

Fiscal Estimate Narratives

DPI 8/16/2021

LRB Number	21-1238/1	Introduction Number	AB-0490	Estimate Type	Original
Description registry for children with blindness or visual impairment					

Assumptions Used in Arriving at Fiscal Estimate

This bill requires the Department of Health Services to establish a registry of children who are under the age of three and who are diagnosed with blindness or visual impairment. A physician, optometrist, or ophthalmologist who diagnoses blindness or visual impairment in a child who is under the age of three must notify a parent or guardian of the child of the existence of the registry and that the registry provides connections to services provided by nonprofit organizations, and paid for by DHS, to children who have blindness or visual impairment and their families.

If a parent or guardian elects to include the child on the registry, the physician, optometrist, ophthalmologist, health care provider, or other qualified professionals must submit certain information, including the contact information for the parent or guardian, to DHS for inclusion in the registry. The bill directs DHS to refer any child included on the registry for a functional vision evaluation conducted by a teacher of the visually impaired who is licensed by the DPI. Based on the results of the evaluation, the teacher of the visually impaired shall determine whether the child requires direct or consultative vision services from a teacher of the visually impaired as part of the Birth to 3 Program.

The bill also provides that the teacher of the visually impaired who conducted the functional vision evaluation shall refer the child for an orientation and mobility assessment conducted by an orientation and mobility specialist who is licensed by DPI if the results of the functional vision evaluation demonstrate that it is appropriate. Finally, the bill provides that DHS shall contract with a nonprofit organization that meets certain requirements to manage the registry and provide relevant information about services available for children with blindness or visual impairment to parents and guardians included on the registry upon request and free of charge.

State: No direct impact on DPI operations

Long-Range Fiscal Implications