person without consent or when such person is incapable of giving consent.” 32 states currently offer a protection order for a sexual assault victim, Kansas being the newest addition to this growing list.

“We are really excited this legislature has picked up these issues as being critical safety issues for victims and survivors,” said KCSDV Executive Director Joyce Grover. “They will provide safety all over the state for years to come.”

Other amendment topics are: strangulation, discussion of fatalities in closed meetings, mental health compensation, consideration of abuse in custody decisions, parental notification after assault, and infectious disease testing of offenders.

A list of the changes effective on July 1, 2017:

1. Senate Bill (SB) 101:

- The Protection from Abuse Act now has sexual assault added to the definition of “abuse.”
- The Protection from Stalking Act becomes the Protection from Stalking or Sexual Assault Act and clearly defines sexual assault for the purpose of getting a protection order as, “engaging in any sexual contact or attempted sexual contact with another person without consent or when such person is incapable of giving consent.”
- House Bill (HB) 2033 inserted into SB 101: Kansas Crime Victims Compensation now allows sexual assault victims to seek crime victims compensation for mental health counseling within two years of being notified of the identification of a suspect. This reflects the state’s work on untested and unsubmitted sexual assault evidence collection kits.

## PRESS RELEASE

- HB 2176 inserted into SB 101: Sexual Assault Evidence Collection Examinations and Parental Notification adds exceptions to parental notification. When a hospital or medical facility has information that parent or guardian of a minor (who receives a sexual assault evidence collection examination) is the subject of a related criminal investigation or the medical professional, after consulting with law enforcement, reasonably believes the minor will be harmed if notification is given, notification to the parent or guardian is not required. This provides an additional layer of protection for minors who may be sexually assaulted by a parent or guardian.
  - HB 2234 Inserted into SB 101: Infectious disease testing of certain offenders is now required to occur not later than 48 hours after the alleged offender appears before a magistrate. The court shall also order the arrested person to submit to follow-up tests for infectious diseases as may be medically appropriate. A magistrate is a civil officer or lay judge who administers the law, especially one who conducts a court that deals with minor offenses and holds preliminary hearings for more serious ones.
2. SB 112:
    - HB 2034 inserted into SB 112: Strangulation of an intimate partner is now a felony, signaling the critical need to recognize the lethality of this abuse. Strangulation stops the flow of blood to and from the brain, inhibits normal breathing and can result in immediate death.
    - HB 2071 inserted into SB 112: Now, in a domestic battery case if presented with protective order information, courts will be required to consider current or prior protective orders when sentences are issued.
  3. SB 124: In the past, judges have been able to consider evidence of emotional and physical spousal abuse when making custody decisions. This update provides a much clearer definition of domestic abuse, which now includes patterns of abusive behavior or threats used to gain control or domination as well as any act of domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking.
  4. HB 2128 inserted into HB 2301: The Kansas Open Meeting Act was amended to allow the Governor's Domestic Violence Fatality Review Board to discuss fatalities in closed meetings.

--End--  
###

The Kansas Coalition Against Sexual and Domestic Violence (KCSDV) is a leading statewide voice for victims and survivors and works with over 25 coalition members across the state of Kansas to prevent and eliminate domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking. Find services, resources and a listing of trainings on KCSDV's website at [www.kcsdv.org](http://www.kcsdv.org). Contact KCSDV by email at [coalition@kcsdv.org](mailto:coalition@kcsdv.org) or by phone at 785.232.9784. The 24-hour Kansas Crisis Hotline is 888-END-ABUSE (888-363-2287).



<https://www.youtube.com/user/KCSDV>

[www.twitter.com/kcsdv](http://www.twitter.com/kcsdv)

<http://www.linkedin.com/company/kcsdv>

[www.instagram.com/kcsdv](http://www.instagram.com/kcsdv)

[www.facebook.com/kcsdv](http://www.facebook.com/kcsdv)