

OFFICE OF LEGISLATIVE RESEARCH
PUBLIC ACT SUMMARY



PA 21-116—sHB 6510
Committee on Children
Public Health Committee

AN ACT REQUIRING THE PROVISION OF INFORMATION CONCERNING CHILDREN'S BEHAVIORAL AND MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES IN HOSPITAL EMERGENCY DEPARTMENTS AND SCHOOLS

SUMMARY: This act requires the Department of Children and Families (DCF), by December 1, 2021, to develop a document for each mental health region describing the behavioral and mental health evaluation and treatment resources available to children. DCF must do so in consultation with the Behavioral Health Partnership Oversight Council (BHPOC), the Mental Health and Addiction Services and Public Health departments, and DCF's Youth Suicide Advisory Board.

Under the act, BHPOC must (1) distribute the documents electronically to each licensed hospital with an emergency department and to each local and regional board of education and (2) make them available on the council's website.

Starting by December 1, 2022, the act requires DCF to annually review and update the documents as necessary. DCF must provide any updated documents to BHPOC, who must then distribute and make them available in the manner described above.

The act also requires hospital emergency departments, starting on January 1, 2022, to provide a copy of the applicable documents to the parents or guardians of each child upon the child's discharge from the emergency department.

It also requires each local and regional board of education to (1) distribute the applicable document to parents and guardians and certain students starting January 1, 2022, and (2) make the document available on its website by that date.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage, except the provisions on board of education distribution is effective July 1, 2021.

DOCUMENT DESCRIBING AVAILABLE RESOURCES

Under the act, each document must provide information on mental health evaluation and treatment resources available to children in their respective mental health region.

The documents must also contain contact information for the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline and a list of evaluation and treatment providers, including mobile crisis intervention services providers. The list must include the providers' physical locations, if applicable; types of services offered; and contact information.

OLR PUBLIC ACT SUMMARY

EMERGENCY DEPARTMENTS' DISTRIBUTION

Under the act, hospital emergency departments must provide a child's parent or guardian with the DCF documents that pertain to the mental health region where the (1) department is located and (2) child lives, if different, so long as the child lives in the state.

The emergency departments must provide copies of the documents:

1. in printed form or through the child's patient chart in the hospital's electronic health record system, if the chart was created before the date of the child's discharge, and
2. by email to the parent or guardian's email address, if the parent or guardian chooses this.

SCHOOL BOARDS' DISTRIBUTION

The act requires each local and regional board of education to:

1. make the DCF document described above pertaining to its region available on its website by January 1, 2022, and
2. starting January 1, 2022, distribute it to (a) any student taking a course in health and safety and (b) the parents and guardians of each student in the school district, at least semiannually, in September and May.