



General Assembly

January Session, 2023

Raised Bill No. 6902

LCO No. 5749



Referred to Committee on APPROPRIATIONS

Introduced by:
(APP)

**AN ACT CONCERNING YOUTH SERVICE BUREAUS AND
ESTABLISHMENT OF A JUVENILE DIVERSIONARY PROGRAM.**

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

1 Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective January 1, 2024*) (a) The Commissioner of
2 Children and Families and the Chief Court Administrator shall
3 develop, in consultation with The Consultation Center at Yale, a
4 program to divert from the juvenile justice and court system juveniles
5 who (1) have committed a first or second criminal offense, (2) have
6 been charged with a minor criminal offense, or (3) are chronically
7 absent from school.

8 (b) Such program shall be administered by the Commissioner of
9 Children and Families and the Chief Court Administrator and shall be
10 known as the Diversion First program. The program shall first be
11 implemented in one or more municipalities in the state having a
12 population of ninety thousand or more. The program shall: (1) Serve as
13 a single point of contact for program participants seeking services
14 provided by a network of community-based agencies; and (2) include a
15 centralized decision-making process regarding program eligibility,
16 service coordination, referrals for services to such agencies and

17 tracking of program participant outcomes. Such agencies shall provide
18 services that include, but need not be limited to, (A) anger
19 management, (B) family counseling, (C) substance abuse education,
20 (D) assessment and treatment for substance abuse, (E) domestic
21 violence identification and prevention, and (F) community service
22 opportunities. The Commissioner of Children and Families and the
23 Chief Court Administrator shall collaborate with school districts in the
24 municipalities in which the program operates to provide program
25 participants with tutoring services, special education and truancy
26 prevention services.

27 (c) The Commissioner of Children and Families and the Chief Court
28 Administrator shall develop the program to utilize existing
29 community services in the municipality in which the program
30 operates. Said commissioner and administrator, in consultation with
31 municipal police departments and youth service bureaus, as described
32 in section 10-19m of the general statutes, as amended by this act,
33 serving the municipality in which the program operates, shall identify
34 (1) all community services that are available to children who are
35 referred to the program and members of their families; and (2) gaps in
36 such services. Said commissioner and administrator, in consultation
37 with such municipal police departments and youth service bureaus,
38 shall take steps to eliminate such service gaps.

39 (d) Municipal police departments in which the Diversion First
40 program operates shall consider referring to the program juveniles
41 involved in criminal activity or who are chronically absent from
42 school. The program shall provide opportunities for victim input
43 utilizing a restorative justice model and allow for identification of
44 measurable outcomes.

45 Sec. 2. Section 10-19m of the general statutes is repealed and the
46 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective January 1, 2024*):

47 (a) For the purposes of this section, "youth" means a person from
48 birth to eighteen years of age. Any one or more municipalities having a

49 population of less than seventy thousand or any one or more private
50 youth-serving organizations, designated to act as agents of one or
51 more municipalities [, may] having a population of less than seventy
52 thousand, shall establish a multipurpose youth service bureau for the
53 purposes of evaluation, planning, coordination and implementation of
54 services, including prevention and intervention programs for
55 delinquent, predelinquent, pregnant, parenting and troubled youths
56 referred to such bureau by schools, police, juvenile courts, adult courts,
57 local youth-serving agencies, parents and self-referrals. A youth
58 service bureau shall be the coordinating unit of community-based
59 services to provide comprehensive delivery of prevention,
60 intervention, treatment and follow-up services.

61 (b) A youth service bureau established pursuant to subsection (a) of
62 this section may provide, but shall not be limited to the delivery of, the
63 following services: (1) [Individual] Screening using a validated risk
64 and needs assessment screening tool to develop a plan for services; (2)
65 comprehensive case management and coordination services; (3)
66 individual and group counseling; [(2)] (4) parent training and family
67 therapy; [(3)] (5) restorative justice practices; (6) work placement and
68 employment counseling; [(4)] (7) educational advocacy and
69 educational supports; (8) alternative and special educational
70 opportunities; [(5)] (9) recreational and youth enrichment programs;
71 [(6)] (10) outreach programs to [insure] ensure participation and
72 planning by the entire community for the development of regional and
73 community-based youth services; [(7)] (11) preventive programs,
74 including youth pregnancy, youth suicide, violence, alcohol and drug
75 prevention; and [(8)] (12) programs that develop positive youth
76 involvement. Such services shall be designed to [meet the needs of
77 youths by the diversion of troubled] divert youths from the justice
78 system [as well as by the provision of] and provide opportunities for
79 all youths to function as responsible members of their communities. If
80 the youth service bureau has identified services that are needed by a
81 youth but cannot be provided by the youth service bureau, the youth
82 service bureau shall refer such youth to an appropriate service

83 provider in the community who can provide the needed services. Not
84 later than fifteen days after such referral, the referring youth service
85 bureau shall consult with the provider to whom it referred such youth
86 for a service status report. If the youth service bureau determines that
87 the diversion to community services was unsuccessful, the youth
88 service bureau shall refer such youth back to the juvenile justice and
89 court system.

90 (c) The Commissioner of Children and Families shall adopt
91 regulations, in accordance with the provisions of chapter 54,
92 establishing minimum performance standards for such youth service
93 bureaus and the criteria for qualifying for state cost-sharing grants,
94 including, but not limited to, allowable sources of funds covering the
95 local share of the costs of operating such bureaus, acceptable in-kind
96 contributions and application procedures. The commissioner shall, [on
97 December 1, 2011] not later than December 1, 2024, and biennially
98 thereafter, submit a state-wide performance report to the [General
99 Assembly] Juvenile Justice Policy and Oversight Committee
100 established pursuant to section 46b-121n on the referral or diversion of
101 children and youth under the age of eighteen years from the juvenile
102 justice system and the court system. Such report shall include, but not
103 be limited to, (1) demographic data on age, race, ethnicity and gender
104 of children and youth receiving services from youth service bureaus,
105 (2) results of any screenings conducted, (3) data on the types of
106 services provided, (4) data on program completion and outcomes, (5)
107 the number of times any child or youth is so diverted, (6) the number
108 of children and youth diverted, (7) the type of service provided to any
109 such child [by whom,] or youth, (8) identification of the juvenile justice
110 or court system from which such child or youth was diverted, (9) the
111 ages of the children and youth diverted, (10) identification of any
112 youth service bureau not meeting established minimum performance
113 standards, established by the commissioner pursuant to this
114 subsection, and (11) an outline of a performance improvement plan,
115 developed in accordance with subsection (d) of this section, for such
116 youth service bureau, and such other information and statistics as the

117 General Assembly may request from time to time. Any such report
118 shall contain no identifying information about any particular child or
119 youth.

120 (d) The Commissioner of Children and Families shall develop and
121 implement a performance improvement plan for each youth service
122 bureau not meeting the minimum performance standards established
123 by the commissioner and shall offer technical and other needed
124 assistance to such youth service bureau directly or through a third
125 party to comply with such performance standards.

126 (e) Each youth service bureau shall, not later than September 1,
127 2024, and annually thereafter, report the following information to the
128 Commissioner of Children and Families: (1) Demographic data on
129 children and youth served, including age, race, ethnicity and gender;
130 (2) results of any screening conducted; (3) services provided; (4)
131 service completion; and (5) outcome data. Any such report shall not
132 contain identifying information about any particular child or youth.

133 (f) For purposes of this section, "divert" means to provide an
134 alternative to a court referral for a juvenile arrested for the first or
135 second time of an infraction or misdemeanor, including, but not
136 limited to: (1) Simple trespass under section 53a-110a; (2) creating a
137 public disturbance under section 53a-181a; (3) disorderly conduct
138 under section 53a-182; (4) fifth degree larceny under section 53a-125a;
139 (5) sixth degree larceny under section 53a-125b; and (6) breach of the
140 peace under section 53a-181.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	January 1, 2024	New section
Sec. 2	January 1, 2024	10-19m

APP *Joint Favorable*