

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
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C.S.H.B. 1362
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Health & Human Services
5/20/2019
Committee Report (Substituted)

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

The Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) provides the public with information regarding child protective services (CPS) caseworkers' average daily caseload. However, the difficulty and time necessary for each case varies, and so with the current reporting system, 13 cases a day for one worker may be much more intense and time-consuming than 13 cases a day for another.

H.B. 1362 simply requires DFPS to complete a study on the development and implementation of a scoring system to ensure equity in the distribution of cases among child protective services caseworkers. The study shall require DFPS to consider the procedures for assigning cases, methods for managing caseloads, and factors considered in assigning scores to caseloads and caseworkers.

DFPS shall submit the report containing information related to the caseloads of CPS caseworkers to the governor, lieutenant governor, speaker of the house of representatives, and chairs of the standing committees of the senate and the house of representatives with primary jurisdiction over child protection. DFPS will also be required to determine the average caseload for caseworkers disaggregated by DFPS region and the cost to implement such a caseload scoring system.

Such a procedure will allow for better insight into the demands on CPS caseworkers and potentially better inform policies around average caseloads in the future. Additionally, an equitable distribution of caseloads based on demand and difficulty, rather than a purely aggregate count of cases, would ideally relieve stress among caseworkers, therefore reducing turnover and bettering case outcomes. (Original Author's/Sponsor's Statement of Intent)

C.S.H.B. 1362 amends current law relating to the caseloads of child protective services caseworkers.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

This bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, institution, or agency.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Subchapter C, Chapter 40, Human Resources Code, by adding Section 40.05291, as follows:

Sec. 40.05291. CASEWORKER CASELOAD SCORING SYSTEM AND REPORT. (a) Requires the Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) to study the development and implementation of a scoring system to ensure equity in the distribution of cases among child protective services caseworkers. Requires DFPS, as part of the study, to:

(1) consider:

(A) the procedures for assigning cases;

(B) the methods for managing caseloads; and

(C) the factors considered in assigning scores to caseloads and assigning cases to caseworkers;

(2) determine the appropriate guidelines for average caseloads for caseworkers in each DFPS region;

(3) determine the cost to implement any scoring system developed by DFPS;

(4) ensure any scoring system developed by DFPS has the capability of producing monthly reports that include information for each DFPS region; and

(5) compare the caseloads for caseworkers in each DFPS region with the caseloads of child protective services caseworkers in other states or with national best practices.

(b) Requires DFPS, not later than September 1, 2020, to report the results of the study and any recommendations to the governor, lieutenant governor, speaker of the house of representatives, and chairs of the standing committees of the senate and house of representatives having primary jurisdiction over child protection issues.

(c) Provides that this section expires September 1, 2021.

SECTION 2. Effective date: September 1, 2019.