

**SB 135 A STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY**

Carrier: Rep. Elmer

**House Committee On Early Childhood and Human Services****Action Date:** 05/01/25**Action:** Do Pass the A-Eng bill.**Vote:** 6-0-3-0**Yeas:** 6 - Elmer, Hartman, McIntire, Ruiz, Scharf, Walters**Exc:** 3 - Javadi, Nguyen H, Nosse**Fiscal:** Has minimal fiscal impact**Revenue:** No revenue impact**Prepared By:** Taylor Bickel, LPRO Analyst**Meeting Dates:** 4/22, 5/1**WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:**

The measure requires that certain multidisciplinary and review teams include a representative of a local CASA volunteer program, if available.

Detailed Summary:

Requires the addition of a representative of a local CASA Volunteer Program, if available, on:

- a multidisciplinary domestic violence fatality review team established by a local domestic violence coordinating council;
- county child abuse multidisciplinary teams developed by each county's district attorney; and
- Critical Incident Review Teams (CIRTs) assigned by the Department of Human Services.

**ISSUES DISCUSSED:**

- Geographic distribution of local CASA programs
- CASA representation on Critical Incident Review Teams
- Changes in federal funding for local CASA programs

**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 [House Bill 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. [Oregon's CASA Network](#) is the statewide organization that supports Oregon's local CASA programs. The local programs recruit, screen, train, and support CASA volunteers.

In Oregon, there are various types of multidisciplinary teams that are convened at the state, county, or local levels to review incidents related to domestic violence fatalities, child abuse, and other critical incidents involving children. Multidisciplinary domestic violence fatality review teams, outlined in ORS 418.714, are collaborative groups composed of experts from various fields who review domestic violence fatalities and make recommendations to prevent domestic violence fatalities. They typically consist of law enforcement personnel, health care providers, social services, and domestic violence advocates, legal experts, and, in certain cases, additional members such as educators, policy makers, or victim support organizations. County child abuse multidisciplinary teams, outlined in ORS 418.747, are collaborative groups established at the county level under the leadership of the district attorney. These teams bring together professionals from various sectors to address,

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investigate, and prevent child abuse. The teams include representatives from several fields, such as law enforcement, child protective services, healthcare, education, and the legal community. [Critical Incident Review Teams](#) (CIRTs), outlined in ORS 418.811, are specially designated groups assigned by the Department of Human Services to investigate and analyze significant child abuse incidents. CIRTs are typically multidisciplinary, including professionals in child welfare, juvenile court judges, legislators, or district attorneys.