

# FINAL BILL REPORT

## ESHB 1512

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C 412 L 93  
Synopsis as Enacted

**Brief Description:** Changing provisions relating to dependent children.

By House Committee on Human Services (originally sponsored by Representatives Brough, Leonard, Chappell, Romero, Veloria, Riley, Karahalios, Horn, Wolfe, Ballasiotes, Talcott, G. Cole, Flemming and J. Kohl).

House Committee on Human Services  
Senate Committee on Health & Human Services

**Background:** When a child is found by the court to be dependent because of abuse, neglect, or a parent's inability to care for the child, he or she is often placed in foster care. For many children, their stay in foster care can last for years. Also, the process for terminating a parent and child relationship can take years, denying the child a permanent home or setting.

In 1991, the Legislature required the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) to use a risk assessment tool in child abuse investigations in three offices as a pilot project.

**Summary:** In legal proceedings related to the termination of the parent and child relationship, the judge must consider a parent's use of chemical substances and psychological or mental deficiency which render the parent incapable of properly caring for his or her child. A parent is presumed incapable of remedying the deficiencies which led to the removal of the child from the home if he or she has not made significant progress in correcting his or her deficiencies within 12 months. When the parent of a dependent child is ordered to undergo substance abuse diagnostic, evaluation, and treatment services, the treatment program will inform the court of the parent's progress.

Adults living with a child, developmentally disabled person, or a dependent adult, are required to report severe abuse to Child Protective Services or law enforcement if they are able or capable of making a report. The Department of Social and Health Services is required to use a risk assessment tool when investigating child abuse and neglect referrals. Law enforcement officials conducting child abuse

and neglect investigations may request a temporary restraining order against a person with unsupervised visitation rights if they are accused of sexually or physically abusing a child.

**Votes on Final Passage:**

|        |    |   |                           |
|--------|----|---|---------------------------|
| House  | 98 | 0 |                           |
| Senate | 44 | 0 | (Senate amended)          |
| House  |    |   | (House refused to concur) |

Conference Committee

|        |    |   |
|--------|----|---|
| Senate | 47 | 0 |
| House  | 98 | 0 |

**Effective:** July 25, 1993