
SUBSTITUTE HOUSE BILL 1774

State of Washington

63rd Legislature

2013 Regular Session

By House Early Learning & Human Services (originally sponsored by Representatives Freeman, Goodman, Haler, Roberts, Farrell, Kagi, Stanford, Stonier, Bergquist, Ryu, O'Ban, Morrell, Fey, Pollet, and Santos)

READ FIRST TIME 02/22/13.

1 AN ACT Relating to measuring performance of the child welfare
2 system; adding a new section to chapter 74.13 RCW; and creating a new
3 section.

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

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** (1) The legislature recognizes that the
6 goals of the child welfare system are to protect the safety,
7 permanence, and well-being of the children it serves. The legislature
8 further recognizes the importance of maintaining publicly accessible
9 data that tracks the performance of the child welfare system, leading
10 to transparency and public understanding of the system.

11 (2) The legislature believes it is important to measure safety,
12 permanence, and well-being such that the public and the legislature may
13 understand how the child welfare system is performing. This
14 information will also serve the legislature in determining priorities
15 for investment of public dollars as well as need for substantive
16 legislative changes to facilitate improvement.

17 (3) The reports to the legislature under section 2 of this act will
18 be used to provide feedback to the department. The agencies referenced

1 in section 2 of this act will not disclose individually identifiable
2 private information except as allowable under federal and state law.

3 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 74.13 RCW
4 to read as follows:

5 (1) Within existing resources, the University of Washington,
6 through partners for our children, within the school of social work, in
7 cooperation with the department, and in collaboration with other
8 stakeholders, shall develop measurements in the areas of safety,
9 permanency, and well-being, using existing and available data.
10 Measurements must be calculated from data used in the routine work of
11 the state agencies' data and information technology departments. Any
12 new record linkage or data-matching activities required in fulfillment
13 of this section may be performed by partners for our children pursuant
14 to agreements developed under subsection (6) of this section.

15 (2) For the purposes of this section, "state agencies" mean any
16 agency or subagency providing data used in the integrated client
17 database maintained by the research and data analysis division of the
18 department. Any exchange of data must be in accordance with applicable
19 federal and state law.

20 (3) All measurements must use a methodology accepted by the
21 scientific community. Wherever possible, all measurements must address
22 any disproportionate racial and ethnic inequality. The University of
23 Washington, through partners for our children, shall develop the
24 initial measurements by December 1, 2013.

25 (4) The measurements may not require the state agencies to revise
26 their data collection systems, and may not require the state agencies
27 to provide individually identifiable information.

28 (5) The state agencies shall provide the University of Washington
29 with all measurement data related to the measurements developed under
30 this section at least quarterly beginning January 1, 2014. Partners
31 for our children shall make any nonidentifiable data publicly
32 available. Partners for our children shall report on the data to the
33 legislature and the governor annually starting December 31, 2014.

34 (6) By July 1, 2014, the state agencies shall execute agreements
35 with partners for our children to enable sharing of data pursuant to
36 RCW 42.48.020 sufficient to comply with this section.

1 (7) The fact that partners for our children has chosen to use a
2 specific measure, use a specific baseline, or compare any measure to a
3 baseline is not admissible as evidence of negligence by the department
4 in a civil action.

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