

HOUSE BILL ANALYSIS

HB 2684

Title: An act relating to records that are accessible by the department of social and health services.

Brief Description: Clarifying what records are available to the department of social and health services.

Sponsors: Representatives D. Sommers and Tokuda; by request of Department of Social and Health Services.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN & FAMILY SERVICES

Meeting Date: January 27, 2000.

Bill Analysis Prepared by: Tracey Taylor (786-7196).

Background: In a dependency or child in need of services (CHINS) proceeding, or under a voluntary placement agreement, a child may be placed temporarily outside his or her home. If so placed, the department must oversee the child's care and supervision.

In cases involving allegations of abuse or neglect, an investigation will take place, requiring the access to the child's relevant records.

Summary of Bill: For case planning and obtaining healthcare for a child placed outside his or her home, the department shall have access to the child's records (from birth to present) equal to that of the child's parent or guardian. Health care providers are not required to get the minor's authorization to release the medical records to the Department of Social and Health Services, the court or the minor's court-appointed guardian ad litem. This applies to placements due to dependency proceedings, proceedings under the Family Reconciliation Act and voluntary placement agreements.

When allegations of abuse are being investigated, the department or law enforcement agency shall have access to all of the child's records (from birth to present) in the possession of mandatory reporters, such as physicians.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: None.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

