

SB 749 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Senate Committee On Human Services

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Meeting Dates: 3/8, 4/12

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Permits child, ward, youth, or youth offender in legal custody of Department of Human Services (collectively “young person”) who is age 12 or older to receive new assignment of caseworker upon request. Permits young person who is age 14 to be provided access to own confidential information upon request, and to be allowed to sign own release of information. Specifies when young person must be provided with information regarding rights.

FISCAL: May Have Fiscal Impact, But No Statement Yet Issued

REVENUE: May Have Revenue Impact, But No Statement Yet Issued

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Access to DHS records for foster youth and foster youth with mental health issues
- Existing rights to information and records covered by measure for release
- Importance of stability in caseworker assignments
- Provisions of measure
- Possible amendments

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

Oregon law does not provide a mechanism for a child, ward, youth, or youth offender (collectively “child”) in the legal custody of the Department of Human Services (DHS) to request a new caseworker if the child has been unable to develop a positive relationship with their currently assigned caseworker. There is also no mechanism for a child to access their own confidential records without the permission of DHS staff.

Senate Bill 749 permits a child who is age 12 or older and in legal custody of DHS, who has already been assigned a caseworker, to request a new caseworker. DHS is required to provide a new caseworker within 15 days of the request if the child states they have been unable to develop a positive relationship with their assigned caseworker. The measure also permits a child, who is age 14 or older and in custody of DHS, to have access to their own confidential information maintained by DHS upon request. It also entitles such a child to sign their own release of information for use in getting assistance. Senate Bill 749 also specifies when DHS is to inform a child about their rights under the measure.