

CHILD WELFARE AUDITING AMENDMENTS

2017 GENERAL SESSION

STATE OF UTAH

Chief Sponsor: Gene Davis

House Sponsor: Sandra Hollins

LONG TITLE

General Description:

This bill amends provisions related to the auditing of Division of Child and Family Services' referrals and cases.

Highlighted Provisions:

This bill:

- requires the legislative auditor general to audit, subject to the prioritization of the Legislative Audit Subcommittee, a sample of child welfare referrals to and cases handled by the Division of Child and Family Services.

Money Appropriated in this Bill:

None

Other Special Clauses:

None

Utah Code Sections Affected:

AMENDS:

62A-4a-118, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2008, Chapter 3

Be it enacted by the Legislature of the state of Utah:

Section 1. Section **62A-4a-118** is amended to read:

62A-4a-118. Annual review of child welfare referrals and cases by executive director -- Accountability to the Legislature -- Review by legislative auditor general.

(1) The division shall use principles of quality management systems, including statistical measures of processes of service, and the routine reporting of performance data to

employees.

(2) (a) In addition to development of quantifiable outcome measures and performance measures in accordance with Section 62A-4a-117, the executive director, or his designee, shall annually review a randomly selected sample of child welfare referrals to and cases handled by the division. The purpose of that review shall be to assess whether the division is adequately protecting children and providing appropriate services to families, in accordance with the provisions of Title 62A, Chapter 4a, Child and Family Services, and Title 78A, Chapter 6, Part 3, Abuse, Neglect, and Dependency Proceedings, and Part 5, Termination of Parental Rights Act. The review shall focus directly on the outcome of cases to children and families, and not simply on procedural compliance with specified criteria.

(b) The executive director shall report, regarding his review of those cases, to the legislative auditor general and the Child Welfare Legislative Oversight Panel.

(c) Information obtained as a result of the review shall be provided to caseworkers, supervisors, and division personnel involved in the respective cases, for purposes of education, training, and performance evaluation.

(3) The executive director's review and report to the Legislature shall include:

(a) the criteria used by the executive director, or his designee, in making the evaluation;

(b) findings regarding whether state statutes, division policy, and legislative policy were followed in each sample case;

(c) findings regarding whether, in each sample case, referrals, removals, or cases were appropriately handled by the division and its employees, and whether children were adequately and appropriately protected and appropriate services provided to families, in accordance with the provisions of Title 62A, Chapter 4a, Child and Family Services, Title 78A, Chapter 6, Part 3, Abuse, Neglect, and Dependency Proceedings, and Part 5, Termination of Parental Rights Act, and division policy;

(d) an assessment of the division's intake procedures and decisions, including an assessment of the appropriateness of decisions not to accept referrals; and

(e) an assessment of the appropriateness of the division's assignment of priority.

(4) (a) In addition to the ~~[review conducted by the executive director, beginning July 1, 2004, the legislative auditor general shall audit]~~ executive director's review under Subsection (2), the legislative auditor general shall audit, subject to the prioritization of the Legislative Audit Subcommittee, a sample of child welfare referrals to and cases handled by the division and report ~~[his]~~ the findings to the Child Welfare Legislative Oversight Panel.

~~[(b) An audit under Subsection (4)(a) shall be conducted at least once every three years, but may be conducted more frequently pursuant to Subsection (4)(d).]~~

(b) An audit under Subsection (4)(a) may be initiated by:

(i) the Audit Subcommittee of the Legislative Management Committee;

(ii) the Child Welfare Legislative Oversight Panel; or

(iii) the legislative auditor general, based on the results of the executive director's review under Subsection (2).

(c) With regard to the sample of referrals, removals, and cases, the Legislative Auditor General's report may include:

(i) findings regarding whether state statutes, division policy, and legislative policy were followed by the division and its employees;

(ii) a determination regarding whether referrals, removals, and cases were appropriately handled by the division and its employees, and whether children were adequately and appropriately protected and appropriate services provided for families, in accordance with the provisions of Title 62A, Chapter 4a, Child and Family Services, Title 78A, Chapter 6, Part 3, Abuse, Neglect, and Dependency Proceedings, and Part 5, Termination of Parental Rights Act, and division policy;

(iii) an assessment of the division's intake procedures and decisions, including an assessment of the appropriateness of decisions not to accept referrals;

(iv) an assessment of the appropriateness of the division's assignment of priority;

(v) a determination regarding whether the department's review process is effecting beneficial change within the division and accomplishing the mission established by the

86 Legislature and the department for that review process; and
87 (vi) findings regarding any other issues identified by the auditor or others under this
88 Subsection (4)~~[(d)]~~.
89 ~~[(d) An audit under Subsection (4)(a) may be initiated by:]~~
90 ~~[(i) the Audit Subcommittee of the Legislative Management Committee;]~~
91 ~~[(ii) the Child Welfare Legislative Oversight Panel; or]~~
92 ~~[(iii) the Legislative Auditor General, based on the results of the executive director's~~
93 ~~review under Subsection (2).]~~