



2023 Acts Affecting Children

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Notice to Readers

This report provides summaries of new laws (public acts and one special act) significantly affecting children enacted during the 2023 legislative session. OLR's other Acts Affecting reports, including Acts Affecting Education, are, or will soon be, available on OLR's website:

<https://www.cga.ct.gov/olr/actsaffecting.asp>.

Each summary indicates the public act (PA) or special act (SA) number. Not all provisions of the acts are included. The report does not include vetoed acts unless the veto was overridden.

Complete summaries of public acts are, or will soon be, available on OLR's website:

<https://www.cga.ct.gov/olr/olrsums.asp>.

Readers are encouraged to obtain the full text of acts that interest them from the Connecticut State Library, House Clerk's Office, or General Assembly's website: <http://www.cga.ct.gov>. A number of new laws affect schools and students, including early childhood education. Please refer to OLR's Acts Affecting Education report for these new laws.

Table of Contents

Child Behavioral and Mental Health.....	5
Eligibility for Paid Sick Leave.....	5
Psychosis Task Force.....	5
Study of Community-Based Bereavement and Grief Counselor Organizations for Children and Families	5
Task Force to Study Children’s Needs.....	5
Child Health and Safety.....	6
Car Seat Violation Fine Cancellation	6
Emergency Services Awareness Programs	6
Encouragement to Obtain Opioid Antagonists.....	6
Grant Program for High Poverty-Low Opportunity Census Tracts	6
HUSKY Expansion for Immigrant Children	7
HUSKY Health Child Enrollment.....	7
Infant Mortality.....	7
Lead Poisoning Prevention and Treatment.....	7
Newborn Screening for Cytomegalovirus	8
Repealed Child Health Quality Improvement Program.....	8
Safe Storage and Disposal of Prescription Drugs.....	8
Sensory Kits for Emergency Services Personnel	9
Splash Pad and Spray Park Warning Signs.....	9
Title IX Assessment Working Group.....	9
Universal Nurse Home Visiting Program	9
Child Protection and Welfare	10
Evaluations and Reports Related to Parenting and Substance Use Disorder.....	10
Harmful Communication With a Minor	10
Local Voluntary Public Safety Registration System for Children With IDD.....	11
Minors and Online Services, Products, and Features	11
Opioid Settlement Fund Advisory Committee	11
Risk of Injury to a Child	12
Social Media Platforms.....	12
State Police Sting Operations Unit Regarding Online Sexual Abuse of Minors	12
Courts and Criminal Law	13
Deceptive or Coercive Interrogation Tactics	13
Financial Support Hearings in Divorce and Custody Proceedings.....	13
Firearm Risk Warrants for Children	13
Minimum Age to Marry	14
Early Childcare and Childcare Programs	14

Blue-Ribbon Panel on Child Care	14
Child Care Centers Near Certain Higher Education Institution Campuses	14
Community and Child-Care Residences	14
Exempting Military Child Care Programs From State Licensing.....	15
Increased Business Tax Credit for Child Care Investments	15
Individualized Family Service Plans.....	16
Payment to Birth-to-Three Program Early Intervention Service Providers.....	16
Juvenile Justice	16
Access to Juvenile Delinquency Records	16
Confidentiality of Juvenile Records and Proceedings.....	16
Department of Corrections (DOC) Commissary Implementation Plan	17
Juvenile Matters.....	17
Schools and Education.....	18
Grant Program for Student Mental Health Services.....	18
Grants to Hire School Social Workers, Psychologists, Counselors, Nurses, Licensed Marriage and Family Therapists, and School Mental Health Specialists	18
Early Childhood Education Fund	18
Medicaid Reimbursement for School-Based Mental Health Assessments	19
School Meals.....	19
School Readiness Program	19
Services for At-Risk Teenage Students.....	19
Miscellaneous	19
Connecticut Baby Bond Trust Program	19
Diaper Changing Tables in Public Buildings.....	20
Employment of 15-Year-Olds.....	20
Stillbirths.....	20
Stillborn Tax Credit.....	21
Tax Credit for Donations to Eligible Youth Development Organizations	21
Two-Generational Initiative.....	21

Child Behavioral and Mental Health

Eligibility for Paid Sick Leave

A new law extends eligibility for paid sick leave to a service worker who is the parent or guardian of a child who is a victim of family violence or sexual assault, provided the service worker is not the perpetrator or alleged perpetrator of the violence or assault. The law applies to specified service worker occupations covered by existing law (e.g., certain food, health care, hospitality, retail, and sanitation industry workers).

Under existing law, employers must provide paid sick leave to a service worker who is a family violence or sexual assault victim to, among other things, obtain medical care or psychological or other counseling for physical injury or disability, or participate in a related civil or criminal legal proceeding ([PA 23-101](#), § 8, effective October 1, 2023).

Psychosis Task Force

A new law creates a 10-member task force to study various issues relating to the treatment of childhood and adult psychosis. The task force must report its findings and recommendations to the Public Health Committee by January 1, 2024 ([PA 23-97](#), § 28, effective upon passage).

Study of Community-Based Bereavement and Grief Counselor Organizations for Children and Families

A new law requires the Commission on Women, Children, Seniors, Equity, and Opportunity (CWCSEO), in collaboration with the Social and Emotional Learning and School Climate Advisory Collaborative and at least one community-based bereavement and grief counseling resource center serving children and families, to conduct a study of community-based bereavement and counseling resource centers serving children and families ([PA 23-101](#), § 19, effective upon passage).

Task Force to Study Children's Needs

Recent legislation expanded the duties of the Task Force to Study Children's Needs to include (1) reviewing and analyzing certain programs that received pandemic-related funding; (2) making recommendations on which programs should receive a more permanent funding structure; and (3) conducting a needs assessment focused on students enrolled in a Connecticut high school from classes graduating from 2020-2023 ([PA 23-101](#), § 15, effective upon passage).

Child Health and Safety

Car Seat Violation Fine Cancellation

By law, people transporting children must secure them as the law requires (e.g., in a car seat or booster seat), and a first violation of this requirement is an infraction. A new law allows the court, within 14 days after the violation but before imposing the fine, to cancel the fine for a first-time violator if he or she shows proof of acquiring, renting, or buying a car seat or booster seat appropriate for the child he or she transports ([PA 23-40](#), § 15, effective October 1, 2023).

Emergency Services Awareness Programs

Under a new law, the Department of Developmental Services, Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection (DESPP), and Department of Children and Families (DCF) must, by December 31, 2023, jointly develop guidelines and best practices for municipalities to create and implement emergency services awareness programs for children and adults with an autism spectrum disorder, cognitive impairments, nonverbal learning disorders, and intellectual and other developmental disabilities. The departments must publish the guidelines and best practices on their respective websites by January 1, 2024 ([PA 23-137](#), § 9, effective upon passage).

Encouragement to Obtain Opioid Antagonists

A new law requires prescribing practitioners, when prescribing an opioid, to encourage the patient to obtain an opioid antagonist. If the patient is a minor, the prescriber must also encourage the patient's custodial parent, guardian, or other person with legal custody to obtain an opioid antagonist, if they are present when the prescription is being issued ([PA 23-97](#), § 6, effective October 1, 2023).

Grant Program for High Poverty-Low Opportunity Census Tracts

This year's bond act requires the Department of Economic and Community Development commissioner to establish a grant program to fund eligible projects in "high poverty-low opportunity census tracts." Under the act, these are census tracts in which at least 30% of the residents have incomes below the federal poverty level, according to the U.S. Census Bureau's most recent five-year American Community Survey. The act authorizes general obligation (GO) bonds of up to \$50 million per year from FYs 24-29 (\$300 million total) for the program.

The act also requires the Office of Early Childhood (OEC) commissioner, by February 1, 2024, to report to the Children's Committee on the following:

1. an asset map of currently available services supporting families with young children in high poverty-low opportunity census tracts;
2. the number of children and families in need of support in these tracts and a plan, including necessary staffing and funding, to assure that each child under age five and their families will have access to early childhood services (e.g., home visits, child care, access to family resource centers, and health care); and
3. a plan to prioritize early childhood services and assess the cost of assuring they are available and accessible in the tracts ([PA 23-205](#), §§ 101-104, effective July 1, 2023, except the OEC report provision is effective upon passage).

HUSKY Expansion for Immigrant Children

New legislation extends HUSKY health benefits to children ages 15 and under, rather than ages 12 and under, beginning July 1, 2024, who meet program income limits but are ineligible due to immigration status. Further, the law requires the Department of Social Services (DSS) to study extending coverage to all children and young adults ages 25 and younger under similar conditions ([PA 23-204](#), §§ 283-285, effective upon passage).

HUSKY Health Child Enrollment

A new law requires DSS, for FY 24, to hire temporary and part-time employees responsible for collaborating with nonprofit organizations to identify and enroll eligible children in the HUSKY Health program ([PA 23-101](#), § 16, effective July 1, 2023).

Infant Mortality

A new law establishes an Infant Mortality Review Program within the Department of Public Health (DPH) to review medical records and other data on infant deaths (i.e., those occurring between birth and one year of age) and sets related requirements on record access, information sharing, and confidentiality.

It also tasks a DPH Infant Mortality Review Committee that the act creates to conduct a comprehensive, multidisciplinary review of infant deaths to reduce health care disparities, identify associated factors, and make recommendations to reduce the deaths ([PA 23-147](#), §§ 10-12, effective October 1, 2023).

Lead Poisoning Prevention and Treatment

This session, the legislature made various changes related to lead poisoning prevention and treatment, such as (1) reducing the timeframe within which a health care provider must notify the parent of a child under age three with an elevated blood lead level; (2) modifying the blood lead

level thresholds at which local health department programs must provide children case management services; and (3) requiring pediatricians to complete annual lead risk assessment for all children from birth to age six and annually screen those with elevated risk ([PA 23-31](#), §§ 28-42 & 52, various effective dates).

Newborn Screening for Cytomegalovirus

Prior law required all health care institutions caring for newborn infants to test each newborn who fails a newborn hearing screening for cytomegalovirus (CMV). Starting July 1, 2025, a new law instead requires CMV testing as part of the existing newborn screening program, thereby requiring all newborns to be tested for the condition.

By law, the newborn screening program generally requires health care institutions, licensed nurse-midwives, and midwives to perform newborn screenings using blood spot specimens between 24 and 48 hours after the infant's birth.

The act also requires the public health commissioner to convene a CMV working group to study the condition, including (1) screening in other states; (2) treatment for newborns with positive, asymptomatic screening results; (3) best practices for universal screening; (4) planning for implementing universal screening; and (5) education for health care providers and vulnerable populations. The commissioner must report the working group's findings to the Public Health Committee by January 1, 2025 ([PA 23-204](#), §§ 191 & 192, effective upon passage).

Repealed Child Health Quality Improvement Program

The budget and implementer act repealed a requirement that DSS (1) collaborate with DCF and DPH to establish a child health quality improvement program to improve HUSKY Health service delivery and access and (2) annually report on the program ([PA 23-204](#), § 443, effective upon passage).

Safe Storage and Disposal of Prescription Drugs

A new law makes changes in laws that address the safe storage and disposal of prescription drugs and other substances. Among other things, it requires:

1. pharmacies to affix a fluorescent orange sticker or label with black ink that says "DANGER TO CHILDREN KEEP OUT OF REACH" on any container or packaging in which an opioid drug or schedule II, III, IV, or V controlled substance is sold or dispensed, beginning January 1, 2024;

2. the Department of Consumer Protection commissioner to (a) adopt regulations by July 1, 2024, and (b) implement policies and procedures, by September 1, 2023, to provide guidance to pharmacies in implementing the new law; and
3. the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services) DMHAS, by July 1, 2024, to develop and administer a public awareness campaign about the (a) safe storage and disposal of prescription drugs, cannabis, cannabis products, and illegal drugs and (b) dangers they pose to children and tactics to reduce and eliminate them ([PA 23-100](#), effective upon passage).

Sensory Kits for Emergency Services Personnel

A new law requires the Department of Administrative Services to develop and acquire sensory kits for DESPP to distribute to emergency services personnel who interact with children and adults with autism spectrum disorder, cognitive impairments, or nonverbal learning disorders. The kits must (1) help these children and adults manage emotions and anxiety while interacting with emergency services personnel and during emergencies to which they respond and (2) include noise-canceling headphones, dark tinted glasses, and anxiety-reducing tactile objects or toys.

Municipalities may apply to DESPP for these sensory kits, as the department prescribes, by September 1, 2025 ([PA 23-137](#), § 10, effective upon passage).

Splash Pad and Spray Park Warning Signs

Under a new law, owners or operators of splash pads and spray parks where water is recirculated must post a sign stating that the water is recirculated and warning of the potential health risk of ingesting it. They must post the sign by January 1, 2024, and in a conspicuous place at or near the entrance ([PA 23-97](#), § 21, effective July 1, 2023).

Title IX Assessment Working Group

A new law creates a 12-member working group to study the possibility of assessing all municipal recreation areas and facilities used for organized sports, and any sports facilities maintained by a public school, to determine if they comply with Title IX of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1972 (a federal law aimed at ensuring male and female students and employees in educational settings are treated equally and fairly). The group must submit its findings and recommendations to the Planning and Development and Education committees by January 1, 2024 ([SA 23-18](#), effective upon passage).

Universal Nurse Home Visiting Program

A new law requires the OEC commissioner, within available appropriations, to develop and implement a statewide universal nurse home visiting services program for all families with

newborns living in the state to support parental health, healthy child development, and strengthen families.

Under the act, universal nurse home visiting services are provided by licensed registered nurses with specialized training in providing in-home services to families with newborns. The program's services are voluntary and do not have any negative consequences for a family that does not participate. Services may be offered in every community in Connecticut and to all families with newborns based on the full extent of available provider capacity ([PA 23-147](#), § 16, effective July 1, 2023).

Child Protection and Welfare

Evaluations and Reports Related to Parenting and Substance Use Disorder

A new law requires DCF, DMHAS, and DSS to evaluate or report on various supports, programs, and related issues for parents, other child caregivers, or pregnant individuals with substance use disorder. For example, it requires (1) these commissioners to report on access for parents involved with DCF, when applicable, to appropriate substance use disorder treatment in the state, to prevent children's removal from their parents, when possible, and support reunification when removal is necessary; (2) DMHAS and DSS to collaborate with OEC to create a plan to allow parents in substance use disorder treatment to qualify for child care supports and subsidies; and (3) the DCF commissioner to report on the department's efforts to mitigate child safety concerns in the home when the child's caregiver has a substance use disorder ([PA 23-97](#), §§ 29-34, effective upon passage).

Harmful Communication With a Minor

A new law establishes a new crime of harmful communication with a minor as a class A misdemeanor (punishable by up to 364 days imprisonment, up to a \$2,000 fine, or both). Anyone who is age 25 or older is guilty of this crime when the person uses an interactive computer service or text message to knowingly persuade, induce, entice, or coerce a "minor" (i.e., anyone under age 18 or whom the actor reasonably believes to be under age 18) to do certain actions (e.g., inappropriate sharing of a photograph or recording or certain unsuitable communications) ([PA 23-123](#), effective October 1, 2023).

Local Voluntary Public Safety Registration System for Children With IDD

A new law creates a voluntary public safety registration system that municipal police departments may implement for parents and guardians of children with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD), including autism spectrum disorder, cognitive impairments, and nonverbal learning disorders. It requires DESPP, within available appropriations, to develop a form that municipal police departments may distribute to these parents and guardians to collect specified information that can help emergency services personnel (i.e., police, firefighting, medical, ambulance, and others) interact with the children. Participating municipal police departments must record the information collected in a database that police officers and emergency dispatchers can access in specified situations ([PA 23-137](#), §§ 7 & 8, as amended by [PA 23-204](#), § 170, effective upon passage).

The FY 24-25 bond act authorizes \$800,000 in state general obligation bonds for this local voluntary public safety registration system ([PA 23-205](#), § 95, effective July 1, 2023).

Minors and Online Services, Products, and Features

This session the legislature established a framework and set requirements for how controllers (i.e., people or entities that determine the purposes and means of processing data) who offer online services, products, and features manage, process, and get consent to use the personal data of minors. Among other things, the new law specifically requires them to use reasonable care to avoid having their services, products, and features cause any heightened risk of harm to a minor. They are also prohibited from (1) processing the minor's personal data without receiving the minor's or his or her parent's or guardian's consent; (2) using any system design feature to significantly increase, sustain, or extend a minor's use of such online service, product, or feature; and (3) collecting a minor's precise geolocation data ([PA 23-56](#), §§ 8-13, effective October 1, 2024).

Opioid Settlement Fund Advisory Committee

A new law increases, from 37 to 45, the membership of the Opioid Settlement Fund Advisory Committee, including by adding two members with experience supporting infants and children affected by the opioid crisis, appointed by the DMHAS commissioner. By law, the committee ensures (1) Opioid Settlement Fund moneys are allocated and spent on specified substance use disorder abatement purposes and (2) robust public involvement, accountability, and transparency in allocating and accounting for the fund's moneys ([PA 23-97](#), § 35, effective July 1, 2023).

Risk of Injury to a Child

A new law limits the circumstances under which a parent or guardian may be found guilty of leaving a minor unattended in a public place or motor vehicle. In doing so, it also limits the circumstances under which injury or risk of injury to a minor may be found.

By law, it is a class A misdemeanor for any parent, guardian, or person with custody, control, or supervision of a child under age 12 to knowingly leave the child unsupervised in a place of public accommodation or motor vehicle for a period of time that presents a substantial risk to the child's health or safety. (A class A misdemeanor is punishable by up to 364 days in prison, a fine up to \$2,000, or both.)

Under the new law, when determining whether someone committed this violation, consideration must be given to whether the person exercised judgment that a reasonable person would use to determine if the child was of sufficient age, maturity, and physical and mental ability to be unsupervised under the circumstances. Additionally, the new law prohibits a finding of substantial risk based solely on the person allowing a child who is of sufficient age, maturity, physical condition, and mental ability to participate in independent activities (e.g., traveling to and from school and unsupervised outdoor play), if a reasonable person would not believe participating creates an obvious danger to the child's safety ([PA 23-176](#), effective October 1, 2023).

Social Media Platforms

Under a new law, social media platforms must unpublish (i.e., remove a social media platform account from public visibility) a minor's account within 15 business days after receiving a request from a minor, or the minor's parent or legal guardian if the minor is under age 16. It also generally (1) requires the platform, within 45 business days after receiving the request, to delete the account and (2) stop processing the minor's personal data ([PA 23-56](#), § 7, effective July 1, 2024).

State Police Sting Operations Unit Regarding Online Sexual Abuse of Minors

A new law requires the DESPP commissioner, for FYs 25 and 26, to establish an investigative unit within the Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force to conduct sting operations relating to the online sexual abuse of minors ("the investigative unit"). Among other things, the task force, using the investigative unit, must (1) perform undercover and investigative operations to prevent and detect these criminal, or suspected criminal, activities and (2) compile, monitor, analyze, and share related data.

By November 1, 2024, the new law requires the Police Officer Standards and Training Council, in consultation with the DESPP commissioner, to develop: (1) a standardized form or other reporting system for law enforcement to report to the investigative unit; (2) best practices to investigate online sexual abuse of minors and to facilitate information sharing between the investigative unit and law enforcement units; (3) a model policy for investigating online sexual abuse of minors; and (4) ways to inform the public on how to report these criminal activities ([PA 23-204](#), §§ 326 & 327, most provisions effective July 1, 2023).

Courts and Criminal Law

Deceptive or Coercive Interrogation Tactics

A new law generally presumes any written or oral admission, confession, or statement is involuntary and inadmissible in any proceeding if it was made by someone during a custodial interrogation in which a law enforcement agency official or the official's agent used deception or coercive tactics. The new law defines certain tactics that apply to everyone and specific ones that only apply when interrogating a minor (e.g., using false facts about evidence or making false statements or misrepresentations of the law) ([PA 23-27](#), effective October 1, 2023).

Financial Support Hearings in Divorce and Custody Proceedings

A new law establishes a timeframe within which the court must hold a hearing on temporary financial support in divorce, legal separation, annulment, and custody proceedings. Under the new law, the court must hold the hearing within 60 days after the filing date of (1) a motion requesting an initial order of alimony or support pendente lite (i.e., pending the case outcome) and (2) the moving party's accompanying affidavit making specific attestations (e.g., moving party has insufficient funds to meet minor children's reasonable needs).

If a hearing needs to be continued or rescheduled, the new law requires the court to (1) give it calendar priority and (2) if the court is closed or one of the parties has an emergency, reschedule to a date within 14 days after the originally scheduled hearing date ([PA 23-7](#), effective January 1, 2024).

Firearm Risk Warrants for Children

The state's "red flag" law allows courts to authorize the temporary seizure of firearms of other deadly weapons from people who may pose a danger to themselves or other people. A new law limits the existing process to adults and creates a new, separate risk warrant process for children (under age 18) who possess firearms or other deadly weapons and pose an imminent risk of injuring other people. Like the existing process, the new process starts with an investigation on the

police or prosecutor’s initiative or a court-ordered investigation requested by family or household members or medical professionals ([PA 23-89](#), §§ 1-3, most provisions effective upon passage).

Minimum Age to Marry

A new law prohibits anyone under age 18, including emancipated minors, from being issued a marriage license under any circumstances. It does so by removing an exception in prior law that generally allowed a 16- or 17-year-old to get a marriage license if the probate court approved a petition filed by the minor’s parent or guardian ([PA 23-44](#), effective July 1, 2023).

Early Childcare and Childcare Programs

Blue-Ribbon Panel on Child Care

This year’s budget implementer act requires the OEC commissioner to annually report recommendations from the Blue-Ribbon Panel on Child Care to the Appropriations and Education committees. The governor’s executive order (EO 23-1, March 17, 2023) established this panel, chaired by the OEC commissioner, to serve as his principal advisor on child care and early childhood issues and coordinate state agencies’ efforts to promote an effective child care and early childhood education system ([PA 23-204](#), § 339, effective July 1, 2023).

Child Care Centers Near Certain Higher Education Institution Campuses

Existing law requires the Board of Regents for Higher Education to consult with the OEC to develop a plan to increase the number of OEC-licensed child care centers or group child care homes on or near each regional community technical college and state university campus. The plan must include the expansion and maintenance of child care facilities that (1) are used by an early childhood education program for instructional purposes or (2) provide evening and weekend child care services in accordance with college or university course schedules.

This session, the legislature passed a law adding to the plan’s requirements. The plan must include, among other things, an assessment of the student body’s child care needs and the existing child care services and facilities available on each campus or in the surrounding community, and a budget and implementation timeline for the plan ([PA 23-118](#), effective upon passage).

Community and Child-Care Residences

This session, the legislature made several changes in laws governing where certain community and child-care residential facilities (i.e., certain group homes for adults or children, respectively, who have disabilities) may be located. Among other things, these changes:

1. increase the size, from those housing six people to those housing eight people, of these residences (and certain hospice residences) that are protected from zoning regulations treating them differently than single family homes;
2. modify the definition of “community residence” (to no longer use the term “mentally ill”) that applies to a public health provision and restriction on zoning regulations allowing for multi-family dwellings; and
3. exempt certain community and child-care residences from prohibitions on their locating within 1,000 feet from one another ([PA 23-137](#), §§ 65-68, effective October 1, 2023, as amended by [PA 23-204](#), § 172, effective upon passage).

Exempting Military Child Care Programs From State Licensing

This session, the legislature passed a law exempting from state licensing requirements certain child care programs that only serve military members’ children. It exempts these programs if they are administered by (1) the federal government or on federal property (e.g., a military installation) or (2) in-home day care providers (generally military spouses) that are certified by the United States Coast Guard or a Department of Defense military branch, which requires that providers comply with conditions similar to those state licensure requires (e.g., inspections, background checks, and trainings) ([PA 23-29](#), effective upon passage).

Increased Business Tax Credit for Child Care Investments

Starting with the 2024 income year, a new law makes businesses eligible for a 25% corporation business tax credit for certain child care-related investments. It does so by (1) increasing the existing human capital investment tax credit from 5% to 25% for currently eligible child care-related expenses (i.e., subsidies to in-state employees for in-state child care and facility-related expenses paid to establish a child care center for use primarily by in-state employees’ children) and (2) expanding eligibility for the 25% credit to include donations or capital contributions to 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations for site preparation and planning, constructing, renovating, or acquiring facilities to establish a child care center for use by children living in the community, including in-state employees’ children.

The new law also makes it easier for businesses to claim the credits for child care-related expenses by allowing them to reduce up to 70% of their tax liability with the credits each year (currently, a 50.1% cap applies to all corporation tax credits except R&D credits) ([PA 23-204](#), §§ 351 & 352, effective January 1, 2024).

Individualized Family Service Plans

The legislature recently passed a law requiring Birth-to-Three program individualized family service plans to be translated into and provided in Spanish for any family whose primary language is Spanish. Existing law requires eligible children in the program and their families to generally receive within set timeframes a (1) multidisciplinary assessment, (2) written individualized family service plan, and (3) review of the plan.

Additionally, the act requires an eligible child whose primary language is Spanish to receive early intervention services from Spanish-speaking personnel and a Spanish-speaking service coordinator. Under the act, if there is no such personnel or coordinator available within the system to provide early intervention services, then a Spanish-speaking interpreter must be used to provide these services to the eligible child ([PA 23-101](#), §§ 5-6, effective July 1, 2023).

Payment to Birth-to-Three Program Early Intervention Service Providers

A new law makes permanent the \$200 general administrative payment the OEC commissioner must make to certain Birth-to-Three early intervention service providers. Under prior law, this payment requirement would have sunset on June 30, 2024.

By law and unchanged by the act, the commissioner must make these payments to providers for each child (1) with an individualized family service plan on the first day of the billing month and (2) whose plan accounts for less than nine service hours during the billing month, so long as the provider delivers at least once service during the month ([PA 23-101](#), §§ 3-4, effective July 1, 2023).

Juvenile Justice

Access to Juvenile Delinquency Records

A new law gives municipal, state, and federal agency employees and authorized agents access to juvenile delinquency case records to evaluate a proposed firearm transfer to someone under age 21, as the federal Bipartisan Safer Communities Act requires. By law, juvenile delinquency case records are generally confidential and for the juvenile court's use, with exceptions in specified situations ([PA 23-25](#), effective July 1, 2023).

Confidentiality of Juvenile Records and Proceedings

A new law (1) expands access to juvenile and youthful offender proceedings to include the victim's next of kin (i.e., a spouse, an adult child, a parent, an adult sibling, an aunt, an uncle, or a grandparent); (2) makes risk and behavioral health screening information and results confidential

and limited to being used solely for determining the child's eligibility for community diversion and nonjudicial handling; and (3) grants access to certain juvenile delinquency and youthful offender records to DCF's education unit (i.e., the department's administrative unit established to oversee the education of any child who resides in any juvenile justice facility and any incarcerated child) ([PA 23-46](#), §§ 5-7, 22 & 23, effective July 1, 2023).

Department of Corrections (DOC) Commissary Implementation Plan

A new law requires DOC to (1) in consultation with Juvenile Justice Policy and Oversight Committee's (JJPOC) incarceration subcommittee, develop and submit a commissary implementation plan to JJPOC by July 1, 2023; (2) fully implement the plan by November 1, 2023; and (3) immediately implement procedures for more equitable commissary options for certain incarcerated youth. The new law specifies what the commissary implementation plan must include, such as:

1. an integrated positive behavior motivation system to engage and reinforce positive youth behaviors and expectations that can be used to pay for commissary goods in place of money;
2. increased incentives to promote good health and recognize a diverse range of ethnic groups, races, sexes, and cultural backgrounds;
3. the identification of youth within the institution who do not have equitable access to the commissary and strategies to implement equitable access; and
4. the transition of saved commissary allocations, including how it can be transitioned and accessed when a youth is transferred to an adult facility ([PA 23-204](#), § 127, effective upon passage).

Juvenile Matters

This session the legislature passed a new law that made various changes in laws on juvenile matters.

It creates an implementation team to develop a prearrest diversion plan for low-risk children. The implementation team must include the DCF, State Department of Education (SDE), and DOC commissioners and the Court Support Services Division (CSSD) executive director, or their designees; local and regional boards of education representatives; and a juvenile review board representative. By January 1, 2024, the implementation team must develop a plan for automatic prearrest diversion of children to the community-based diversion system or other community-based service providers instead of arrest for first or second offenses. The new law specifies that this includes offenses such as simple trespass, creating a public disturbance, 2nd degree breach of

peace, and 6th degree larceny (the first two are infractions and the second two are misdemeanors) (§ 1).

By November 1, 2023, the new law also requires various state agencies (i.e., CSSD, DCF, SDE, and DOC) in consultation with designated JJPOC subcommittees, to develop a reentry success plan for youth released from DOC and the Judicial Department's facilities and programs (§ 3).

Lastly, it requires the judicial branch, by July 1, 2023, to begin reviewing and updating the implementation plan developed under [PA 21-174](#), § 13, to securely house in the branch's custody anyone under age 18 who is arrested and detained (§ 4) ([PA 23-188](#), effective upon passage).

Schools and Education

Grant Program for Student Mental Health Services

The budget implementer act pushes out by one year the dates during which SDE must administer a grant program (from FYs 23-25 to FYs 24-26) to provide student mental health services to certain youth camp and summer program operators. It also removes the requirement that grant recipients refund unexpended grant amounts to SDE ([PA 23-204](#), § 337, effective upon passage).

Grants to Hire School Social Workers, Psychologists, Counselors, Nurses, Licensed Marriage and Family Therapists, and School Mental Health Specialists

Existing law requires SDE to administer grant programs for local and regional boards of education to (1) hire and retain more school social workers, school psychologists, school counselors, nurses, and licensed marriage and family therapists and (2) hire school mental health specialists. The budget implementer act pushes out by one year the fiscal year during which SDE must administer the school mental health specialist grant program (from FYs 23-25 to FYs 24-26). The act also removes the requirement that grant recipients in both programs refund unexpended grant amounts to SDE ([PA 23-204](#), §§ 335-336, effective upon passage).

Early Childhood Education Fund

As part of the budget implementer act, the legislature passed a law requiring the comptroller to establish the Early Childhood Education Fund and charging the OEC commissioner with reporting to legislative committees with recommendations for the fund's expenditures ([PA 23-204](#), §§ 338-339, various effective dates).

Medicaid Reimbursement for School-Based Mental Health Assessments

This session, the legislature passed a law requiring the DSS commissioner, to the extent allowed under federal law, to provide Medicaid reimbursement for suicide risk assessments and other mental health evaluations and services provided at a school-based health center or public school.

The law also requires the commissioner to (1) amend the Medicaid state plan if necessary to provide the reimbursement and (2) set the reimbursement at a level that ensures an adequate pool of providers to provide the assessments, evaluations, and services ([PA 23-101](#), § 9, effective July 1, 2023)

School Meals

This session the General Assembly increased the state share of funding from \$30 million to \$90 million to extend the free school meals for all students through the end of the 2022-23 school year. This increase was achieved by reallocating \$60 million in unspent federal American Rescue Plan Act funds to the State Department of Education ([PA 23-1](#), § 1, effective upon passage).

School Readiness Program

A new law extends the FY 21 cap on the per child cost (i.e., \$9,027) of the OEC school readiness program through FY 24. For FY 25 and subsequent fiscal years, the new law increases the cap to \$10,500 ([PA 23-204](#), § 330, effective July 1, 2023).

Services for At-Risk Teenage Students

A new law requires SDE, for FY 24, to award a grant to, and collaborate with, a nonprofit organization specializing in identifying and providing services to certain at-risk teenage students. The act allows SDE, within available appropriations, to hire one full-time employee to implement the act's provisions ([PA 23-101](#), § 17, effective July 1, 2023).

Miscellaneous

Connecticut Baby Bond Trust Program

The FY 24-25 budget and implementer act sets conditions under funds from the Connecticut Teachers' Retirement Fund Bonds Special Capital Reserve Fund may be deposited in the Connecticut Baby Bond Trust. Relatedly, it eliminates the current \$600 million general obligation bond authorization for the baby bond program (\$50 million per year from FYs 25-36) and makes various conforming changes. Lastly, the act makes numerous changes to the baby bond program.

This includes requiring that the disbursements, rather than funds invested in the trust, be (1) exempt from all state and local taxes and (2) disregarded as assets or income for state assistance programs and need-based educational aid at public institutions ([PA 23-204](#), §§ 148-152 & 438-442, effective upon passage).

Diaper Changing Tables in Public Buildings

This session, the legislature passed a law requiring the state building inspector and the Codes and Standards Committee, jointly, and with the administrative service commissioner's approval, to include in the next proposed revision to the State Building Code a requirement that (1) certain newly constructed or substantially renovated public buildings (e.g., state, municipal, religious, and educational buildings) or (2) places of public accommodation, resort, or amusement (i.e., those that cater to or offer services, facilities, or goods to the general public) have at least one safe, sanitary, and convenient baby diaper changing table ([PA 23-72](#), effective upon passage).

Employment of 15-Year-Olds

Recent legislation expressly allows 15-year-olds to work as youth camp staff members or lifeguards, under adult supervision and subject to existing restrictions on certain other jobs 14- and 15-year-olds can work. This new law also requires the labor commissioner, by July 1, 2023, to implement a pilot program authorizing one amusement establishment in the state to employ 15-year-olds in non-hazardous positions, including as cashiers in a ticket booth or food concession stand. The law generally requires employers of 15-year-olds working as youth camp or amusement establishment staff members or lifeguards to get a certificate documenting the employee's age (i.e., "working papers") ([PA 23-183](#), effective upon passage).

Stillbirths

A new law requires hospitals to give the mother of a stillborn child written notification about the child's burial and cremation arrangement options. Hospitals must do this (1) if practicable, when the mother is admitted to the hospital and expects to deliver a stillborn child or (2) if it is not practicable, or the mother did not expect to deliver a stillborn child, within 24 hours after the stillbirth, so long as the health care provider responsible for the mother's care agrees it is appropriate to do so.

Mothers who receive the notification, and any other known parent, must inform the hospital in writing about their decision on the stillborn child's disposition. They may do so at any time during their hospitalization but before they are discharged, as long as the mother and other parent have at least 24 hours after receiving the hospital's written notification to do so ([PA 23-195](#), § 15, effective July 1, 2023).

Stillborn Tax Credit

By law, there is a \$2,500 personal income tax credit for the birth of a stillborn child if the child would have been claimed as the taxpayer's dependent on his or her federal income tax return. A new law applies the credit for the tax year in which the fetal death occurred, instead of the year in which the fetal death certificate was issued ([PA 23-31](#), § 10, effective upon passage and applicable to tax years starting on or after January 1, 2022).

Tax Credit for Donations to Eligible Youth Development Organizations

This session, the legislature established a new tax credit for cash contributions people and businesses make to eligible "youth development organizations" to fund programs such as after-school tutoring, mentoring programs, and workforce preparedness training. Under the new law, these organizations are nonprofits that provide evidence-supported interventions to high-risk youth to improve school and family engagement and (2) offer skills development, transitional employment, and job training and support to help young adults be employed and self-sufficient.

The credit may be applied against the corporation business tax or personal income tax, but not the withholding tax. It equals 50% of the qualifying contribution, up to a maximum of \$100,000 credit per income year for corporation taxpayers or \$20,000 credit per tax year for personal income taxpayers. The new law caps the total amount of credits that may be reserved for this program at \$2.5 million per fiscal year ([PA 23-205](#), § 161, effective January 1, 2024).

Two-Generational Initiative

By law, the Two-Generational Initiative must collaborate across public and private sectors to support early childhood care and education, health and workforce readiness, and economic self-sufficiency across two generations in the same household. A new law requires CWCSEO to (1) make recommendations on the Two-Generational Initiative's membership and (2) develop a two-generational advisory strategic plan. The commission must submit the plan to the Appropriations, Children's, Housing, Human Services, and Labor committees by September 1, 2024 ([PA 23-204](#), § 193, effective upon passage).

JC:co