

OFFICE OF LEGISLATIVE RESEARCH
PUBLIC ACT SUMMARY



PA 13-77—sSB 763

Human Services Committee

**AN ACT CONCERNING NOTICE OF INVESTIGATIONS BY THE
DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES**

SUMMARY: This act requires the Department of Children and Families (DCF), when opening a child abuse or neglect investigation, to notify both the child's guardian and custodial and noncustodial parents, if such notification is in the child's best interest. DCF may not provide this notice if it has reasonable grounds to believe that doing so would interfere with a criminal investigation or endanger someone.

The notice must:

1. state the abuse or neglect allegation;
2. inform the recipient that DCF, if the law allows, may remove the child from the custodial parent's care;
3. be provided verbally as soon as practicable, and in writing within five business days, after DCF opens the investigation;
4. within all reasonably employed DCF efforts, be in English or the recipient's principal language, if known;
5. indicate the availability of DCF services, such as child care subsidies and emergency shelter; and
6. include Office of Victim Services programs and information on obtaining a restraining order.

If mailed, the notice must be delivered by certified mail, with return receipt requested. If DCF delivers the notice (written or verbal) in person, it must obtain the recipient's written acknowledgment.

By law, DCF must provide a similar notice to these individuals within 10 days of substantiating abuse of a child with a single custodial parent if it is in the child's best interest to do so. In practice, DCF also provides notice of substantiated neglect. The act codifies this practice.

The act also makes technical changes.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2013

OLR Tracking: RC:RP:VR:ts