



Legislative Fiscal Office
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Bill Title: Relating to the investigation of child abuse committed by a person who is unrelated to the child.

Government Unit(s) Affected: Department of Human Services, Department of Justice, Oregon Health Authority, Oregon Youth Authority

Summary of Fiscal

Costs related to the measure are indeterminate at this time - see explanatory analysis.

Measure Description

The measure requires the Department of Human Services (DHS) to ensure assessments or investigations of child abuse reports for children residing in a youth correction facility, youth care center, detention facility, foster home or with a foster family are processed by the program that specializes in training, investigations, and safety. The measure becomes operative July 1, 2027, and permits DHS to take any action necessary prior to the effective date in preparation for implementation of the measure.

Fiscal Analysis

Department of Human Services

DHS interprets the measure to mean the Office of Training, Investigations and Safety (OTIS) should be responsible for the assessments and investigations listed in the measure. Currently OTIS, as a shared service, supports the needs of both DHS and the Oregon Health Authority (OHA). OTIS trains and consults with state and county investigators, providers, and mandatory reporters. The office investigates reports of abuse for child caring agencies (or CCAs), mental health and developmental disability programs, licenses and regulates CCAs, and conducts research and prevention activities. OTIS investigates reports of neglect, physical abuse, financial exploitation, verbal abuse, sexual abuse, and wrongful restraint. Child Protective Services (CPS) within DHS' child welfare division investigates allegations of abuse and neglect of children. CPS has established a continuum of care for child and family services which includes prevention, early engagement including CPS assessment, in-home and out-of-home support and adoption and guardianship. This measure would shift part of the caseload currently completed by CPS to OTIS.

The estimated biennial increase in screenings for OTIS is projected to be 5,708 resulting in approximately 1,824 investigations. DHS estimates the transition of work from Child Welfare to OTIS will take six to nine years, this estimate includes community engagement, rulemaking, and training. During this period of time, OTIS and the child welfare division will essentially share the workload until OTIS is fully staffed and trained. While the child welfare division currently provides additional supports and services to affected families, it is unclear if OTIS will be required to do the same or if that responsibility will remain with CPS. If CPS retains the work, there may be several hand offs between the two during the course of a single investigation. With the measure's extended effective date, the department may be able to better define the resources and support required to begin implementation and may return to the legislature at that time to request additional or different resources.

The fiscal impact of the measure is indeterminate. The staffing needs, implementation deadline and division of work between OTIS and CPS are unknown. While staffing requirements are unclear, OTIS estimates the office

will need to add approximately 21 full-time permanent positions with a projected biennial cost of \$6.3 million total funds to meet the increased caseload. Positions include 1 investigation manager, 1 paralegal, 2 operations and policy analyst 3 positions, 2 compliance specialist 3 positions, 2 research analyst 2 positions, 5 administrative specialist 1 positions and 12 investigator 3 positions. Additional costs will include a biennial increase in Department of Justice (DOJ) costs of \$234,394 General Fund, due to an increase in contested hearings, program coordination and consultations.

To support the transition of work to OTIS, the Child Welfare Division will need at least one full-time permanent operations and policy analyst 3 position, one full-time limited duration project manager 3 position and one part-time limited duration Learning and Development Specialist 2 position. The estimated biennial cost for these positions, including personal services and standard position-related services and supplies costs is \$565,581 total funds. The department may need to return to the legislature to request additional resources as the scope of the work and the transition process is fully understood.

Oregon Health Authority

As OTIS is a shared service, OHA is responsible for a portion of their costs. The projected biennial cost to OHA for the new OTIS' positions is \$2.1 million General Fund.

Department of Justice

As OTIS' caseload is increasing, DOJ anticipates additional consultation for program development and increased contested case hearings. The estimated fiscal impact of the measure for the Department of Justice (DOJ) is one permanent senior assistant attorney general position. The estimated biennial cost of the position, including personal services and standard position-related services and supplies costs, is \$358,700 Other Funds.

The measure has no fiscal impact on the Oregon Youth Authority.

Relevant Dates

The measure takes effect on July 1, 2027.