

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 662
By: Dukes
Human Services
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Although prevention and intervention services for child abuse and neglect are available statewide, the specific services offered and their availability as well as the jurisdiction of each program is often unknown. According to the Prevention and Early Intervention Division of the Department of Family and Protective Services, the population for which services are available may not be known even when service areas are clearly identified. As a result, prevention and intervention services for child abuse and neglect are fragmented.

H.B. 662 seeks to rectify this problem by having the Department of Family and Protective Services coordinate with the Interagency Coordinating Council for Building Healthy Families to develop a strategic plan for child abuse and neglect prevention services. The bill requires transition to a system that promotes prevention services through public awareness efforts and outreach.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

It is the opinion of the author that this bill does not expressly delegate any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, department, agency, or institution.

ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Section 265.001 (1) of the Family Code by defining "Department" as the Department of Family and Protective Services.

SECTION 2. Amends Chapter 265 of the Family Code by adding Section 265.005. Section 265.005 requires by December 1, 2008, the Department of Family and Protective Services in consultation with the Interagency Coordinating Council for Building Healthy Families to develop a statewide, long-range strategic plan for child abuse and neglect prevention services. The plan must include:

- (1) a strategy for the state and political subdivisions of the state to:
 - (A) reduce their need for services addressing child maltreatment; and
 - (B) transition to a system that promotes child abuse and neglect prevention services in order to use cost savings to increase prevention services funding in the future; and
- (2) details for child abuse and neglect public awareness efforts and outreach.

Section 265.005 also requires the Department of Family and Protective Services to assist the Interagency Coordinating Council for Building Healthy Families in any reasonable manner requested by the Interagency Coordinating Council for Building Healthy Families in preparing the portion of the council's report to the legislature regarding the strategic plan required by Section 267.001(g). This section expires September 1, 2009.

SECTION 3. Chapter 266 of the Family Code, as added by Chapter 587, Acts of the 79th Legislature, Regular Session, 2005, is redesignated as Chapter 267 of the Family Code. Section 267.001 is also amended to add the following duties to the Interagency Coordinating Council for Building Healthy Families:

- (1) to facilitate improvements in the coordination of service delivery among state agencies whose programs and services promote and foster healthy families;
- (2) to provide information and other resources to assist those agencies; and
- (3) to receive input from those agencies in order to develop and improve policies for the prevention of and early intervention in child abuse and neglect.

A representative from the Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services is added as an appointed member to the Interagency Coordinating Council for Building Healthy Families. The representative is appointed by the commissioner of the Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services. By December 1, 2008, the Interagency Coordinating Council for Building Healthy Families is required to prepare and submit to the lieutenant governor, the speaker of the house of representatives, and the legislature a report containing the council's recommendations for improving the coordination and collaboration of child abuse and neglect prevention and early intervention programs and services among state agencies. The Interagency Coordinating Council for Building Healthy Families is also required to evaluate and include in its report due by December 1, 2008 the status of its findings regarding:

- (1) the potential for streamlined funding mechanisms for programs and services for the prevention of and early intervention in child abuse and neglect;
- (2) methods for the ongoing identification of additional opportunities for comprehensive improvements to the delivery of services for the prevention of and early intervention in child abuse and neglect;
- (3) the need for increased state funding for programs and services for the prevention of and early intervention in child abuse and neglect in order to ensure a sustained, long-term, cost-effective investment in families in this state.

The report must also include:

- (1) details regarding the strategic plan for child abuse and neglect prevention services developed by the Department of Family and Protective Services in consultation with the council under Section 265.005;
- (2) the council's recommendations regarding implementation of the strategic plan, including a detailed explanation of the resources, the funds, and any interagency or intergovernmental agreements necessary to accomplish the plan; and
- (3) the council's recommendation regarding whether to continue the council.

By December 1, 2009, the Interagency Coordinating Council for Building Healthy Families is required to prepare and submit an additional report to the lieutenant governor, the speaker of the house of representatives, and the legislature. The Interagency Coordinating Council for Building Healthy Families is required to evaluate and include in its report due by December 1, 2009 the status of its findings regarding:

- (1) the effectiveness and cost efficiency of state-funded programs and services for the prevention of and early intervention in child abuse and neglect; and
- (2) the effectiveness of state-funded child maltreatment prevention programs and services in achieving their intended outcomes and methods for transitioning those programs and services to an increased reliance on evidence-based practices.

Sec. 267.002 includes the provision which provides for the expiration of the chapter on January 1, 2010.

SECTION 4. Upon passage, or if the Act does not receive the necessary vote, the Act takes effect on September 1, 2007.

EFFECTIVE DATE

Upon passage, or if the Act does not receive the necessary vote, the Act takes effect on September 1, 2007.