
**Early Learning & Human Services
Committee**

HB 1816

Brief Description: Concerning information sharing related to implementation of the homeless youth prevention and protection act of 2015.

Sponsors: Representatives Frame, Goodman, Lovick, Ortiz-Self, Kilduff, Muri, Doglio, Macri and Fey; by request of Department of Social and Health Services.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Allows the Department of Social and Health Services to disclose confidential child welfare records to the Department of Commerce for youth admitted to Crisis Residential Centers (CRC) or HOPE Centers.
- Modifies certain administrative responsibilities related to CRCs and HOPE Centers.

Hearing Date: 2/8/17

Staff: Dawn Eychaner (786-7135).

Background:

In 2015 the Legislature created the Office of Homeless Youth Prevention and Protection Programs (Office) at the Department of Commerce (COM). With the establishment of the Office, programs serving homeless and unaccompanied youth, including Crisis Residential Centers (CRC) and HOPE Centers, were transferred from the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) to the COM.

Crisis Residential Centers.

A CRC is a short term, secure or semi-secure facility providing a temporary residence for runaway youth and adolescents in conflict with their families. Counselors at a CRC work with the family to resolve the immediate conflict and may refer the family for additional services. At

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the request of the child or parent, a CRC administrator may convene a multidisciplinary team to assist with coordination and delivery of services to the family.

HOPE Centers.

Hope Centers provide temporary residence and services for street youth under the age of 18. Youth residing in a HOPE center receive a comprehensive assessment that may include referrals and permanency planning.

Summary of Bill:

Confidential Child Welfare Records.

The DSHS may disclose confidential child welfare records for youth in foster care to the COM and its contracted providers. Records may be disclosed only if they pertain to or may assist with meeting the service needs of foster youth who are admitted to CRCs and HOPE Centers under contract with the Office. Records used for these purposes must remain confidential and may not be disclosed further by the COM and its contractors.

Crisis Residential Centers.

Notification to the DSHS regarding: (a) law enforcement's transport of a child to a CRC, and (b) unauthorized leave from a CRC by a child, is only required in cases where the child is in the care of or receiving services from the DSHS Children's Administration.

Responsibility for adopting rules related to CRC licensing are transferred from the COM to the DSHS. Responsibility for requesting state agency participation on multidisciplinary teams serving children and parents is transferred from the CRC administrator to the COM. The COM must provide information about state agency participation on the team to the CRC administrator.

HOPE Centers.

The requirement for a HOPE Center administrator to accompany a resident leaving the HOPE Center to attend school or other necessary appointments is removed. HOPE Center administrators may establish rules allowing residents to come and go from the facility at reasonable hours. Administrators may require that a resident leaving the facility:

- be accompanied by a facility administrator or designee,
- notify the administrator of his or her intent to leave, intended destination, and probable time of his or her return to the facility.

Approval by the DSHS for payment for a HOPE Center bed for a dependent youth is no longer required.

For a petition filed in juvenile court by a parent, child, or the COM for a child in need of services, the definition is changed to allow the DSHS to file a petition instead of the COM.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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