
OLR Bill Analysis

HB 6645 (as amended by House "A")*

AN ACT REQUIRING PARENTAL NOTIFICATION OF CERTAIN EVENTS BY INPATIENT PSYCHIATRIC AND BEHAVIORAL HEALTH TREATMENT FACILITIES SERVING CHILDREN.

SUMMARY

Starting January 1, 2024, this bill requires any facility, hospital, or psychiatric residential treatment facility that (1) is licensed by the Department of Children and Families (DCF) or Department of Public Health (DPH) and (2) provides inpatient psychiatric, behavioral health, or substance abuse treatment services to one or more children ("facility") to notify parents or guardians when a notice event occurs at the facility. Under the bill, a "notice event" includes events like any child's death by suicide at the facility, a disciplinary action against the facility, or certain DCF or DPH investigations into the facility.

The bill requires the facility to notify the parent or guardian within 24 hours after the notice event or by the next business day, depending on the facility's knowledge of the recipient's contact information.

The bill also requires the facility's director, chief executive officer, or equivalent, or that person's designee, within seven days after the notice event, to submit a written statement to DCF or DPH, as applicable. The statement must describe the notice event and confirm compliance with the notice requirement.

*House Amendment "A" strikes the underlying bill and replaces it with similar provisions. In doing so it (1) specifies that its provisions apply to licensed hospitals and other licensed facilities that provide inpatient psychiatric, behavioral health, or substance abuse treatment services to one or more children and (2) reduces the time following a notice event within which a facility must notify a parent or guardian from seven days to 24 hours if contact information is available or by the

next business day if no contact information is available.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2023

NOTICE EVENT

Under the bill, a “notice event” means the following:

1. start or adjudication of an investigation by a facility, DCF, or DPH into circumstances or an event having or potentially having an adverse effect on the health, safety, or wellness of one or more children receiving the facility’s inpatient psychiatric, behavioral health, or substance use treatment services;
2. start of a DCF or DPH disciplinary action against the facility;
3. suicide of any child receiving these services from the facility; or
4. arrest of a facility’s employee who (a) during employment duties has contact with one or more children receiving such services from the facility and (b) is charged with a felony or an offense or crime that is violent, sexual, or concerns a child.

NOTICE TO PARENT OR GUARDIAN

Notice Timing and Mode

After a notice event, the bill requires the facility to notify parents and guardians as follows:

1. within 24 hours by telephone or email if the facility knows the recipient’s telephone number or email address;
2. within 24 hours by mail if the facility knows the recipient’s mailing address but not the telephone number or email address;
or
3. by the next business day by any method if the facility has no telephone number, email, or mailing information for the parents or guardians at the time of the notice event.

Notice Content

Under the bill, the parent or guardian notice must describe the notice event and any related actions the facility has taken or plans to take to ensure the health, safety, or wellness of the children receiving the specified services from the facility. The bill prohibits the inclusion of personally identifying information of anyone involved in the notice event.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Committee on Children

Joint Favorable

Yea 19 Nay 0 (02/24/2023)