



Ensuring the dignity of children in foster care

Senate Bill 548 implementation update

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February 28, 2024

Supporting youth during difficult transitions

ODHS is committed to upholding the dignity of all children and young people experiencing foster care.



Background

- Caseworkers are required to be prepared with luggage or duffel bags for a child's belongings when the child enters or exits foster care or transitions between foster placements.
- It is a rare circumstance – and only when it is out of the department's control – to transport a child's belongings in a trash bag.
- Community partners have stepped up with generous donations of bags, and ODHS also purchases bags when needed.



Senate Bill 548 (2023)

Directs ODHS to:

- Maintain inventory of luggage carriers for caseworkers to use when transporting the belongings of children involved in foster care.
- Report annually to the Legislature on each instance when trash bags were used and the reasons for their use.
- Include in each report ODHS' supply of luggage carriers and inventory management practices.



Implementation update

- **November 2023:** ODHS began tracking transportation of children's belongings (first reports for October 2023)
- **Four instances** when trash bags were used instead of luggage
- **Examples of reasons for use:**
 - Clothes needed to be washed and were placed in trash bag initially.
 - Ice storm prevented caseworker from being able to safely travel to an office to obtain luggage.





Questions?
