

Fiscal Estimate Narratives

DCF 9/11/2017

LRB Number	17-3921/1	Introduction Number	SB-390	Estimate Type	Original
Description creating family treatment court and juvenile treatment court grant programs in the Department of Children and Families					

Assumptions Used in Arriving at Fiscal Estimate

The bill creates a family treatment court grant program under the Children's Code, to be administered by the Department of Children and Families (DCF) and operating within the court assigned to exercise jurisdiction under the Children's Code. The bill also creates a similar program under the Juvenile Justice Code, to be administered by DCF and operating within the court assigned to exercise jurisdiction under the Juvenile Justice Code (collectively, "juvenile court").

Under the family treatment court grant program, DCF would make grants available to counties or tribes to enable them to establish and operate programs to develop procedures that screen, assess, and provide new dispositional alternatives for parents whose children have come under the jurisdiction of the children's court due to parental problems related to mental illness or substance abuse. A county or tribe that receives a grant must establish eligibility criteria for participation in the county or tribe's program, provide evidence-based treatment services to program participants, and integrate all services provided to program participants by various governmental and non-governmental entities. The bill also requires counties that receive those grants to submit data to DCF that must be analyzed annually by DCF.

Under the juvenile treatment court grant program, DCF would similarly make grants available to counties or tribes to enable them to establish and operate programs to develop procedures that screen, assess, and provide new dispositional alternatives for juveniles who have problems related to mental illness or substance abuse. In all other respects the juvenile treatment court grant program is very similar to the family treatment court grant program.

The bill requires DCF to prepare an annual progress report evaluating the effectiveness of the grant programs and make it available to the public. Additionally, every five years DCF must prepare a comprehensive report and submit it to the legislature under s. 13.172(2). Costs to prepare these reports could be absorbed by existing resources.

The bill authorizes DCF to make grants for the treatment courts from available funding from the federal program local assistance appropriation, which is currently used to fund caseworker visits, the Promoting Safe and Stable Families program, and local training/stipends among other programs.

The bill provides no additional funding for the treatment courts, so the fiscal effect would depend on the amount of available existing funding allocated by the department toward grants under the authority provided in the bill, or the receipt of additional federal funds to make such grants under the authority provided in the bill. Neither of these is known at this time. Therefore, the fiscal estimate is indeterminate.

Long-Range Fiscal Implications