

SB 135 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Senate Committee On Human Services

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Meeting Dates: 3/11

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

The measure requires certain advisory councils, advisory committees, and review teams to include court appointed special advocates (CASAs) in their membership.

Detailed Summary:

- Defines CASA as a person in a CASA Volunteer Program who is appointed by a court to act as a court appointed special advocate.
- Requires the addition of current or former CASAs to:
 - The Governor's Child Foster Care Advisory Commission;
 - Domestic violence fatality review teams establish by local domestic violence coordinating councils;
 - The Youth Suicide Intervention and Prevention Advisory Committee;
 - County child abuse multidisciplinary teams developed by each county's district attorney;
 - The Advisory Council on Child Abuse Assessment; and
 - The System of Care Advisory Council.
- Requires the Department of Human Services to include a current CASA on a Critical Incident Review Team selected from a list of three to five potential nominees with no prior contact with or knowledge of the deceased child or their family.

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

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

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

Court appointed special advocates (CASA) and guardian ad litem (GAL) volunteers are appointed by courts to advocate for children's interests during court proceedings. In 2021, the legislature passed [HB 2738](#) which required the Oregon Department of Administrative Services (DAS) to contract with a nongovernmental statewide coordinating entity to oversee the CASA Volunteer Programs and services.

[The National CASA Association](#) was founded in 1977 in Seattle, Washington. [Oregon's CASA Network](#) is the statewide organization that supports Oregon's 20 local CASA programs. The local programs recruit, screen, train, and support CASA volunteers.