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**Early Learning & Human Services  
Committee**

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**HB 1661**

**Brief Description:** Creating the department of children, youth, and families.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Kagi, Sullivan, Dent, Senn, Muri, Kilduff, Klippert, Frame, Goodman, Ortiz-Self, Wilcox, Lovick, Hargrove, Clibborn, Lytton, Appleton, Fitzgibbon, Orwall, Kloba, Sells, Fey, Macri, Bergquist, Pollet, Hudgins, Robinson, Stanford and Slatter; by request of Office of the Governor.

**Brief Summary of Bill**

- Creates the Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) and moves responsibility for early learning from the Department of Early Learning and child welfare programs from the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) to the DCYF on July 1, 2018 and juvenile justice programs from the DSHS to the DCYF on July 1, 2019.
- Creates an Office of Innovation and Alignment within the Office of the Governor with the duty to develop a plan for the establishment of the DCYF.

**Hearing Date:** 2/3/17

**Staff:** Luke Wickham (786-7146).

**Background:**

The Department of Social and Health Services.

The Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) was established in 1970 and was created by merging the former Department of Health, Department of Public Assistance, Department of Institutions, Veterans' Rehabilitation Council, and Division of Vocational Rehabilitation of the Coordinating Council on Occupational Education. The DSHS was intended to "integrate and coordinate all those activities involving the provision of care for individuals who, as a result of

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their economic, social, or health condition, require financial assistance, institutional care, rehabilitation, or other social and health services."

The DSHS consists of seven program area administrations including the:

- Aging and Long-Term Support Administration;
- Behavioral Health Administration;
- Children's Administration;
- Developmental Disabilities Administration;
- Economic Services Administration;
- Financial Services Administration; and the
- Rehabilitation Administration.

The Children's Administration (CA) responds to allegations of abuse and neglect, offers child welfare services to families, and licenses foster homes, among other things. The CA screens allegations of abuse and neglect and determines whether a response is necessary, and if so what the appropriate response should be. If a child abuse or neglect allegation meets the criteria for a response, the case will be assigned to either Child Protective Services (CPS), the Family Assessment Response program, or to the Division of Licensing Resources. Serious allegations of child abuse or neglect will receive a CPS investigation within 24 hours. Allegations with low to moderately low risk of child abuse or neglect will receive a response from the Family Assessment Response within 72 hours. The CA offers voluntary services to parents through the Family Voluntary Services program. The CA may also seek court intervention to approve out-of-home placement for children, request that parents engage in services to correct parental deficiencies, and to terminate parental rights in cases where parents do not correct their deficiencies.

The Rehabilitation Administration has responsibility for the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, Juvenile Rehabilitation, the Office of Juvenile Justice, and the Special Commitment Center. Juvenile Rehabilitation serves youth committed to custody by county courts for periods of incarceration lasting longer than 30 days in three facilities: Echo Glen, Green Hill, and Naselle Youth Camp. The Office of Juvenile Justice is responsible for monitoring the state's compliance with the federal Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act and providing support for the Washington State Partnership Council on Juvenile Justice.

#### Department of Early Learning.

The Department of Early Learning (DEL) was created by the Legislature in 2006 and has the duty to implement early learning programs including licensing center and family home child care programs, the Early Achievers quality rating and improvement system, and the Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program. The DEL also partners with Thrive Washington to provide home visiting services, provides community grants and public awareness to prevent abuse and neglect, administers a Medicaid Treatment Child Care program, oversees the Early Support for Infants and Toddlers program, and sets policy for the Working Connection Child Care and Seasonal and Homeless child care subsidy programs.

#### Blue Ribbon Commission on the Delivery of Services to Children and Families.

The Blue Ribbon Commission on the Delivery of Services to Children and Families (BRC) was established by executive order in early 2016 and directed to recommend an organizational

structure for a new department focused solely on children and families. The BRC met monthly from May to November of 2016 and produced a final report after its last meeting recommending that the Children's Administration and juvenile justice functions of the DSHS should be integrated with the DEL to create a new state agency, among many other recommendations.

### **Summary of Bill:**

#### The Department of Children, Youth, and Families.

A new state agency, called the Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF), is created on July 1, 2018. The intent of creating this new agency is to improve the delivery of services and the outcomes for children and families through delivery of these services by housing early learning, child welfare, and juvenile justice services in the same agency.

On July 1, 2018 the DEL is eliminated, and the functions performed by that agency are moved to the DCYF.

On July 1, 2018 the child welfare functions of the DSHS Children's Administration move from DSHS to the DCYF.

On July 1, 2019 the juvenile justice functions of the DSHS Juvenile Rehabilitation Administration move from DSHS to the DCYF.

#### Office of Innovation and Alignment.

An office of Innovation and Alignment is created within the Office of the Governor with the primary duty of developing and presenting a plan for the establishment of the Department of Children, Youth, and Families, which will include:

- coordinating and convening the DEL, the DSHS, policy work groups and research institutions in the development of an integrated management portfolio management and administrative structure for the DCYF, which would include a definition of outcomes to measure performance for the DCYF;
- developing a stakeholder advisory system for the DCYF.
- developing an information technology design and investment plan required to effectively integrate the DEL, the CA of DSHS, and the JRA of DSHS, and to meet other goals for consideration in the 2018 supplemental budget;
- developing a consultation policy and protocol with the 29 federally recognized tribes in the State of Washington;
- reviewing existing statutes affecting DEL and DSHS and identifying conflicts or barriers that these statutes present.

The Office of Innovation and Alignment transitions from the Office of the Governor to the DCYF on July 1, 2018. After that date, its functions will include:

- recommending implementation of advancements based on research;
- alignment and measurement of outcomes;
- quality assurance and evaluation of programs and services;
- leading partnerships with the community, research and teaching institutions, philanthropic organizations, and nonprofit organizations; and

- producing an annual work plan that includes priorities for ongoing policy, practice, and system reform, tracking and reporting on the performance of DCYF reforms.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Requested on January 26, 2017.

**Effective Date:** The bill contains multiple effective dates.