

SB 1579 -6 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Senate Committee On Human Services

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Sub-Referral To: Joint Committee On Ways and Means

Meeting Dates: 2/7, 2/12, 2/14

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

The measure creates a special fund for advocacy centers that support children who have been abused. It directs the Oregon Legislature to provide enough funds to make sure that all the centers helping these children are fully funded. This money will also support teams that work to stop child abuse in each county. The Department of Human Services will get money from the general fund to run a one-time grant program, giving more help to these centers. A task force will be set up to check if Oregon is following Karly's Law, to figure out the best way to fund the centers, and to find out why some kids can't get help and report to the Legislature.

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

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

Detailed Summary:

I. Definitions

- Defines **children's advocacy center** as a facility to which a child from the community may be referred to receive a thorough child abuse assessment, for the purpose of determining whether the child has been abused or neglected, and that facilitates a coordinated, comprehensive, and multidisciplinary response to cases of child abuse.
- Defines **regional children's advocacy center** as a facility operated by a children's advocacy center selected by the Child Abuse Multidisciplinary Intervention Program to provide training and complex case assistance.

II. Children's Advocacy Center Fund

Establishes the Children's Advocacy Center Fund which appropriates money to the Department of Justice for to establish and maintain children's advocacy centers and regional children's advocacy centers, to support training and technical assistance efforts for county child abuse multidisciplinary teams and children's advocacy centers and to provide coordination and support for the work of regional children's advocacy centers. Provides that the Legislative Assembly shall appropriate sufficient moneys to the fund that are necessary to fully fund said program. Appropriates \$3,500,000 to the Children's Advocacy Center Fund.

III. Children's Advocacy Center One-Time Grants

Directs the Department of Human Services (ODHS) to develop and administer a one-time grant program to expand access to services and supports provided by children's advocacy centers and regional children's advocacy centers and to increase the number of children served by said centers. Directs ODHS to govern program in rule, specifies program requirements. Establishes the Children's Advocacy Center One-Time Grant Fund and permits ODHS to use fund to cover administrative costs associated with administering grant program. Appropriates \$27,000,000 for deposit in the Children's Advocacy Center One-Time Grant Fund. Sunsets program on January 2, 2026.

IV. Task Force on County Child Abuse Multidisciplinary Teams

Establishes the Task Force on County Child Abuse Multidisciplinary Teams and specifies its membership. Directs task force to study best practices of child abuse multidisciplinary teams and related referral processes. Requires Task Force to report to the Oregon Legislature by September 15, 2024. Directs ODHS to provide staff support to

This summary has not been adopted or officially endorsed by action of the committee.

the task force. Appropriates an unspecified amount to the Task Force on County Child Abuse Multidisciplinary Teams. Sunsets task force on January 2, 2026.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Children’s advocacy center accreditation process and funding
- Needs of children who have survived trauma and abuse

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

-6 Directs the Oregon Department of Justice to develop and administer a one-time grant program to expand access to services and supports provided by children’s advocacy centers and regional children’s advocacy centers and to increase the number of children served by said centers. Directs Oregon Department of Justice to govern program in rule, specifies program requirements. Permits Oregon Department of Justice to use fund to cover administrative costs associated with administering grant program. Requires Oregon Department of Justice to award and distribute all of the grants by June 30, 2025. Adds members to the Task Force on County Child Abuse Multidisciplinary Teams. Requires the task force to also identify challenges for drug-endangered children and propose solutions. Requires Task Force to report to the Oregon Legislature by December 3, 2024.

BACKGROUND:

Children's advocacy centers are safe, child-friendly places where kids who have experienced abuse or trauma can go for help and support. These centers bring together professionals like counselors, doctors, and police officers to work together in one location. They provide services like counseling, medical exams, and legal help, all in a comforting and supportive environment. The goal of children's advocacy centers is to make sure that children who have been hurt or abused get the help they need while minimizing further trauma and helping them on their path to healing. Regional children's advocacy centers are similar to regular children's advocacy centers but serve a broader area or region, rather than just one local community. They provide specialized services and support to children who have experienced abuse or trauma across multiple counties or jurisdictions within a particular region. Regional centers often collaborate with local agencies, such as law enforcement, medical professionals, and social services, to ensure that children receive comprehensive care and support. By serving a larger geographic area, regional children's advocacy centers can reach more children in need and provide a coordinated response to child abuse cases. There are [24 currently active centers](#) which serve all 36 Oregon counties, and four more centers are developing. In these centers, 7,895 children per year are seen for concerns of all forms of abuse. Overall, funding for children's advocacy centers in Oregon is typically a combination of public and private sources, with each center employing various strategies to sustain its operations and meet the needs of the children and families it serves. Children's advocacy centers in Oregon typically receive funding from various sources: grants (state and federal), private donations, philanthropic organizations, insurance reimbursements, state and local government contracts, and volunteer support.