

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1237

As Reported by House Committee On:
Children, Youth & Families

Title: An act relating to defining family resource centers.

Brief Description: Defining family resource centers.

Sponsors: Representatives Eslick, Senn, Leavitt, Callan, Ortiz-Self, Rude, Davis, Santos, Rule, Goodman and Riccelli.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Children, Youth & Families: 1/27/21, 1/28/21 [DP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Defines the term "family resource center" to mean a unified single point of entry where families, individuals, children, and youth in communities can obtain information, an assessment of needs, referral to, or direct delivery of family services in a manner that is welcoming and strength-based.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILIES

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 13 members: Representatives Senn, Chair; Harris-Talley, Vice Chair; Rule, Vice Chair; Dent, Ranking Minority Member; Chase, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; McCaslin, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Callan, Eslick, Goodman, Klippert, Ortiz-Self, Wicks and Young.

Staff: Luke Wickham (786-7146).

Background:

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

A "family resource center" ("FRC") generally refers to community-based resource hubs where families can access formal and informal supports to promote their health and well-being. These FRCs are sometimes located in apartment complexes, schools, health centers, libraries, community centers, storefronts, and churches, among other places.

The National Family Support Network (NFSN) is made up of statewide networks of two or more family support and strengthening programs, such as FRCs. According to the NFSN, FRCs most commonly offer parenting support, access to resources, child development activities, and parent leadership development services.

Other terms are sometimes used to describe the same type of services provided by an FRC, such as:

- family support center (FSC);
- family center;
- family success center; and
- parent child center.

There are a number of FRCs or FSCs throughout Washington.

Summary of Bill:

A "family resource center" ("FRC") is defined to mean a unified single point of entry where families, individuals, children, and youth in communities can obtain information, an assessment of needs, referral to, or direct delivery of family services in a manner that is welcoming and strength-based. An FRC is designed to meet the needs, cultures, and interests of the communities the FRC serves.

Family services may be delivered directly to a family at the FRC by the FRC staff or by providers who contract with or have provider agreements with the FRC.

Each FRC must have one or more family advocates who screen and assess a family's needs and strengths.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) The family resource centers (FRCs) provide assistance to families and help families thrive. The FRCs help families reach self-sufficiency and reach their potential.

Twenty-five years ago there was a focus on preventing crime and child abuse when responding to families in crisis. The focus now is on prevention and providing families with the supportive services needed to keep families safe.

The pandemic has shown how crucial the FRCs are.

Families often lack the support needed to keep their families together. Children are sometimes removed from parents based on future risk that could be mitigated if the appropriate services were provided.

The FRCs help families before they are involved with child protective services. During the COVID-19 pandemic, training was provided by the FRCs to service providers and families and helped describe the latest public health information.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Representative Eslick, prime sponsor; Lynsey Gagnon, Volunteers of American of Western Washington; Byron Manering, Brigid Collins Family Support Center; Dorothy Gorder and Bryan Neal, Multicultural Child and Family Hope Center; and Gina Cabiddu, Children's Home Society of Washington.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: Jonny Fernandez-Trujillo; Heidi Strobe; Shrounda Selivanoff, Children's Home Society; Laurie Lippold, Partners for Our Children; Kayla Epting, Southwest Youth and Family Services.