

LEGISLATIVE BUDGET BOARD
Austin, Texas

FISCAL NOTE, 85TH LEGISLATIVE REGULAR SESSION

April 4, 2017

TO: Honorable Charles Schwertner, Chair, Senate Committee on Health & Human Services

FROM: Ursula Parks, Director, Legislative Budget Board

IN RE: SB190 by Uresti (Relating to the effective management of caseloads in the investigation of child abuse or neglect reports by the Department of Family and Protective Services.),
As Introduced

The provisions of the bill would generally not have a significant fiscal impact. The cost related to the proposed requirement to close certain cases at 60 days cannot be determined at this time.

The bill would amend the Family Code to require the commissioner of the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) to establish a rule requiring the Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) to implement a formal review process under which any case that remains open 60 days following a report of abuse or neglect must be reviewed by a supervisor for administrative closure if the case meets certain criteria.

The bill would allow a case that does not qualify for administrative closure to be reassigned to a different caseworker if the reassignment would make the most effective use of resources to investigate and respond to reported cases of abuse or neglect.

The bill would require DFPS to develop a training program for supervisors and caseworkers who investigate reports of abuse or neglect. The training program must include effective utilization of the alternative response system and the process of and requirements for administrative closure.

According to DFPS, the current use of Alternative Response and Family Based Safety Services programs can result in a case remaining open beyond 60 days while receiving these services. The proposed requirement to close certain cases at 60 days could substantially modify the implementation of these programs and could subsequently increase recidivism. The cost related to this impact cannot be determined at this time.

Based on information provided by HHSC and DFPS, it is assumed that the remaining duties and responsibilities associated with implementing the provisions of the bill could be accomplished by utilizing existing resources.

The bill would take effect September 1, 2017.

Local Government Impact

No significant fiscal implication to units of local government is anticipated.

Source Agencies: 529 Health and Human Services Commission, 530 Family and Protective Services, Department of

LBB Staff: UP, KCA, EP, JLi, TBo