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HOUSE BILL 1703

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State of Washington

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By Representatives Schual-Berke, Walsh, Pettigrew, Haler, Simpson, Hinkle, Hurst, Hunter, Priest, Upthegrove, Roberts, Springer, Pedersen, Hudgins, Morrell, Cody, Dickerson, McIntire, P. Sullivan, Appleton, Roach, Kessler, Darneille, Hasegawa, Moeller, Williams, Conway, Santos, Kenney and Lantz

Read first time 01/25/2007. Referred to Committee on Early Learning & Children's Services.

1 AN ACT Relating to creating a domestic violence pilot program to  
2 colocate a domestic violence advocate in department of social and  
3 health services offices; adding a new section to chapter 74.13 RCW; and  
4 providing an expiration date.

5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

6 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** A new section is added to chapter 74.13 RCW  
7 to read as follows:

8 (1) The department of social and health services shall create a  
9 pilot program to place a domestic violence advocate and a specialized  
10 domestic violence supervisor in a minimum of two division of children  
11 and family services offices.

12 (2) The purpose of the program is to provide domestic violence  
13 safety planning, advocacy, information, and support to adult victims of  
14 domestic violence who are receiving services from the division of  
15 children and family services offices, and to increase the capacity of  
16 division of children and family services workers to identify and  
17 respond effectively to domestic violence in their caseloads.

18 (3) The goals of the program are to:

1 (a) Increase the safety of children and adult victims of domestic  
2 violence who are involved with the department's child protective  
3 services division;

4 (b) Increase the adult domestic violence victim's understanding of  
5 available domestic violence resources and supports;

6 (c) Increase the adult domestic violence victim's and the domestic  
7 violence perpetrator's understanding of the effects of domestic  
8 violence on children;

9 (d) Provide specialized supervision, consultation, and training to  
10 child protective services social workers so that they may increase  
11 their knowledge of domestic violence and practice skills for addressing  
12 domestic violence in their caseloads, and provide safe, effective  
13 responses for children and their families experiencing domestic  
14 violence;

15 (e) Decrease the rate at which victims of domestic violence are  
16 referred back to the division of children and family services;

17 (f) Decrease the number of children of domestic violence victims  
18 that are placed in protective custody;

19 (g) Improve the ability of division of children and family services  
20 social workers to accurately identify the full spectrum of abusive and  
21 coercive tactics that are utilized by domestic violence perpetrators,  
22 and their impact on children's safety and well-being, as well as the  
23 way they disrupt or undermine the parenting practices of adult victims  
24 of domestic violence;

25 (h) Improve the ability of the division of children and family  
26 services social worker to identify the range of strategies employed by  
27 adult domestic violence victims to support the safety and well-being of  
28 their children;

29 (i) Increase the strategies available to division of children and  
30 family services social workers to hold the domestic violence  
31 perpetrator accountable for abusive and coercive behavior and its  
32 adverse impact on children;

33 (j) Increase the ability of division of children and family  
34 services social workers to accurately identify the domestic violence  
35 perpetrator as the person responsible for the adverse impact of  
36 domestic violence on children;

37 (k) Strengthen collaborations between department staff and  
38 community providers and resources; and

1 (1) Conduct an evaluation of the program by comparing the outcomes  
2 of the program offices to the outcomes of the two offices that do not  
3 have the domestic violence advocate, and to develop a report of the  
4 findings and recommendations that may be used to replicate the program  
5 statewide.

6 (4) The department shall convene advisory groups at the program  
7 sites to provide advice on the implementation and progress of the pilot  
8 program. The advisory groups shall include representatives from a  
9 local domestic violence agency, public health, domestic violence  
10 perpetrator's treatment program, protection order programs, law  
11 enforcement, and others who are appropriate for the advisory group.

12 (5) The department shall provide supervision at the program sites.  
13 The supervisor will be selected in collaboration with the partnering  
14 domestic violence agency and will provide supervision in accordance  
15 with the goals of the program. The supervisor shall have formal  
16 training and experience in domestic violence, and the supervisor's  
17 duties will include the following:

18 (a) Ensuring that the domestic violence advocate has the support  
19 necessary to implement advocate-specific portions of the program;

20 (b) Ensuring that children and family community services office  
21 workers receive ongoing training regarding:

22 (i) Identifying indicators of domestic violence;

23 (ii) Interviewing techniques that do not increase the risk of  
24 danger to the adult victim of domestic violence or the child;

25 (iii) Identifying protective behaviors that may reduce the risk of  
26 harm to the adult victim or child;

27 (iv) Determining risks posed by an alleged domestic violence  
28 perpetrator to the adult victim or child;

29 (v) Appropriate case investigation, documentation, and planning in  
30 cases involving domestic violence that accurately hold domestic  
31 violence perpetrators responsible for the adverse impacts of their  
32 behavior on the children, increases children's and victim's safety,  
33 identifies and builds on adult domestic violence victim's strengths,  
34 and holds abusers accountable;

35 (vi) Engagement of perpetrators of domestic violence in  
36 investigation, case planning, and supervision;

37 (c) Convening case staffings which include the domestic violence  
38 advocate;

1 (d) Convening the program advisory group on a regular basis; and  
2 (e) Providing consultation to the case workers regarding  
3 appropriate interventions for the adult victim, the child, and the  
4 alleged domestic violence perpetrator.

5 (6) The department shall utilize a request for proposal process and  
6 shall select the pilot sites by September 2007. The request for  
7 proposal shall require:

8 (a) The community-based domestic violence agency to have experience  
9 providing domestic violence shelter or advocacy services under chapter  
10 70.123 RCW, and experience working in a department community services  
11 office for the purpose of providing domestic violence services to  
12 clients seeking temporary assistance for needy families benefits.

13 (b) The agency must be willing to commit to the following:

14 (i) Involvement in the program for the duration of the program;

15 (ii) Providing the employees who will be the domestic violence  
16 victim advocates located at the department offices;

17 (iii) Agree to supervise and support the advocates placed into the  
18 department offices;

19 (iv) Collaborate with the division of children and family services  
20 program supervisor at each site; and

21 (v) Participate in the evaluation of the pilot program.

22 (c) The domestic violence advocate shall provide the following  
23 services while colocated at the department office:

24 (i) Provide on-site education, consultation, and support to  
25 division of children and family services staff to meet the needs of the  
26 children and families involved in domestic violence situations on  
27 subjects including, but not limited to:

28 (A) Identifying indicators of domestic violence;

29 (B) Interviewing techniques that do not increase the risk of danger  
30 to the adult victim of domestic violence or the child;

31 (C) Identifying protective behaviors that may reduce the risk of  
32 harm to the adult victim or the child;

33 (D) Determining risks posed by an alleged domestic violence  
34 perpetrator to the adult victim or the child; and

35 (E) How to refer victims to a domestic violence advocate;

36 (ii) Provide advocacy services to facilitate linkage to appropriate  
37 community supports for families receiving services from division of  
38 children and family services offices; and

1 (iii) Participating in child protective services unit meetings,  
2 case reviews, or child protection team meetings, for families with  
3 identified domestic violence concerns.

4 (7) Provision of services by a domestic violence advocate under  
5 this section does not waive or diminish the confidential or privileged  
6 nature of communications between a victim of domestic violence and  
7 advocate pursuant to RCW 5.60.060, 70.123.075, or 70.123.076.

8 (8) The program shall be evaluated to determine the outcomes of the  
9 program.

10 (a) The department shall utilize the services of an evaluator from  
11 a university or other organization who has expertise in evaluating the  
12 division of children and family services and expertise in domestic  
13 violence and child maltreatment issues of children and families. The  
14 department shall select the evaluator by September 2007.

15 (b) Beginning in October 2007, the evaluator shall conduct a  
16 preprogram assessment. The evaluator shall assess and compare the  
17 program sites to two additional divisions of children and family  
18 services offices selected as comparison sites. The comparison sites  
19 shall not have a domestic violence advocate colocated at the site.

20 (c) The evaluator shall collect and assess data from the program  
21 and nonprogram comparison sites to determine the following outcomes:

22 (i) Changes to the rate of being referred back to child protective  
23 services intake for domestic violence related concerns;

24 (ii) Whether there are documented safety assessments that identify  
25 domestic violence safety risk factors for the children and the adult  
26 victim of domestic violence;

27 (iii) Whether there are documented service plans with strategies  
28 that address and mitigate identified domestic violence safety risks;

29 (iv) Whether there is an increase in the ability of the adult  
30 victims of domestic violence, as well as the perpetrator of domestic  
31 violence, to identify safety risks and adverse impacts of domestic  
32 violence on the children;

33 (v) Whether there is an increase in the adult domestic violence  
34 victim's access to resources available to them within the community to  
35 increase the safety and security for themselves and the children;

36 (vi) Whether there is an increase in the ability of the perpetrator  
37 of domestic violence to identify and understand the adverse impact of  
38 the abusive and coercive domestic violence behaviors on their children;

1 (vii) Changes to the rate of children of adult domestic violence  
2 victims placed into protective custody in the program offices compared  
3 to the comparison sites at the end of the three-year pilot program  
4 period;

5 (viii) Whether there is an increase in the knowledge of division of  
6 children and family services caseworkers regarding response to domestic  
7 violence in the child protective services caseload and changes in  
8 practice;

9 (ix) Whether the capacity of the social worker to accurately  
10 identify domestic violence perpetrators as responsible for the negative  
11 consequences of domestic violence increases and is reflected through  
12 case plans, who is the target of investigations, and against whom  
13 findings are made; and

14 (x) Whether the focus on the perpetrator will cause division of  
15 children and family services social workers to develop service plans  
16 and strategies for the perpetrator with the aim of reducing child  
17 neglect or abuse risks caused by the perpetrator's domestic violence  
18 behaviors.

19 (d)(i) The evaluator shall use the results of the evaluation to  
20 identify the effectiveness of the program including effectiveness of  
21 training, consultation, and advocacy services, changes in social worker  
22 practices, improvements in services to families, barriers to  
23 implementing program services, and service gaps for families affected  
24 by domestic violence.

25 (ii) The evaluation shall include recommendations to the department  
26 for improving domestic violence responses in other division of children  
27 and family services community offices of Washington state.

28 (e) The evaluator shall report the findings of the program to the  
29 appropriate committees of the legislature by December 1, 2010.

30 (9) The pilot program shall begin in January 2008.

31 (10) This section expires January 1, 2011.

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