

By: Money

H.B. No. 5561

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to the diversion of certain foster youth from the juvenile justice system, including through emergency behavior intervention by certain persons providing foster care services.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1. Section 53.01(b-1), Family Code, is amended to read as follows:

(b-1) The person who is conducting the preliminary investigation shall, as appropriate, refer the child's case to a community resource coordination group, a local-level interagency staffing group, or other community juvenile service provider for services under Section 53.011, if the person determines that:

(1) ~~[the child is younger than 12 years of age,~~  
~~[(2)]~~ there is probable cause to believe the child engaged in delinquent conduct or conduct indicating a need for supervision;

(2) ~~[(3)]~~ the child's case does not require referral to the prosecuting attorney under Subsection (d) or (f);

(3) ~~[(4)]~~ the child is eligible for deferred prosecution under Section 53.03; and

(4) ~~[(5)]~~ the child:  
(A) is younger than 12 years of age, and the child  
and the child's family are not currently receiving services under Section 53.011 and would benefit from receiving the services; or

1                    (B) resides in a general residential operation,  
2 as that term is defined by Section 42.002, Human Resources Code.

3            SECTION 2. Section 42.0426(b), Human Resources Code, is  
4 amended to read as follows:

5            (b) A residential child-care facility shall implement a  
6 behavior intervention program approved by the department for the  
7 benefit of a child served by the facility who needs assistance in  
8 managing the child's conduct. The program must include:

9            (1) behavior intervention instruction for staff  
10 members who work directly with children served by the facility,  
11 including crisis response training for emergency behavior  
12 intervention with a goal of limiting law enforcement involvement;  
13 and

14            (2) training for all employees regarding the risks  
15 associated with the use of prone restraints.

16            SECTION 3. Section 152.00145, Human Resources Code, is  
17 amended to read as follows:

18            Sec. 152.00145. DIVERSION AND DETENTION POLICY FOR CERTAIN  
19 JUVENILES. (a) In this section, "general residential operation"  
20 has the meaning assigned by Section 42.002.

21            (b) A juvenile board shall establish policies that  
22 prioritize:

23            (1) the diversion from referral to a prosecuting  
24 attorney under Chapter 53, Family Code, of children who are:

25                    (A) younger than 12 years of age [~~from referral~~  
26 ~~to a prosecuting attorney under Chapter 53, Family Code]~~; or

27                    (B) residing in a general residential operation,

1 particularly children alleged to have engaged in conduct  
2 constituting a misdemeanor involving violence to a person; and

3 (2) the limitation of detention, to circumstances of  
4 last resort, of children who are:

5 (A) younger than 12 years of age; or

6 (B) residing in a general residential operation  
7 ~~[to circumstances of last resort]~~.

8 (c) To monitor the success of policies implemented under  
9 Subsection (b) for children who reside in general residential  
10 operations, a juvenile board shall track:

11 (1) the number of children referred to the board who  
12 reside in a general residential operation;

13 (2) the number of children described by Subdivision  
14 (1) who receive deferred prosecution or are referred to the  
15 juvenile probation department; and

16 (3) the general residential operation where a child  
17 described by Subdivision (1) resides.

18 SECTION 4. Section 53.01(b-1), Family Code, as amended by  
19 this Act, applies only to conduct that occurs on or after the  
20 effective date of this Act. Conduct that occurs before the  
21 effective date of this Act is governed by the law in effect on the  
22 date the conduct occurred, and the former law is continued in effect  
23 for that purpose. For the purposes of this section, conduct  
24 occurred before the effective date of this Act if any element of the  
25 conduct occurred before that date.

26 SECTION 5. This Act takes effect September 1, 2025.