



# House of Representatives

General Assembly

**File No. 283**

January Session, 2005

Substitute House Bill No. 5179

*House of Representatives, April 12, 2005*

The Committee on Human Services reported through REP. VILLANO of the 91st Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the House, that the substitute bill ought to pass.

***AN ACT CONCERNING MENTAL HEALTH ASSESSMENTS AND TREATMENT PLANS FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH IN THE CARE OR CUSTODY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES.***

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. Subsection (e) of section 17a-6 of the general statutes is  
2 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July*  
3 *1, 2005*):

4 (e) Insure that all children under the commissioner's supervision or  
5 custody have adequate (1) food, clothing [,] and shelter, [and  
6 adequate] (2) medical [,] and dental services, (3) psychiatric [,] and  
7 psychological [,] services, including a uniform, comprehensive,  
8 multidisciplinary child and family assessment as well as an  
9 individualized mental health assessment of the child at the time such  
10 child comes under the commissioner's supervision or custody and  
11 clinically appropriate services based on plans developed from such  
12 assessments, and (4) social, religious and other services.



The following fiscal impact statement and bill analysis are prepared for the benefit of members of the General Assembly, solely for the purpose of information, summarization, and explanation, and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either House thereof for any purpose:

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### **OFA Fiscal Note**

#### **State Impact:**

<b>Agency Affected</b>	<b>Fund-Effect</b>	<b>FY 06 \$</b>	<b>FY 07 \$</b>
Children & Families, Dept.	GF - Cost	Greater than \$1.75 million	Greater than \$1.75 million
Social Services, Dept.	GF - Cost	Potential Significant	Potential Significant
Judicial Dept.	GF - Cost	Greater than \$1.5 million	Greater than \$1.5 million

Note: GF=General Fund

#### **Municipal Impact:** None

#### **Explanation**

Section 1 requires the Department of Children and Families (DCF) to provide a multidisciplinary assessment of each child under the commissioner's supervision or custody at the time the child enters the department's care. Approximately \$980,000 has been included within the Governor's Recommended FY 06-07 Biennial Budget to support fourteen foster care clinics. These clinics are expected to conduct multidisciplinary evaluations of approximately 2,450 children entering foster care, safe homes or shelters for the first time. The bill would expand the number of children receiving evaluations by an estimated 4,400,<sup>1</sup> and result in an additional cost to the department of approximately \$1.75 million annually, assuming inclusion of the Governor's recommended funding level in the final FY 06-07 Appropriations Act.

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<sup>1</sup> Reflects 3,500 children entering the child welfare system who remain in-home; 550 children committed to the commissioner due to delinquency; and 350 children directly entering residential treatment or group homes.

Requiring all children in the care or custody of DCF to receive multidisciplinary evaluations (MDE) will lead to increased costs to the Department of Social Services (DSS). The department provides medical services for a significant portion of these children through the HUSKY A managed care system. The managed care organizations (MCO's) that administer HUSKY A will incur significant increased costs to pay for these evaluations. It is likely that the MCO's will pass these costs on to DSS through the negotiation of future capitated rates. Any increased expenditures under the Medicaid program are subject to fifty percent federal financial participation.

Additionally, the bill requires the DCF to provide clinically appropriate services based upon plans developed from the assessments. To the extent that additional children are identified who require medical or behavioral health services not presently supported by the DCF or HUSKY A program, further significant costs will ensue.

Section 2 of the bill requires the Court Support Services Division of the Judicial Department to develop a program that provides juvenile offenders with mental health screening that is uniform, comprehensive and multidisciplinary. This requirement would increase the complexity (and therefore average cost) of mental health assessments, and is expected to increase the number of assessments made. The associated annual cost is estimated to be greater than \$1.5 million.

**OLR Bill Analysis**

sHB 5179

**AN ACT CONCERNING MENTAL HEALTH ASSESSMENTS AND TREATMENT PLANS FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH IN THE CARE OR CUSTODY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES**

**SUMMARY:**

This bill requires the Department of Children and Families commissioner to ensure that all children under her supervision or custody (i.e., foster children, status offenders, and juvenile delinquents) receive uniform, comprehensive, multidisciplinary child and family assessments and an individualized mental health assessment when they first come under her care. She must use the assessments to provide clinically appropriate services.

The bill also requires the Court Support Services Division of the Judicial Branch to make its mental health screenings, assessment, and treatment for unconfined juvenile offenders uniform, comprehensive, and multidisciplinary.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2005

**COMMITTEE ACTION**

Select Committee on Children

Joint Favorable Change of Reference

Yea 7      Nay 5

Human Services Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 16      Nay 1