



شعبة الترجمة الرسمية  
Official Translation Department

## **Child Protection Law**

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**Translation of Saudi Laws**



**NOTE:**

The translation of Saudi laws takes the following into consideration:

- Words used in the singular form include the plural and vice versa.
- Words used in the masculine form include the feminine.
- Words used in the present tense include the present as well as the future.
- The word “person” or “persons” and their related pronouns (he, his, him, they, their, them) refer to a natural and legal person.



## Child Protection Law

### Chapter 1: Definitions, Objectives, and Cases of Abuse and Neglect

#### Article 1

In this Law, the following terms shall have the meanings assigned thereto, unless the context requires otherwise:

1. **Child:** Any person under 18 years of age.
2. **Abuse:** All types of child abuse and exploitation, or threatening thereof, including:
  - **Physical abuse:** Exposing a child to physical harm or injury.
  - **Psychological abuse:** Exposing a child to maltreatment which may cause psychological harm or harm to his health.
  - **Sexual abuse:** Exposing a child to any type of sexual assault, harm, or exploitation.
3. **Neglect:** Failure to provide the basic needs of a child including: physical, emotional, psychological, educational, intellectual, social, and cultural needs, in addition to those related to health, upbringing, safety, and security.
4. **Regulations:** The Implementing Regulations of this Law.
5. **Relevant Authorities:** The authorities concerned with child protection, as set forth in the Implementing Regulations.

#### Article 2

This Law aims to:

1. Emphasize the stipulations of Sharia and applicable laws as well as international conventions to which the Kingdom is party, which uphold children's rights and protect children against all forms of abuse and neglect.
2. Protect children against all forms of abuse and neglect, and the manifestations thereof to which they may be exposed in the surrounding environment (home, school, neighborhood, public places, welfare and rehabilitation facilities, foster families, public and private institutions, or the like) whether committed by a person who has guardianship, responsibility, or authority over the child, or a person related thereto, or by any other person.
3. Guarantee the rights of abused or neglected children by providing them with necessary care.
4. Raise awareness of children's rights, especially those related to protection against



child abuse and neglect.

### **Article 3**

The following shall be deemed cases of child abuse or neglect:

1. Leaving a child without family support.
2. Failing to obtain or maintain a child's identification documents, or withholding the same.
3. Failing to complete a child's compulsory vaccinations.
4. Causing interruption to a child's education.
5. Exposing a child to unsafe environments.
6. Maltreatment.
7. Sexually harassing a child or exposing him to sexual exploitation.
8. Exploiting a child financially or forcing him into criminal activities or beggary.
9. Using abusive language to humiliate or degrade a child.
10. Exposing a child to obscene and criminal scenes or other scenes inappropriate for his age.
11. Discriminating against children for racial, social, or economic reasons.
12. Explicitly and continuously failing to raise and care for a child.
13. Allowing a child under the legal driving age to drive a vehicle.
14. Any act that may threaten the safety or physical or psychological well-being of a child.

### **Article 4**

A child shall be considered at risk of delinquency in any of the following cases:

1. Practicing beggary or any illicit act.
2. Rebelling against the control of a parent or caretaker.
3. Regularly escaping from home or from any rehabilitation or housing facilities.
4. Regularly sleeping in places not designated for sleeping or lodging.
5. Regularly visiting socially or morally suspicious places, or places not appropriate for his age, or mingling with homeless or corrupt people.
6. Carrying out activities related to prostitution, gambling, drugs, or the like, or providing services to people engaged in such activities.



## **Chapter 2: A Child's Right to Protection**

### **Article 5**

A child shall always have the priority to protection, care, and relief.

### **Article 6**

A child shall have the right to protection against all forms of abuse or neglect.

### **Article 7**

A child living in an inappropriate family environment where he is exposed to abuse or neglect shall have the right to alternative care through the following:

1. A foster family which provides custody and care.
2. Government, non-government, or charitable institutions which provide social care, when no foster family is available.

The Regulations shall set forth the necessary conditions.

## **Chapter 3: Prohibitions Related to Child Protection**

### **Article 8**

Without prejudice to the provisions of the Labor Law, a child under the age of 15 may not be employed nor assigned to perform activities that may be harmful to his safety or physical or psychological health, nor used in military activities or armed conflicts.

### **Article 9**

A child may not be sexually exploited nor exposed to any form of sexual exploitation, nor shall he be subject to trafficking for purposes of criminal activities or beggary.

### **Article 10**

A child may not be employed in places where narcotics or psychotropic substances are produced or traded.

### **Article 11**

1. It shall be prohibited to sell tobacco, tobacco derivatives, and any harmful substances



to children. Children may not be used in purchasing, selling, or promoting such substances, nor used in the production sites.

2. Importing and selling children toys or candies resembling cigarettes or any other smoking tools shall be prohibited.
3. Displaying any scenes which encourage children to smoke, and smoking in the presence of children shall be prohibited.

### **Article 12**

It shall be prohibited to produce, publish, display, trade, and possess any printed, visual, or audio works targeting children and inciting them to engage in any behavior contrary to the provisions of Sharia, public order, or public decency, or works which may encourage delinquency.

### **Article 13**

Participation of children in sports, recreational activities, or competitions that may endanger their safety or health shall be prohibited.

### **Article 14**

Without prejudice to the provisions of other laws, any medical intervention or procedure on a fetus shall be prohibited, except for necessary medical purposes.

## **Chapter 4: Responsibility towards the Child and the Child's Right to Care**

### **Article 15**

1. The child's parents, or either of them, or his caretaker, shall be responsible, within their abilities and financial capabilities, for raising the child, guaranteeing his rights, providing adequate care thereto, and protecting him against abuse or neglect.
2. The relevant authorities shall take necessary measures to ensure the commitment of the parents - or the caretaker - to their responsibility towards the child, safeguard his rights, and protect him against abuse or neglect.
3. In case the parents are separated, the child shall have the right to visit or contact either of them, unless the interest of the child requires otherwise.

### **Article 16**

All agencies shall take into consideration the interest of the child in all actions taken



regarding the child and shall accelerate the same. They shall also take into consideration the mental, psychological, physical, and educational needs of the child as well as those related to upbringing in a manner that is appropriate to his age, health, etc.

### **Article 17**

All relevant agencies shall promptly take appropriate care and rehabilitation measures if the child is in an environment detrimental to his upbringing as well as his mental, psychological, or physical health.

### **Article 18**

The relevant agencies shall take all appropriate measures to perform the following:

1. Assuming a productive and effective role in promoting preventive healthcare and guidance and raising awareness of children's rights, particularly in relation to health and nutrition, the benefits of breastfeeding, mental health, protection against accidents, and the negative impact of smoking as well as the risks of smoking during pregnancy, in addition to emphasizing children's rights through various media outlets.
2. Supporting school health programs to play an effective role in preventive healthcare and guidance.
3. Guaranteeing the child's right to obtain education appropriate to his age.
4. Protecting the child from dangerous or communicable diseases.
5. Protecting the child from injuries resulting from car accidents and other accidents.
6. Protecting the child from the hazards of environmental pollution.
7. Relieving the suffering of children living under harsh conditions, such as children whose custody is disputed, street and homeless children, and those who are victims of disasters and wars.

### **Article 19**

The relevant agencies shall develop health, educational, psychological, and social programs to rehabilitate abused or neglected children.

### **Article 20**

The relevant agencies shall set comprehensive quality standards for children's toys, whether the toys are locally manufactured or imported, to ensure compliance with health, environmental, and cultural standards and specifications as well as safety means, and to ensure they are not in violation of Sharia.



### **Article 21**

The provisions and procedures set forth in this Law shall not prejudice the following:

1. Obligations of other concerned agencies, each within their jurisdiction.
2. Any provision guaranteeing better protection to the child set forth in any other law or international convention to which the Kingdom is party.

## **Chapter 5: Reporting and Considering Violations of the Law and its Regulations and its Effective Date**

### **Article 22**

1. Any person who becomes aware of a case of abuse or neglect shall promptly report the same to the competent agencies.
2. The competent agencies shall facilitate the reporting of cases of abuse or neglect, especially if made by the child.
3. The Regulations shall specify the procedures for reporting cases of abuse and neglect, and the manner of dealing therewith.

### **Article 23**

1. Subject to Article 22(3) of this Law, the Bureau of Investigation and Public Prosecution shall investigate violations of the provisions of this Law and file lawsuits before the competent court.
2. Subject to the provisions of other relevant laws, the competent court shall consider violations of the provisions of this Law and decide appropriate penalties.

### **Article 24**

The Minister of Social Affairs shall issue the Regulations within 90 days from the publication date of this Law in the Official Gazette, upon coordination with the Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health, Human Rights Commission, and other relevant agencies, each within their jurisdiction. The Regulations shall enter into force as of the date this Law enters into force.

### **Article 25**

This Law shall enter into force 90 days from the date of its publication in the Official Gazette.