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**Early Learning & Human Services  
Committee**

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**HB 1697**

**Brief Description:** Providing for unannounced visits to homes with dependent children.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Roberts, Seaquist, Goodman, Orwall, Dickerson and Kenney.

**Brief Summary of Bill**

- Requires the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) and supervising agencies to randomly select at least 10 percent of caregivers currently providing care to receive one unannounced face-to-face visit in the caregiver's home per year.
- Allows the caseworker, under some circumstances, to waive the requirement to conduct an unannounced visit.
- Encourages the DSHS and supervising agencies to group monthly visits to caregivers by geographic area as an efficiency measure.

**Hearing Date:** 2/11/11

**Staff:** Megan Palchak (786-7120).

**Background:**

The Department of Social and Health Services, Children's Administration (CA) is required to monitor children who are placed in out-of-home care or who reside with their parents on in-home dependencies. Case workers conduct visits with children to ensure they are safe and receive quality care. Currently, case workers are required to conduct private, face-to-face visits with children on a monthly basis.

Supervising agencies were established by the Legislature in 2009 as part of a two-phase process to transform child welfare services. A supervising agency is defined as an agency licensed by the state or a federally recognized Indian tribe that has entered into a performance-based contract with the CA to provide case management for the delivery of child welfare services. During

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phase one of the process, the CA is required to consolidate and convert contracts to performance-based contracts. In phase two, supervising agencies will perform case management in selected demonstration sites. Currently, the CA is in phase one of the transformation process.

**Summary of Bill:**

The CA and supervising agencies must randomly select no less than 10 percent of the caregivers currently providing care (both out-of-home placements and in-home dependencies) to receive one unannounced face-to-face visit in the caregiver's home per year. If the caseworker makes a good faith effort to conduct the unannounced visit and is unable to do so, that month's visit to the caregiver need not be unannounced. The CA and the supervising agencies are encouraged to group monthly visits to caregivers by geographic area so that in the event an unannounced visit cannot be completed, the caseworker may complete other required monthly visits located in that vicinity.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

**Effective Date:** The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.