

Fiscal Estimate - 2009 Session

Original
 Updated
 Corrected
 Supplemental

LRB Number 09-2271/1	Introduction Number SB-122
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Description
 Notice of intent to remove a child from the home of a relative and review of decisions or orders involving the placement and care of a child placed in the home of a relative

Fiscal Effect

State:

- No State Fiscal Effect
- Indeterminate
 - Increase Existing Appropriations
 - Decrease Existing Appropriations
 - Create New Appropriations
- Increase Existing Revenues
- Decrease Existing Revenues
- Increase Costs - May be possible to absorb within agency's budget
 - Yes No
- Decrease Costs

Local:

- No Local Government Costs
 - Indeterminate
 - 1. Increase Costs 3. Increase Revenue
 - Permissive Mandatory Permissive Mandatory
 - 2. Decrease Costs 4. Decrease Revenue
 - Permissive Mandatory Permissive Mandatory
- 5. Types of Local Government Units Affected**
- Towns Village Cities
 - Counties Others
 - School Districts WTCS Districts

Fund Sources Affected **Affected Ch. 20 Appropriations**

- GPR
 FED
 PRO
 PRS
 SEG
 SEGS

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Fiscal Estimate Narratives

DCF 8/4/2009

LRB Number	09-2271/1	Introduction Number	SB-122	Estimate Type	Original
Description Notice of intent to remove a child from the home of a relative and review of decisions or orders involving the placement and care of a child placed in the home of a relative					

Assumptions Used in Arriving at Fiscal Estimate

This bill extends to a relative, other than a parent, in whose home a child is placed the same procedural rights relating to intent to remove a child from the home and review of decisions or orders involving the placement and care the child that are granted a foster parent under law. The Department of Children and Families estimates that any fiscal cost of the proposed bills can be absorbed within current staff levels.

The population affected would be caretakers of court-ordered kinship care placements and placements with unlicensed relatives. The Department estimates that the annual number of these placements is 2,100 (1,750 kinship care; 350 unlicensed relatives).

The procedural rights extended to these caretakers concern the notice of intent to remove the child from the home and the ability to object to decisions or orders involving the placement and care of the child. Notifying caretakers of the intent to remove the child from their care would increase workload for county caseworkers and state caseworkers in both the Bureau of Milwaukee Child Welfare (BMCW) and the state adoption program. Based on the number of court-ordered kinship care and unlicensed relative placements, DCF estimates the bill could generate 1820 additional notifications, 970 for counties and 850 for BMCW. The estimated time required to produce a notice is one hour per notice. Applying the average cost of an ongoing case manager in BMCW, \$17.48 per hour, DCF estimates that the associated workload costs could be \$17,000 for counties and \$14,900 for BMCW. These costs could be absorbed by the county agency or, in the case of BMCW, the state.

The expansion of the right to review decisions and orders to include kinship care providers and unlicensed relatives could increase the number of appeals in which DCF and county agencies must participate. Staff time would be needed to attend these appeals for both case managers and legal staff. The caseworker workload associated with preparing for and participating in the appeals process averages two days per appeal. The workload for legal staff in preparation for and participation in these appeals averages two weeks. However, Department of Administration, Division of Hearings and Appeals' data regarding appeals for foster home placements suggest that the number of additional appeals would be small. In the year between December 2006 and December 2007, two foster home appeals concerned the removal of a child, and none concerned subsequent child placements. Appeals may also be heard in the circuit court, and in 2008, 4 appeals were taken to the circuit for the removal of children from foster homes by the Department of Children and Families. It is unknown how many appeals may have been taken to the circuit court for county removals from foster homes. However, the small number of additional hearings estimated to result of this bill should limit the additional workload costs to a level that can be absorbed by the county agency or the state.

Long-Range Fiscal Implications