

Committee on Children JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No.: SB-315

AN ACT CONCERNING MINOR REVISIONS TO THE STATUTES OF THE

Title: DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES.

Vote Date: 3/15/2018

Vote Action: Joint Favorable Substitute

PH Date: 3/6/2018

File No.:

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SPONSORS OF BILL:

Committee on Children

REASONS FOR BILL:

The purpose of this bill is to make minor revisions to the statutes of the Department of Children and Families.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

Joette Katz, Commissioner, The Department of Children and Families:

The Department of Children and Families testified and submitted testimony in support of this bill. A summary of all eight sections of the bill was included:

1. §§ 1-2 - Consolidation of Reporting Dates for the Children's Mental, Emotional and Behavioral Health Plan: This section aligns the various annual reporting deadlines associated with the Children's Mental, Emotional and Behavioral Health Plan.
2. § 3 - Safe Haven Revisions: This section revises Sec. 17a-58 of the general statutes by removing a requirement that a new mother provide written notice that she wishes to voluntarily surrender her newborn while she is in the hospital to give birth in accordance with the Safe Haven Act.
3. §§ 4-7 - Electronic Reporting of Reports of Child Abuse or Neglect: This section would allow mandated reporters to electronically file "DCF 136" forms (re: Report of Suspected Child Abuse or Neglect) with the DCF Careline. The capability to accept electronic reports is being integrated into the Department's new Comprehensive Child Welfare Information System (CCWIS). Due to the latest timetable for the roll-out of the Intake Module of CCWIS, DCF respectfully requests that the Committee amend

sections 4 through 7 of the bill to change the effective date of these sections to October 1, 2019. They are also requesting that the Committee include language to permit the Commissioner to establish a pilot program for a specific category or categories of mandated reporters, effective July 1, 2018. This would allow them to train staff, train groups of mandated reporters and work out any administrative issues related to electronic reporting before full implementation.

4. § 8 - Legal Clarification Related to a Claim of the Presumption of a Benefit for a Person Who Does Not Have Current Custody of a Child: This section addresses a recent issue that has come to the attention of the Office of the Attorney General.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

See response from administration/agency.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

None submitted.

Reported by: Mikhela Hull

Date: 3/19/18