



HOUSE BILL 212: Social Services Reform.

2021-2022 General Assembly

Committee:	House Families, Children, and Aging Policy. If favorable, re-refer to Appropriations. If favorable, re-refer to Rules, Calendar, and Operations of the House	Date:	March 30, 2021
Introduced by:	Reps. Stevens, Blackwell, White	Prepared by:	Theresa Matula Legislative Analyst
Analysis of:	PCS to Second Edition H212-CSSHa-14		

OVERVIEW: *House Bill 212 would make the following changes:*

- *Move toward implementation of regional supervision of child welfare and social services as recommended by the Social Services Regional Supervision and Collaboration Working Group (SSWG) and appropriate funds for new staff positions.*
- *Require members of the county board of social services to attend education and training sessions.*
- *Require the Administrative Office of the Courts to conduct a feasibility and cost study for a proposed child support tribunal.*
- *Require the Social Services Commission to adopt rules and procedures regarding conflicts of interest.*
- *Extend deadlines for the reporting plans developed by the SSWG and addresses membership and vacancies in the SSWG.*
- *Repeal certain laws pertaining to the Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children that were enacted in 2019.*

The Proposed Committee Substitute amends one of the SSWG duties in Stage Two.

BILL ANALYSIS:

Section 1(a) of House Bill 212 requires the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), in accordance with a plan created by the Social Services Regional Supervision and Collaboration Working Group (SSWG) to establish seven regions for supervision of child welfare and social services beginning March 1, 2022. The bill would require DHHS to repurpose and redeploy positions and managerial staff to support regionalization and to pursue procurement of physical offices within the seven regions beginning March 2023. DHHS shall move toward full implementation of a regional model by March 1, 2024.

Section 1(b) appropriates \$916,171 in recurring funds for each year of the 2021-2023 fiscal biennium to the Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Social Services, to support 11 new staff positions to improve regional supervision and support of child welfare services.

This section becomes effective July 1, 2021. **Section 2(a)** amends G.S. 108A-9 to require members of the county board of social services to attend education and training sessions. This subsection would become effective October 1, 2021, and members must participate in the training by October 1, 2023.

Jeffrey Hudson
Director



H 2 1 2 - S M S H - 1 6 C S S H A - 1 4 - V - 2

Legislative Analysis
Division
919-733-2578

House PCS 212

Page 2

Section 2(b) requires the Division of Social Services, DHHS, to collaborate with key stakeholders on the development of the education and training program which must be made available statewide by March 1, 2022. Section 2(b) is effective when it becomes law.

Section 3 requires the Administrative Office of the Courts to conduct a feasibility and cost study for a proposed child support tribunal and report its findings to the Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Health and Human Services by March 1, 2022.

Section 4 creates a new statute (G.S. 108A-15.16) to define conflicts of interest and set out procedures the county departments of social services must follow to resolve a conflict of interest. The Social Services Commission is required to adopt rules regarding conflicts of interest and must report to the Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Health and Human Services upon adopting the rules.

Section 5 amends S.L. 2017-41, which created the Social Services Regional Supervision and Collaboration Working Group (SSWG). The bill would amend S.L. 2017-41 as follows:

- Extends the deadline from March 1, 2020 to March 1, 2024, for the system of regional supervision to be operational.
- Continues the work of the SSWG and specifies that it consists of the currently constituted members as of December 1, 2018.
- Removes the requirement that members of the SSWG appointed by the General Assembly be members of the Senate or the House of Representatives.
- Creates a new provision addressing vacancies in the SSWG to allow a vacancy to be filled in the same manner as original appointment.
- Amends the duties in Stage Two.
- Requires the SSWG to convene no later than October 8, 2021 to continue developing recommendations.
- Adds a new Stage Three that requires the SSWG to review recommendations from identified entities and revise Stage One recommendations; specifies items on which more detailed recommendation must be provided; and requires a study of appointments and funding for publicly funded guardians.
- Requires a preliminary report to the Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Health and Human Services by October 15, 2022, and a final report by February 1, 2023, at which time the SSWG will terminate.

Section 6 requires DHHS to conduct a feasibility study on transferring adult guardianship cases from DHHS to counties. The report must include findings and recommendations from the feasibility study and outline the support the counties may need, including monetary support. DHHS must submit the report to the Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Health and Human Services by March 1, 2022.

Section 7 repeals two statutes, G.S. 7B-3807 and G.S. 7B-3808, that were enacted in S.L. 2019-172.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Except as otherwise provided, this bill would become effective when it becomes law.

BACKGROUND:

- [Social Services Regional Supervision and Collaboration Working Group, Stage Two Final Report](#), dated December 2018.
- [Plan for Regional Supervision and Support of Social Services and Child Welfare Programs](#), DHHS Report, dated February 22, 2019.