

Fiscal Estimate Narratives

DHS 5/6/2009

LRB Number	09-1534/2	Introduction Number	AB-0141	Estimate Type	Original
Description Requiring distribution of autism-related information, requiring a referral when certain diagnoses are made, providing funding for the Medical Assistance autism benefit, licensure of autism paraprofessionals, creating an autism paraprofessional board, granting rule-making authority, and making an appropriation					

Assumptions Used in Arriving at Fiscal Estimate

This bill would require DHS to provide autism waiver services to all children who have been diagnosed with an autism spectrum disorder and qualify for Medicaid waiver services. DHS would be prohibited from using a waitlist for services. Physicians would be required to provide patients diagnosed with conditions other than mental illness, alcoholism, or drug dependency to with an appropriate referral for further treatment or services. The bill directs DHS to annually distribute to parents, physicians, and local education agencies information on therapies that can be provided at home to complement professional services the child receives. Last, the bill specifies that all individuals who work with children with autism must be licensed and creates an autism paraprofessional licensing board.

Costs to DHS include elimination of the waitlist and annual notices to parents, physicians, and local education agencies. There are also likely to be costs associated with the creation of an autism paraprofessional licensing board that licenses paraprofessionals working with children with autism; these costs would be borne by the Department of Regulation and Licensing and are not reflected in this fiscal note.

To eliminate the waitlist for autism services, it is expected an average of 250 slots would be funded in SFY 10 and 373 slots in SFY 11. The benefit costs would be approximately \$8,835,600 AF (\$3,521,900 GPR) in SFY 2010 and \$13,189,200 AF (\$5,193,900 GPR) in SFY11.

Administrative tasks associated with waitlist elimination include oversight of individual child plan development, provider development and certification, quality assurance activities, and maintenance of federal reporting for the Federal Autism Waiver. The Department estimates one FTE position would be needed for the increased workload associated with the additional children served in the program at an annualized cost of \$109,600 AF (\$54,800 GPR). In addition, short-term staff would be needed to build capacity to eliminate the waitlist in a short period of time. Autism services require staff to be knowledgeable about diagnostics, coordination of benefits, and the ability to work effectively within a provider network that is more limited than in other waiver programs. It is estimated one .5 LTE at a cost of \$7,300 AF (\$3,650 GPR) would be needed for six months to handle applications. In addition, two FTE contract positions would be needed statewide for the first two years to support counties as the counties build the capacity to serve a larger number of children on the autism waiver on an ongoing basis. The contract positions would cost approximately \$219,200 AF (\$109,600 GPR) per year.

It is possible counties will incur greater costs if more staff are needed to administer the program at the county level. This need will vary by county and therefore the cost cannot be estimated.

To fulfill the bill's requirements to annually distribute home therapy information to complement professional services to all parents of children in the autism waiver program, local education agencies, and physicians, the Department would need to hire an LTE each year to research and develop the notice and post the information to the website. The cost of the LTE is estimated to be approximately \$10,000 AF (\$5,000 GPR) per year.

Long-Range Fiscal Implications

Fiscal Estimate Worksheet - 2009 Session

Detailed Estimate of Annual Fiscal Effect

Original
 Updated
 Corrected
 Supplemental

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I. One-time Costs or Revenue Impacts for State and/or Local Government (do not include in annualized fiscal effect): The Department would require one .5 LTE for six months at a cost of approximately \$7,300 AF (\$3,650 GPR) and two FTE contract positions for two years at a cost of approximately \$438,400 AF (\$219,200 GPR).			
II. Annualized Costs:		Annualized Fiscal Impact on funds from:	
		Increased Costs	Decreased Costs
A. State Costs by Category			
State Operations - Salaries and Fringes	\$119,600		\$
(FTE Position Changes)			
State Operations - Other Costs			
Local Assistance			
Aids to Individuals or Organizations	13,189,200		
TOTAL State Costs by Category	\$13,308,800		\$
B. State Costs by Source of Funds			
GPR	5,253,700		
FED	8,055,100		
PRO/PRS			
SEG/SEG-S			
III. State Revenues - Complete this only when proposal will increase or decrease state revenues (e.g., tax increase, decrease in license fee, etc.)			
	Increased Rev	Decreased Rev	
GPR Taxes	\$	\$	
GPR Earned			
FED			
PRO/PRS			
SEG/SEG-S			
TOTAL State Revenues	\$	\$	
NET ANNUALIZED FISCAL IMPACT			
	State	Local	
NET CHANGE IN COSTS	\$13,308,800	\$	
NET CHANGE IN REVENUE	\$	\$	
Agency/Prepared By Authorized Signature Date			
DHS/ Carrie Schneck (608) 266-5362		Andy Forsaith (608) 266-7684	5/6/2009