

SB 244 -1 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Senate Committee On Human Services

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Meeting Dates: 2/1, 2/6

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Clarifies Department of Human Services' notification requirements regarding child-caring agencies. Declares emergency, effective on passage.

FISCAL: No Fiscal Impact

REVENUE: No Revenue Impact

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Current notification requirements on department, providers for abuse reports
- Level of need in increasing number of child placement settings
- Child interview procedures during abuse investigation
- Measure's impact on new entries, children already in care

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

-1 : Defines "governmental agency" for purposes of statutes governing child-caring agencies and statutes governing placement in foster homes by child-caring agencies.

BACKGROUND:

Oregon law requires the Department of Human Services (DHS) to investigate a child-caring agency when DHS becomes aware of any failures of a child-caring agency to comply with licensing criteria. DHS then must report alleged violations to state agencies or governing boards responsible for the child-caring agency, and DHS also must notify other government agencies that have contracts with the child-caring agency. DHS is also required to notify individuals relevant to a child in care's case. If the investigation finds the report is substantiated, DHS must notify the Director and relevant licensing and child welfare personnel within the department. DHS is then also required to notify individuals relevant to the child in care's case that the report is substantiated.

Senate Bill 244 clarifies DHS' notification requirements in regards to abuse allegations. The measure also requires DHS to inform the Oregon Youth Authority or the developmental disabilities office of alleged abuses if the child-caring agency serves children committed to the care of those state agencies. Senate Bill 244 also clarifies what actions DHS can take if the investigation finds deficiencies impacting child health, safety, or welfare. The measure also adds the child in care's case manager to the list of those receiving notice alleged violations. Senate Bill 244 also adds individuals relevant to a child in care's case and certain state agencies to the list of those notified of a substantiated abuse finding.