

SB 815 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Senate Committee On Human Services

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Meeting Dates: 1/23

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

The measure modifies when the Department of Human Services (DHS) is a party in juvenile dependency proceedings. The measure states that DHS is a party in the proceedings when the department is the petitioner, has taken the child into protective custody, has been granted temporary custody of the child, the child has been committed to the legal custody of the department, or a child-caring agency has temporary custody of the child. Removes child-caring agencies as parties to the proceedings. The measure takes effect January 1, 2026.

REVENUE: May have revenue impact, but no statement yet issued

FISCAL: May have fiscal impact, but no statement yet issued

Detailed Summary:

- Specifies that DHS is a party in juvenile dependency proceedings when:
 - DHS is the petitioner;
 - DHS has taken the child or ward into protective custody;
 - the court has granted DHS temporary custody of the child;
 - the ward has been committed to the legal custody of DHS; or
 - a child-caring agency has temporary custody of the child or ward.
- Removes child-caring agencies as parties to the proceedings.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

When the Department of Human Services intervenes in response to reported abuse or neglect of a child, the department will file a petition with the local juvenile court to begin dependency proceedings that will govern the child's case, including placements in substitute care when necessary. Oregon law recognizes the following as parties to proceedings in juvenile court: the child or ward; their parents or guardian; a putative father; the state; the juvenile department; a court appointed special advocate; and a tribal representative and custodian if the child is determined to be covered by the Indian Child Welfare Act (ORS 419B.875). Under current law, the department or another child-caring agency may only be a party to juvenile court proceedings if they have temporary custody of a child or ward or if the department has taken the child or ward into protective custody.