



SENATE BILL 598: Substance-Exposed Newborns Protection Plans

2015-2016 General Assembly

Committee: Senate State and Local Government
Introduced by: Sens. D. Davis, Pate, B. Jackson
Analysis of: Second Edition

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SUMMARY: *Senate Bill 598 requires the Department of Health and Human Services to adopt rules pertaining to development of protection plans for substance-exposed newborns and the conduct of child protective services assessments for those newborns.*

BILL ANALYSIS:

Senate Bill 598 would require county departments of social services to follow rules adopted by the Department of Health and Human Services regarding the development of protection plans for, and child protective services assessments of, substance-exposed newborns. County departments would be required to use structured decision-making tools as well as family service agreements for substance-exposed newborn cases. These tools and agreements would be required to ensure the well-being of the newborn and a safe living environment for the newborn. The family service agreements would be required to address the following:

- The newborn's need for medical care appointments.
- Access to, and cooperation with, health care resources.
- The parent's participation in substance abuse treatment.
- The need for routine substance abuse screening.
- Visitation planning if the newborn is placed out of the home.

EFFECTIVE DATE: This act is effective when it becomes law.

BACKGROUND: Federal law requires that reports of children born with positive toxicology for illegal substances must be accepted for child protective services assessment. This prenatal exposure to illegal substances is addressed in the North Carolina Division of Social Services Family Services Manual under Enhanced Practice for Working with Special Populations.¹

Amy Jo Johnson substantially contributed to this summary.

¹ <http://info.dhhs.state.nc.us/olm/manuals/dss/csm-60/man/pdf%20docs/CS1440.pdf>

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