



## 2024 Acts Affecting Children

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## Notice to Readers

This report provides summaries of new laws (public acts and special acts) significantly affecting children enacted during the 2024 regular legislative session. OLR's other Acts Affecting reports, including Acts Affecting Education, are, or will soon be, available on [OLR's website](#).

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](#).

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](#). 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.

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## **Child Behavioral and Mental Health**

### ***Bereavement and Grief Counseling Services Task Force***

This session, the legislature established a 13-member task force to develop recommendations for creating and administering a statewide program for delivering no-cost bereavement and grief counseling services to children and families. The task force must submit a report on its findings and recommendations to the Children's and Public Health committees by July 1, 2025 ([PA 24-45](#), § 29, effective upon passage).

### ***Recent-Onset Schizophrenia Spectrum Disorder***

Under a new law, the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS) commissioner, within available appropriations and in consultation with the Department of Children and Families (DCF) commissioner, must establish a program for people diagnosed with recent-onset schizophrenia spectrum disorder. Among other things, the program must (1) provide specialized treatment for these people early in their psychosis and (2) serve as a hub for distributing information statewide on best practices for providing early intervention services. Starting by January 1, 2025, the DMHAS commissioner must annually report to the Public Health Committee on the program and related legislative recommendations ([PA 24-19](#), § 27, effective upon passage).

### ***Task Force to Study the Effects of Hate Speech and Bullying on Children***

The legislature established a new 17-member task force to study the effects of hate speech and bullying on children, including analyzing (1) its effect on a child's mental and physical health and academic achievement, (2) the factors that may contribute to a child encountering or perpetrating such behavior, and (3) the environment in which it is likely to occur. The task force must report its findings and recommendations to the Children's Committee by January 1, 2025 ([SA 24-9](#), effective upon passage).

### ***Transforming Children's Behavioral Health Policy and Planning Committee***

By law, the Transforming Children's Behavioral Health Policy and Planning Committee must evaluate the availability and efficacy of prevention, early intervention, and behavioral health treatment services and options for children from birth to age 18. A new law expands this committee's membership by adding two representatives from the federally recognized Indian Tribes in the state. It also extends, by two years, the committee's reporting deadlines ([PA 24-81](#), § 52, effective upon passage).

## ***Universal Patient Intake Form for Recipients of Behavioral Health Services for Children***

New legislation requires the Department of Public Health (DPH) commissioner to convene a working group to make recommendations for a universal patient intake form to be provided to and completed by (1) patients of behavioral health services providers for children and (2) these patients' parents and guardians. The new law requires the DPH commissioner, by January 1, 2026, to (1) develop the form based on the working group's recommendations; (2) create requirements and guidelines for using the form; and (3) report to the Children's and Public Health committees on the group's recommendations, the form, and the requirements and guidelines ([SA 24-10](#), effective upon passage).

## ***Urgent Crisis Centers***

A new law allows urgent crisis centers to be DCF-certified, rather than DCF-licensed, allowing these centers to be licensed by other state agencies. (For example, a hospital emergency department or other DPH-licensed facility would be able to operate an urgent crisis center, as long as the center was certified by DCF.) By law, these centers are dedicated to treating children's urgent mental or behavioral health needs ([PA 24-79](#), §§ 3 & 4, effective July 1, 2024).

## **Child Health and Safety**

### ***Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection (DESPP) Missing Persons Clearinghouse***

New legislation removes children with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) from the missing persons information clearinghouse administered by DESPP which must hold information on certain missing individuals to help law enforcement agencies locate them. More specifically, the act changes the prior requirement that the clearinghouse include information on missing people with IDDs by limiting it to those who are adults (i.e., at least age 18) ([PA 24-81](#), § 34, effective upon passage).

### ***Illegally Passing a School Bus***

A new law makes several changes relating to Connecticut's motor vehicle law that generally prohibits drivers from passing a school bus that has its red signal lights flashing (commonly known as the "stop arm law"). Principally, it (1) sunsets the current statutory authorization for municipalities and boards of education to use a live digital video school bus violation detection monitoring system to enforce the stop arm law, generally by July 1, 2026, and (2) replaces the current statutory authorization with a similar one that expressly allows municipalities to adopt

ordinances that authorize the use of a monitoring system to enforce the stop arm law and establish \$250 municipal fines for violations ([PA 24-107](#), effective July 1, 2024).

### ***Katie Beckett Waiver Study***

The Katie Beckett waiver provides Medicaid coverage for children and young adults with disabilities. A new law requires the Human Services Committee chairpersons to establish a working group to study and make recommendations on reducing or eliminating the waitlist for this waiver and establishing priority placements on the waitlist based on illness and life expectancy. It requires this working group to report its findings and recommendations to the Appropriations and Human Services committees by February 15, 2025 ([PA 24-130](#), § 2, effective July 1, 2024).

### ***Local Voluntary Public Safety Registration System***

A new law eliminates the 2023-enacted local voluntary public safety registration system for children with IDD, including autism spectrum disorder, cognitive impairments, and nonverbal learning disorders, as well as related provisions. It correspondingly eliminates a requirement that each emergency dispatcher employed by a public safety answering point, when practicable, search the system when dispatching emergency services to a residential address ([PA 24-81](#), § 37, effective upon passage).

### ***Medicaid Coverage for Diapers Study***

A new law requires the Department of Social Services (DSS) commissioner to study the feasibility of providing Medicaid coverage for children, ages birth to three, for whom diapers are medically necessary. The commissioner must report her findings to the Human Services Committee by January 1, 2025 ([PA 24-130](#), § 3, effective upon passage).

### ***Medicaid Coverage for Rapid Whole Genome Sequencing for Critically Ill Infants***

A new law requires DSS to provide Medicaid coverage for medically necessary rapid whole genome sequencing for certain critically ill infants, within available appropriations. These tests diagnose genetic disorders to inform or change acute medical or surgical management of critically ill infants. The coverage requirement applies to infants ages 0 to 12 months who are enrolled in Medicaid and being treated in neonatal intensive care or pediatric intensive care units ([PA 24-130](#), § 1, effective July 1, 2024).

### ***Nutrition Assistance Programs for Children and Families***

This session, the legislature created new state agency responsibilities and reporting requirements to increase access to and enrollment in nutrition programs for children and families, including the

(1) federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP); (2) federal Supplemental Food Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC); and Connecticut Farmers' Market nutrition program for women, infants, and children (CT Farmers' Market WIC).

Among other things, the act requires (1) DPH to create a plan to streamline cross-enrollment of children receiving Medicaid in WIC, SNAP, and CT Farmers' Market WIC; (2) DPH to annually report to the legislature on how prior WIC funds were spent and its plan for future expenditures; (3) certain state agencies to jointly develop a plan to create a common application, share data, and increase automatic enrollment in nutrition programs they administer; and (4) DSS to start staggering benefits to SNAP beneficiaries by March 1, 2026 ([PA 24-82](#), most provisions effective upon passage.)

### ***Pediatric Hospice Services***

A new law requires licensed hospices to encourage their nursing staff to spend three weeks each in a pediatric intensive care unit, pediatric oncology unit, and pediatric hospice facility to enhance their pediatric skills and expertise and prepare them for future roles in pediatric hospice care.

Additionally, the Public Health Committee chairpersons must create a working group to examine hospice services for pediatric patients across the state. Specifically, the group must (1) review existing hospice services for these patients, (2) make recommendations for appropriate levels of hospice services for them, and (3) evaluate payment and funding options for this care. The group must report to the Public Health Committee by March 1, 2025 ([PA 24-19](#), §§ 29 & 30, effective upon passage).

### ***School Bus Seat Belts***

Starting July 1, 2025, a new law reestablishes a Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) school bus seat belt program that helps pay for school buses with three-point lap and shoulder seat belts by refunding school bus companies half the sales tax they pay for buses on which these seat belts were installed during manufacture. Program funding comes from the existing school bus seat belt account, which is funded by a portion (\$50) of each DMV fee collected for restoring suspended licenses and registrations. The law allows school districts to apply to DMV starting October 1, 2025. Under the new law, DMV, in collaboration with the State Department of Education, must annually inform school districts about the program and how to apply ([PA 24-20](#), § 40, effective January 1, 2025).



## ***Youth Camps***

A new law makes various changes affecting the regulation of youth camps. Among other things, the new law:

1. increases the frequency of the Office of Early Childhood's (OEC) inspections of youth camp facilities by requiring the office to repeat the initial inspection within 72 hours after approving a corrective action plan and weekly after that until the licensee is fully compliant;
2. establishes a priority order OEC must follow when inspecting youth camps, giving priority to initial licensure applicants and single-week youth camps;
3. authorizes the OEC commissioner to take various disciplinary actions (e.g., license refusal, suspension, or revocation) against a youth camp licensee if the operator or an employee held a youth camp license in another state that was revoked; and
4. establishes a Youth Camp Safety Advisory Council within OEC to advise the commissioner on youth camp safety ([PA 24-49](#), effective July 1, 2024).

## **Child Protection and Welfare**

### ***Adoptive Parent Subsidies***

Existing law allows the transfer of a guardianship subsidy from one caregiver to another if the subsidy recipient dies or becomes seriously ill or severely disabled. A new law additionally allows these transfers to and from adoptive parents.

By law, if the caregiver receiving the subsidy dies or becomes seriously ill or severely disabled, DCF may transfer the subsidy to a successor guardian who (1) meets the department's foster care safety requirements (e.g., passes a criminal background check); (2) is the child's court-appointed legal guardian; and (3) can be identified in the subsidy agreement or any related addendum ([CGS § 17a-126](#)). Under the new law, these conditions also apply to a successor adoptive parent ([PA 24-79](#), § 2, effective July 1, 2024).

### ***Approved and Licensed Foster Care Provider Background Checks***

This session, the legislature passed a law changing background check requirements in DCF's foster care licensure and approval processes. The new law limits the required background checks to household members aged 18 or older, rather than those aged 16 or older, and applies this change to those applying for license renewal or approval. It also eliminates the requirement that any person in the household submit to state national criminal history records checks if they have already done so within the previous year as part of the DCF licensing process ([PA 24-79](#), § 1, effective July 1, 2024).

## ***DCF In-Person Home Visits***

A new law generally requires the DCF commissioner, or her designee, to do home visits or evaluations in person, in accordance with the department's safety plan (i.e., a plan DCF makes to address or mitigate parent or guardian behaviors or conditions or circumstances in a home that may make the home unsafe for children). The new law makes an exception by requiring the visit or evaluation to be done by telephonic, video, or other conferencing platform if any resident of the home is subject to a DPH order of quarantine or isolation ([PA 24-92](#), effective July 1, 2024).

## ***DCF Program Utilization***

A new law requires the DCF commissioner to study program utilization within DCF, and report her findings to the Children's and Appropriations committees by July 1, 2024. The report must include, among other things, information for the previous two-year period on (1) participation in each department program; (2) program quality controls in place; (3) program expenditures in relation to utilization; and (4) department funding and expenditures by account ([SA 24-24](#), effective upon passage).

## ***Mandated Reporters-Related Reporting and Record Disclosure***

The law designates certain professionals (e.g., school employees, health professionals, and coaches) as mandated reporters of suspected child abuse and neglect. Generally, they must report to DCF or law enforcement within prescribed timeframes when, in the ordinary course of their employment or profession, they have reasonable cause to suspect or believe that a child (1) has been abused or neglected, (2) has an injury that is not consistent with its given history, or (3) is at imminent risk of physical harm.

A new law specifies that (1) the mandated reporter law does not prohibit mandated reporters from making a preliminary inquiry to determine if reasonable cause exists for a report and (2) this inquiry is not an abuse or neglect investigation by a school board ([PA 24-41](#), §§ 40 & 48, effective July 1, 2024).

Another new legislation requires the DCF commissioner, following the department's policy, to assess mandated reporters' failure to make reports within the time period prescribed by law ([PA 24-41](#), § 43, effective July 1, 2024). Prior law required the commissioner instead to investigate delayed reports by mandated reporters according to DCF-developed policy.

This session, the legislature also passed a law expanding exemptions of certain law enforcement and government agency records from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act-R. This includes, for certain investigatory records, exempting the identity of mandated reporters not

otherwise known. This act also exempts from disclosure certain photographs, films, videos, digital images, and other visual images depicting a minor unless disclosure is required by the state's body and dashboard camera law ([PA 24-56](#), effective July 1, 2024).

### ***Protection of Children from Child Sexual Abuse***

This session, the legislature passed a law that makes various changes relating to the protection of children from sexual abuse. The new law does the following:

1. starting July 1, 2026, requires DPH to include a sexual abuse and assault awareness prevention survey for high school administrators in the Connecticut School Health Survey;
2. replaces the term "child pornography" with "child sexual abuse material" in statutes that define the term and criminalize the possession, importation, and transmission of this material;
3. establishes a 22-member task force to (a) study the responsiveness of certain state agencies and the judicial branch to child sexual abuse issues and (b) report its recommendations to the Children's and Judiciary committees by July 1, 2025; and
4. requires the Office of the Child Advocate to review state agency practices and procedures for ensuring the care and protection of minors in probate court guardianship proceedings and report the findings to the Children's and Judiciary committees by January 1, 2025 ([PA 24-118](#), most provisions effective upon passage).

### ***Relative and Fictive Kin Foster Emergency Placement***

Under prior law, there were two methods for DCF to place a child who is in the agency's custody with a relative or fictive kin caregiver without DCF licensure or approval. A new law repeals the emergency placement method but adds similar provisions to the remaining placement method. The act also modifies certain conditions under this placement method.

Additionally, the act increases the period in which DCF must do a full state and national criminal history record check for anyone 18 years or older living in the home. The period increase is from 5 to 10 calendar days after a name-based criminal history search is done ([PA 24-79](#), §§ 1 & 10, effective July 1, 2024).

## **Courts and Criminal Law**

### ***Access to Certain Vital Records***

Existing law gives various parties the right to access a person's certified birth and fetal death records and certificates, such as the person's child, grandchild, spouse, parent, grandparent, or guardian. A new law extends this right to a person's legal custodian. The act also specifies that for

guardians, this right applies to someone's legal guardian ([PA 24-68](#), § 2, effective October 1, 2024).

### ***Birth Certificates***

A new law creates a process for a parent of a child born outside of a hospital or other institution, if the birth certificate has not been created and the parent is unable to provide certain information, to seek a probate court order before the child's first birthday to require the town registrar of vital statistics to prepare and file the certificate. The process is similar to the existing process for delayed birth registration for children aged one or older ([PA 24-68](#), § 1, effective October 1, 2024).

### ***Deadline for Financial Records to Social Services Department***

This session, the legislature enacted a law that principally requires financial institutions to provide customer financial records to the DSS commissioner, or anyone deputized by her, within 20 calendar days after receiving a certificate signed by either. Prior law did not impose a specific deadline, but instead generally required anyone with information about someone's eligibility for certain state aid, care, or child support enforcement services (e.g., Medicaid and child support payment collections) to disclose it when presented with a signed certificate by, among others, the DSS commissioner or anyone deputized by her ([PA 24-84](#), effective October 1, 2024).

### ***Immunity From Liability***

Existing law grants immunity from civil or criminal liability to persons, institutions, and agencies that, in good faith, report suspected child abuse or neglect or alleged sexual assault of a student to DCF or law enforcement as required or permitted by law. A new law extends this immunity to persons, institutions, and agencies that, in good faith, do not make such a report ([PA 24-41](#), § 41, effective July 1, 2024).

### ***Juvenile Records and Firearms Background Checks***

By law, records of juvenile cases involving delinquency proceedings are available only to certain people and in specified circumstances, such as employees and agents of municipal, state, and federal agencies involved in evaluating a proposed transfer of a firearm to a person under age 21, as required by federal law. This session, the legislature passed a new law that specifies that these employees and authorized agents have access to the juvenile records whether the proposed transfer of the firearm is to a person under age 21 in this state or any other state ([PA 24-43](#), effective July 1, 2024).

## ***Notices Under Indian Child Welfare Act***

A new law changes certain notice requirements for involuntary proceedings under the state's Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA), including setting different requirements for probate court and Superior Court cases and making minor changes to related provisions. The ICWA governs jurisdiction over American Indian children's removal from their families in custody, foster care, and adoption cases, with exclusive jurisdiction to Indian tribes over certain proceedings involving these children and preferred jurisdiction in some others ([PA 24-97](#), § 3, effective October 1, 2024).

## ***Pretrial Family Violence Education Program***

This session, the legislature passed a new law that expands eligibility to participate in the judicial branch's pretrial family violence education program for people charged with family violence crimes. Previously, a defendant charged with a class C felony was ineligible for the program. The new law makes an exception by allowing program participation if (1) the offender is charged with certain class C violations of risk of injury to, or impairing the morals of, a child and (2) good cause is shown for allowing participation. The new law's exception specifically applies to someone charged with (1) willfully or unlawfully causing or allowing a child under age 16 to be placed in a situation where the child's life or body is in danger, health is likely to be injured, or morals are likely to be impaired or (2) doing any act likely to impair the child's health or morals ([PA 24-129](#), effective October 1, 2024).

## **Early Child Care and Other Child Care Programs**

### ***Birth-to-Three Services***

This session, the legislature passed a law requiring licensed child care centers and group or family child care homes to allow a child who is eligible for Birth-to-Three and who has an individualized family service plan to receive early intervention services at the center or home from the provider designated in the plan ([PA 24-91](#), § 10, effective July 1, 2024).

### ***Care 4 Kids***

New legislation adds children under the care of a caregiver who receives subsidies under DCF's subsidized guardianship program to the Care 4 Kids protective service class. In doing so, it makes these children eligible for Care 4 Kids, regardless of the program's eligibility requirements, if they are meet other guidelines for at-risk populations.

It also repeals the Care 4 Kids program regulations and instead requires the OEC commissioner to (1) administer the program by implementing the federal Child Care Development Fund program's

regulations and (2) develop policies and procedures necessary to do so ([PA 24-91](#), §§ 8-9, 11 & 12, effective July 1, 2024).

### ***Early Childhood Care and Education Fund***

Last session, the legislature created an Early Childhood Education Fund as part of the FY 24-25 budget act. This year it (1) renamed the fund the Early Childhood Care and Education Fund; (2) established a framework for the fund’s deposits and investments and the state treasurer’s authority and powers on behalf of the fund; and (3) created a 23-member advisory commission to, among other things, review and monitor the Early Childhood Care and Education Fund to assess its financial sustainability and prepare a five-year plan for its expenditures ([PA 24-91](#), §§ 1, 2 & 13, effective upon passage).

### ***Early Start CT***

The legislature passed a new law that, beginning in FY 26, consolidates the School Readiness Preschool Grant Program, state-contracted child care centers for disadvantaged children, and state supplemental Head Start grants into one program (“Early Start CT”) and makes OEC responsible for operating and administering it, with the intent of consolidating administrative functions and allowing for families to more easily access early childhood care and education programs. In doing so, the act, among other things, (1) combines the three programs’ funding sources into one funding source and (2) allows eligible entities to enter directly into a contract with OEC to receive state financial assistance to operate these programs.

Among its changes, the act eliminates school readiness councils and instead authorizes towns or school districts to set up local or regional governance partners to help provide early care and education in their respective communities under Early Start CT. These local or regional governance partners must be composed of relevant stakeholders and reflect the racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic composition of the community served. Each local or regional governance partner must, among other things, (1) conduct a data-driven needs assessment for the town or region it serves, within available appropriations, and (2) employ a staff liaison to facilitate and coordinate services.

The act also includes other provisions to:

1. allow the OEC commissioner to allocate funds to regional educational service centers, beginning in FY 25 and within available appropriations, to provide professional development services, technical assistance and evaluation, and program planning and implementation activities; and

2. allow up to \$2 million in unexpended Early Start CT funds, beginning FY 26, to be used to (a) provide professional development for early care and education program providers or (b) support early care and education programs in satisfying the act's staff qualification requirements ([PA 24-78](#), §§ 24-34 & 41, most sections effective July 1, 2025).

### ***Family Child Care Home License Expansion***

Under prior law, the OEC commissioner could issue family child care home licenses from FY 22 to FY 26 in seven specified municipalities to people partnered with a business or entity to provide child care services in a commissioner-approved space outside of a family home. A new law (1) allows the commissioner to issue up to 20 of these licenses anywhere in the state; (2) eliminates the license's FY 26 expiration date; and (3) makes the licenses valid for four-year terms ([PA 24-78](#), § 39, effective July 1, 2024).

### ***Head Start Competitive Grant Program***

New legislation requires the OEC commissioner, as part of Early Start CT, to establish a state-funded competitive grant program for nonprofits and boards of education that receive federal Head Start funds, to help enhance program quality and increase access to Early Head Start and Head Start programs. Among other things, the act requires the grant program to help set up new extended-day and full-day, year-round Head Start programs or expand existing Head Start programs to extended-day or full-day, year-round programs ([PA 24-78](#), § 32, effective July 1, 2025).

### ***OEC Developmental Milestones Document***

Under prior law, each operator of a child care center or group or family child care home was required to post a copy of an OEC-developed document (1) listing key developmental milestones for children from birth to age five and (2) notifying parents or guardians concerned that their child has not met any developmental milestones that they may access the OEC Child Development Infoline for more information on appropriate services. Beginning on July 1, 2024, a new law exempts centers that exclusively serve school-age children from having to post a copy of this document ([PA 24-91](#), § 7, effective July 1, 2024).

### ***OEC Liability Insurance Coverage Document for Child Care Centers***

A new law requires the OEC commissioner, by December 1, 2024, to consult with a nonprofit organization to develop a document that explains the benefits of child care centers and homes maintaining liability insurance coverage and the potential consequences of not having coverage. She must electronically distribute the document to licensed child care centers, group child care homes, and family child care homes each year, starting by January 1, 2025 ([PA 24-91](#), § 6, effective upon passage).

## ***Staff Qualifications for State-Funded Early Childhood Education Programs***

Prior law required state-funded early childhood education program staff members to meet increasingly advanced levels of educational attainment which were phased in over several years from July 1, 2022, to July 1, 2029. This law set separate requirements for primary classroom teachers and remaining classroom teachers over three phases, each with its own set of minimum qualifications. By July 1, 2029, it required 100% of primary classroom teachers to meet one of six specified educational or credentialing standards.

A new law replaces these staff qualification requirements with new requirements for primary classroom teachers that phase in from July 1, 2025, to July 1, 2030. It outlines the degrees or credentials required for these teachers to qualify as “designated qualified staff members” and requires an increasing percentage of primary classroom teachers at each state-funded program to qualify as “designated qualified staff members” (from 25% by June 30, 2027, to 60% by July 1, 2030).

Under the act, these requirements apply to programs that accept state funds directly from OEC or indirectly through office subcontractors, for any combination of infant, toddler, preschool, and before and after school care program, but does not include Care 4 Kids subsidies ([PA 24-78](#), § 31, effective July 1, 2025).

## ***Surplus Land for Early Childhood Care and Early Childhood Education Programs***

Under a new law, the OEC commissioner must notify the Office of Policy and Management (OPM) secretary if certain surplus state property can be used to provide early childhood care and early childhood education programs. If the commissioner is interested in using the land, she must submit a plan detailing the proposal for the secretary’s review. A similar requirement applies under existing law to other specified agencies and commissioners ([PA 24-91](#), § 5, effective July 1, 2024).

## ***Tri-Share Child Care Matching Program***

A new law requires OEC, within available appropriations, to create a Tri-Share Child Care Matching Program for New London County in which child care costs are shared equally between participating employers, employees, and the state. The program must run for at least two years and be administered by a regional or statewide organization selected by OEC. To participate, employers must have a physical facility in New London County that is its employees’ principal workplace and employees must, among other things, live in Connecticut and not be receiving other public assistance for child care costs ([PA 24-91](#), § 3, effective July 1, 2024).



## ***Wage Supplement Program***

New legislation requires OEC to set up and administer a wage supplement program for FY 25 that gives eligible early childhood teachers and teacher assistants a one-time wage supplement payment of at least \$1,800. Under the act, OEC must provide these payments on a first-come, first-served basis, up to the amount made available for the payments, and award all eligible applicants the same payment amount. OEC must use \$9 million of its FY 25 General Fund appropriation for Early Care and Education used for school readiness and child day care purposes for the payments ([PA 24-91](#), § 4, effective upon passage).

## **Juvenile Justice**

### ***Commissary Implementation Plan for Youth in DOC Facilities***

A new law requires the Department of Correction (DOC) commissioner, in consultation with the Juvenile Justice Policy Oversight Committee (JJPOC) incarceration subcommittee, to report to the Appropriations, Children, and Judiciary committees on executing the commissary implementation plan and recommendations for changing the plan or how it is executed.

By law, the commissary implementation plan relates to youths in DOC facilities and includes identifying those that do not have equitable access to commissary. The law required DOC to (1) develop the plan, in consultation with the JJPOC subcommittee, by July 1, 2023; (2) immediately implement procedures for more equitable commissary options for these youths; and (3) fully implement the plan by November 1, 2023 ([PA 24-140](#), effective upon passage).

### ***Juvenile Justice Facility Educational Record Transfers***

This session, the legislature passed a law requiring a DCF-designated directory manager who oversees the educational records of (1) a child residing in a juvenile justice facility or (2) any incarcerated child in an educational program to disclose these records to DCF upon request, in keeping with the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act ([PA 24-79](#), § 6, effective July 1, 2024).

### ***Juvenile Justice Policy Oversight Committee's Gender Responsiveness Subcommittee***

A new law makes various changes in laws related to JJPOC and human trafficking. Specifically, the new law:

1. requires JJPOC to establish a gender responsiveness subcommittee by January 1, 2025;
2. requires this subcommittee to work with the Trafficking in Persons Council to, among other

things, develop a framework for reporting, collecting, and distributing human trafficking police data to generate annual reports and make legislative and policy recommendations; and

3. requires the Trafficking in Persons Council and the Transforming Children’s Behavioral Health Policy and Planning Committee to collaborate with the subcommittee.

Under the new law, the subcommittee’s recommendations must (1) address improvements to the range of care to youth who identify as girls and are impacted by the juvenile justice system; and (2) provide for culturally- and trauma-informed approaches, services, treatment, and permanency models for the youth ([PA 24-139](#), §§ 1, 3 & 4, effective upon passage).

### ***Reentry Success Plan***

This session, the legislature gave the judicial branch’s Court Support Services Division executive director and specified state officials an extra year to develop a reentry success plan for youth released from DOC and the judicial branch’s facilities and programs.

The new law also requires the plan to include youths being released from programs that are contracted with the judicial branch. It also (1) establishes additional requirements for the job readiness and career training programs that the plan must include; (2) expands the principles that the plan must incorporate; and (3) delays a related reporting requirement by 11 months, until December 1, 2024 ([PA 24-139](#), § 2, effective upon passage).

## **Schools and Education**

### ***FY 25 Grant Amounts for Specified Early Childhood Programs***

The new law establishing the Early Start CT program in FY 26 authorizes OEC to pay per-child and per-classroom rates as the commissioner determines, subject to specified minimum per-child grant amounts and other parameters. The new law applies these same grant amount requirements to the following early childhood programs for FY 25: (1) school readiness grants; (2) grants for state-contracted child care centers for disadvantaged children; and (3) competitive grants for Head Start programs ([PA 24-78](#), §§ 35-38, effective July 1, 2024).

### ***School-Based Health Services***

This session, the legislature passed a law requiring DSS to amend the Medicaid state plan to expand Medicaid coverage for health services provided (1) by or on behalf of a local educational agency or (2) in a school nurse’s office to any student enrolled in Medicaid. The law also established an interagency coalition to coordinate and make recommendations to maximize federal

funding for Medicaid-eligible health services in Connecticut public schools ([PA 24-81](#), §§ 61-63, effective upon passage, except the provision on nurses' offices is effective July 1, 2024).

### ***Youth Service Bureaus (YSB)***

A new law requires school boards, when requested by a YSB that provides services to the board, to enter into a memorandum of understanding (MOU) on sharing students' educational records. The MOU must require that the records be shared and maintained according to the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act.

The new law also allows private youth-serving organizations to establish a YSB if they are designated to act as a board of education's agent. The law already allows them to do so if designated as a municipality's agent ([PA 24-45](#), §§ 23 & 24, effective July 1, 2024).

## **Miscellaneous**

### ***Consumer Bars and Service Bars***

A new law allows minors (i.e., those under age 21) to stand at a consumer service bar to order and receive food. A consumer service bar is a counter without seats where a patron can buy alcoholic liquor, but its main function is for buying food ([PA 24-142](#), § 70, effective upon passage).

### ***DCF Special Police Officers***

A new law requires the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection commissioner to appoint up to two people to act as special police officers at DCF to:

1. assist with background checks on (a) each applicant for a department position and (b) all vendors or contractors and their employees who provide direct services to children in DCF custody;
2. conduct and respond to threat assessments in and around any building or facility under DCF supervision or control; and
3. respond to acute crises or security concerns in DCF-supervised or -controlled buildings or facilities ([PA 24-79](#), §§ 7 & 8, effective July 1, 2024).

### ***Disconnected Youth***

This session, the legislature enacted several measures relating to "disconnected youth" (generally, people ages 14-26 who are neither employed nor enrolled in school). It required the Connecticut Preschool through Twenty and Workforce Information Network (P20 WIN) to develop a plan to establish a statewide data intermediary to provide technical support, create data-sharing agreements, and build and maintain the infrastructure needed to share data between nonprofit

organizations serving disconnected youth. The P20 WIN executive board must submit (1) the plan to the Education Committee by January 1, 2025, and (2) a report on disconnected youth annually beginning by January 1, 2025, to specified legislative committees ([PA 24-45](#), §§ 21 & 22, effective July 1, 2024).

### ***Educational Materials on Intimate Partner Violence Toward Pregnant and Postpartum People***

A new law requires DPH, by January 1, 2025, to consult with domestic violence victim advocates and develop educational materials on intimate partner violence toward pregnant and postpartum people. Under the act, DPH must distribute the educational materials (1) in print to birthing hospitals and birth centers and (2) electronically to health care providers who practice obstetrics. These providers and facilities must then give the materials to their pregnant and postpartum patients ([PA 24-81](#), §§ 45 & 46, as amended by [PA 24-151](#), §§ 141 & 142, various effective dates).

### ***Family Resource Centers and Parent Education and Support Centers***

This session, the legislature expanded the scope of (1) State Department of Education family resource centers and (2) DCF parent education and support centers to include resources, programs, and services for nonparent caretaker relatives (e.g., grandparents) and legal guardians. It also requires these centers to make referrals for parents, nonparent caretaker relatives, and legal guardians to community programs on childhood development and positive parenting practices ([PA 24-39](#), §§ 15 & 16, effective October 1, 2024).

### ***Housing Choice Voucher Program Task Force***

A new law establishes a task force to study the federal Housing Choice Voucher program and its implementation in the state, including any disparate impacts the program has on the development of at-risk children and youth or families. The task force must report its findings and recommendations by January 16, 2025, to the Housing Committee and the state's congressional delegation ([PA 24-143](#), § 18, effective upon passage).

### ***Study on Financial Assistance for Nonparent Caretaker Relatives***

A new law requires the Department of Aging and Disability Services (ADS) to study financial assistance for nonparent caretaker relatives (e.g., grandparents), including (1) reimbursement rate options for those receiving DSS Temporary Family Assistance (TFA) benefits, (2) ways to means test these families to target reimbursement to those with greatest need, and (3) the number of nonparent caretaker relatives who may be eligible for TFA reimbursement after applying means testing the department examines.

Under the act, the ADS commissioner must report on the study to the Aging and Human Services committees by January 1, 2025 ([PA 24-39](#), § 14, effective upon passage).

### ***Youth Sports Grant Program***

A new law creates a youth sports grant program to give grants to distressed municipalities to support nonprofit youth sports organizations providing sports programs and activities primarily for distressed municipality residents under age 18. It funds the program with 2% of the state's monthly revenue from sports wagering. Beginning with FY 27, the law allows distressed municipalities to apply to OPM for the grants. Municipalities awarded grants must disburse them to eligible organizations and prioritize sports programs and activities that (1) provide adaptive sports for children and young adults with disabilities or (2) seek to improve outcomes in mental health, educational achievement, or community cohesion ([PA 24-151](#), §§ 110 & 111, effective July 1, 2025).

JC:co