



2021-2022 General Assembly

# SENATE BILL 105: 2021 Appropriations Act, Sec. 9I.13: Regional Supervision and Support of Child Welfare Services/CPS Hotline

<b>Committee:</b>		<b>Date:</b>	February 22, 2022
<b>Introduced by:</b>		<b>Prepared by:</b>	Theresa Matula
<b>Analysis of:</b>	Sec. 9I.13 of S.L. 2021-180		Legislative Analyst

**OVERVIEW:** Section 9I.13 of S.L. 2021-180 provides that of the funds appropriated to the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), Division of Social Services (DSS), \$900,000 in recurring funds must be used to establish up to 15 positions for the (i) regional supervision support model directed by S.L. 2017-41 (Rylan's Law) and (ii) statewide child protective services (CPS) hotline.

This section also provides that, in accordance with the plan submitted by the Social Services Regional Supervision and Collaboration Working Group (SSWG) in its report on March 31, 2019, to the Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Health and Human Services, DHHS must establish seven regions for regional supervision of child welfare and social services and begin providing oversight and support within those regions through State regional staff and the central office team by April 1, 2022. Additionally, DHHS must continue (i) redeploying positions identified in the report to support regionalization and all managerial staff needed to support regionalization in the central office and (ii) repurposing corresponding operating expenses. DHHS is required to pursue procurement of physical offices within each of the seven regions beginning in March 2023 and to prioritize staffing to improve the child welfare system. DHHS must move towards full implementation of a regional model, with offices, by March 1, 2024.

Further, DSS and the North Carolina Association of Regional Councils of Governments (Councils of Governments) are required to explore entering into a memorandum of agreement to (i) utilize Councils of Governments' physical office space and office-related needs for Division staff and (ii) facilitate cooperation between regions and evaluate the estimated costs by region for the office space and sample agreements between the Division and the Councils of Governments. DSS must submit a report to the chairs of the Senate Appropriations Committee on Health and Human Services and the House Appropriations Committee on Health and Human Services by February 1, 2022, on the estimated costs, by region, for office space and sample agreements as described in this subsection.

Finally, this section amends Section 3 of S.L. 2021-132 to conform with the content of this section and to require DHHS to submit a progress report on its development and implementation of the statewide CPS hotline to the Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Health and Human Services no later than September 1, 2022.

This section became effective July 1, 2021.

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