
Early Learning & Human Services Committee

HB 1844

Brief Description: Concerning family assessment response in child protective services.

Sponsors: Representatives Kagi, Ryu, Tharinger and Freeman.

<p style="text-align: center;">Brief Summary of Bill</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Modifies implementation and evaluation guidelines for the Family Assessment Response.

Hearing Date: 2/21/13

Staff: Lindsay Lanham (786-7120).

Background:

In 2012 the Legislature passed Senate Bill 6555 (SB 6555), which requires the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) to implement a differential response system, called the Family Assessment Response (FAR), by December 1, 2013. Among its many provisions, SB 6555 outlined specific implementation procedures for the FAR and requirements for evaluation processes.

In December 2012 the DSHS completed a report for the Legislature, entitled, Family Assessment Response Implementation Report. In addition to providing background information about the Title IV-E waiver, the report also outlines the FAR implementation strategy, guiding principles, and core values. A final section of the report included recommended statutory changes.

Summary of Bill:

The DSHS is required to complete the FAR services within 45 days of receiving the report; however, upon parental agreement, the FAR services may be extended up to 120 days if the

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family is referred to a specific service that requires longer than 45 days for successful completion. In the event that a parent or guardian disagrees with the DSHS's recommendations regarding services, the DSHS is required to convene a family team decision-making meeting or a shared planning meeting. The caseworker's supervisor or area administrator must attend the family team decision-making meeting or the shared planning meeting if they are needed to resolve the disagreement. The DSHS is required to implement, evaluate, and maintain the FAR consistent with the requirements and conditions outlined in the approved Title IV-E waiver. Finally, families are not entitled to the FAR services.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on February 20, 2013.

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