



# Senate

General Assembly

**File No. 34**

February Session, 2016

Substitute Senate Bill No. 183

*Senate, March 14, 2016*

The Committee on Children reported through SEN. BARTOLOMEO of the 13th Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the Senate, that the substitute bill ought to pass.

## ***AN ACT CONCERNING THE PROGRAM OF FAMILY ASSESSMENT RESPONSE.***

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

1 Section 1. Subsection (g) of section 17a-101g of the general statutes is  
2 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from*  
3 *passage*):

4 (g) (1) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsections (a) to (f),  
5 inclusive, of this section, the commissioner may establish a program of  
6 family assessment response to reports of child abuse and neglect  
7 whereby the report may be referred to appropriate community  
8 providers for family assessment and services without an investigation  
9 or at any time during an investigation, provided there has been an  
10 initial safety assessment of the circumstances of a family and child and  
11 criminal background checks have been performed on all adults  
12 involved in the report.

13 (2) The commissioner may adopt procedures to establish a method  
14 for the department to monitor the progress of the child and family  
15 referred to a community provider pursuant to subdivision (1) of this  
16 subsection and to set standards for reopening an investigation  
17 pursuant to this section.

18 (3) Consistent with the provisions of section 17a-28, the department  
19 shall disclose all relevant information in its possession concerning the  
20 child and family, including prior child protection activity, to each  
21 provider to whom a report has been referred for use by the provider in  
22 the assessment, diagnosis and treatment of unique needs of the family  
23 and the prevention of future reports. Each provider who has received a  
24 report of child abuse or neglect referred pursuant to this subsection  
25 shall disclose to the department, consistent with the provisions of  
26 section 17a-28, all relevant information gathered during assessment,  
27 diagnosis and treatment of the child and family. The department may  
28 use such information solely to monitor and ensure the continued safety  
29 and well-being of the child or children.

30 (4) Not later than July 1, 2016, and annually thereafter, the  
31 department shall submit, in accordance with the provisions of section  
32 11-4a, a report to the joint standing committee of the General Assembly  
33 having cognizance of matters relating to children for inclusion in the  
34 annual report card prepared pursuant to section 2-53m on the status of  
35 the program of family assessment response. Such report shall include  
36 data from the previous twelve months, including, but not limited to:  
37 (A) The number of reports of child abuse or neglect referred for  
38 standard child protective services, and the percentage of such reports  
39 that were thereafter referred for family assessment and services; (B) the  
40 number of families referred for family assessment and services; (C) an  
41 identification, by type, of the reporter of the child abuse or neglect that  
42 resulted in the family being referred for family assessment and  
43 services; (D) the number of families referred for family assessment and  
44 services who were thereafter referred for standard child protective  
45 services, and the percentage of the total of families referred for family  
46 assessment and services who were thereafter referred for standard

47 child protective services; (E) an analysis of the outcome of each report  
 48 that was referred for family assessment and services; (F) an analysis of  
 49 the department's prior or subsequent involvement with a family that  
 50 has been referred for family assessment and services, if applicable; (G)  
 51 a description of services that are commonly provided to families  
 52 receiving family assessment and services from community providers;  
 53 (H) an analysis of the department's staff development and training  
 54 practices relating to the program of family assessment response; (I) the  
 55 number of families referred for family assessment and services who  
 56 thereafter participated in the services provided pursuant to such  
 57 referral, and the percentage of the total of families referred for family  
 58 assessment and services who thereafter participated in the services  
 59 provided pursuant to such referral; and (J) the number of families  
 60 referred for family assessment and services who thereafter completed  
 61 their participation in the services provided pursuant to such referral,  
 62 and the percentage of the total of families referred for family  
 63 assessment and services who thereafter completed their participation  
 64 in the services provided pursuant to such referral.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
---	--	--

Section 1	<i>from passage</i>	17a-101g(g)
-----------	---------------------	-------------

**Statement of Legislative Commissioners:**

In Subsec. (g)(4), Subparas. (A), (D), (I) and (J) were rewritten for clarity and consistency.

**KID**      *Joint Favorable Subst. -LCO*

The following Fiscal Impact Statement and Bill Analysis are prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose. In general, fiscal impacts are based upon a variety of informational sources, including the analyst's professional knowledge. Whenever applicable, agency data is consulted as part of the analysis, however final products do not necessarily reflect an assessment from any specific department.

***OFA Fiscal Note******State Impact:*** None***Municipal Impact:*** None***Explanation***

There is no fiscal impact to the Department of Children and Families associated with reporting data that is currently collected.

***The Out Years******State Impact:*** None***Municipal Impact:*** None

**OLR Bill Analysis****sSB 183*****AN ACT CONCERNING THE PROGRAM OF FAMILY ASSESSMENT RESPONSE.*****SUMMARY:**

This bill requires the Department of Children and Families (DCF), starting by July 1, 2016, to annually report to the Children's Committee on the status of the family assessment response (FAR) program for inclusion in the annual children's report card (see BACKGROUND).

Under the FAR program, when DCF receives a report of child abuse or neglect, it can make referrals to appropriate community providers for family assessment and services either when it decides not to investigate a case that it classifies as presenting a lower safety risk or, if it decides to investigate, at any time during the investigation.

The DCF status report must include data from the previous 12 months, including:

1. the number of reports of child abuse and neglect referred for standard child protective services, and the percentage of those reports that were later referred for family assessment and services;
2. the total number of families referred for family assessment and services;
3. the number of families referred for family assessment and services who (a) were later referred for standard child protective services, and the percent of total family assessment and services referrals this represents; (b) participated in the

services provided through the referral, and the percent of total family assessment and services referrals this represents; and (c) completed their participation in the referred services, and the percent of total family assessment and services referrals this represents;

4. an identification, by type (e.g., parent, school employee, etc.), of the reporter of the child abuse and neglect that resulted in the family being referred for family assessment and services;
5. analyses of (a) the outcome of each report referred for family assessment and services; (b) the department's prior or subsequent involvement with a family that has been referred for family assessment and services, if applicable; and (c) DCF's staff development and training practices relating to the FAR program; and
6. a description of services commonly provided to families receiving family assessment and services from community providers.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

## **BACKGROUND**

### ***Children's Report Card***

By law, the Children's Committee, in collaboration with the offices of Fiscal Analysis and Legislative Research and the Commission on Children, must maintain an annual report card that evaluates the progress of state policies and programs in promoting the result that all Connecticut children grow up in a stable living environment, safe, healthy, and ready to lead successful lives. The report must use data and primary indicators to measure the progress towards this goal in a variety of areas (e.g., statewide rates of child abuse and child poverty) (CGS § 2-53m).

**COMMITTEE ACTION**

Committee on Children

Joint Favorable

Yea 11    Nay 0    (02/25/2016)