



This Bill Analysis reflects the contents of the bill as it was presented in committee.

# SENATE BILL 90: Social Services Reform/CWBTC Recs.

2021-2022 General Assembly

<b>Committee:</b>	Senate Health Care. If favorable, re-refer to Rules and Operations of the Senate	<b>Date:</b>	March 15, 2021
<b>Introduced by:</b>	Sens. Krawiec, Burgin, Perry	<b>Prepared by:</b>	Jessica Boney Staff Attorney
<b>Analysis of:</b>	First Edition		

**OVERVIEW:** *Senate Bill 90 would direct the Department of Health and Human Services (Department) to develop policies and procedures on the foster care system, the Guardianship Assistance Program, child welfare services, programs qualified for reimbursement under the Family First Prevention Services Act, confidentiality laws, and to report the findings to the North Carolina General Assembly, explore memorandums of agreement for staffing, eliminate the Permanency Innovation Initiative Oversight Committee and require annual notification for school social workers of attendance requirement, as recommended by the North Carolina Child Well-Being Transformation Council.*

## BILL ANALYSIS:

### Part I. Foster Care and Social Services Reform

**Section 1.(a)** would require the Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Social Services (Division), to develop policies to require coordination between counties for children who reside outside of the county that has custody of the child, no later than 90 days after the child's seventeenth birthday. The policies shall ensure the child has a point of contact, educational plan, employment plan, and mechanisms to ensure continuity of services. **Section 1.(b)** would require the Department to report to the Chairs of the Senate Appropriations Committee on Health and Human Services and the Chairs of the House Appropriations Committee on Health and Human Services by February 1, 2022 on the progress, dissemination and implementation of these policies and procedures.

**Section 2.(a)** would direct the Division to develop policies and procedures on the permanency plan process, set time frames for the development and finalization of permanency plans, and study the age of transition out of foster care. **Section 2.(b)** would require the Department to report to the Chairs of the Senate Appropriations Committee on Health and Human Services and the Chairs of the House Appropriations Committee on Health and Human Services by April 1, 2022 on these policies, procedures, and any legislative recommendations to modify the age of transition.

**Section 3** would instruct the Department to develop and implement a plan to encourage and keep foster children in community-based settings to avoid inappropriate residential behavioral health placements. Implementation of the plan shall begin by April 1, 2022. The Department must report to the Chairs of the Senate Appropriations Committee on Health and Human Services and the Chairs of the House Appropriations Committee on Health and Human Services by July 1, 2022.

**Section 4.(a)** would instruct the Department to study the applicable requirements of the social services system, juvenile justice system, and the Medicaid and NC Health Choice program for children in foster care. **Section 4.(b)** would require the Department to report on the information to the Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Health and Human Services and the Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Medicaid and NC Health Choice by February 1, 2023.

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**Section 5** would direct the Department to develop and identify standardized, trauma-informed assessment tools and to evaluate the costs and benefits of using the assessment tools. The Department shall report results to the Chairs of the Senate Appropriations Committee on Health and Human Services and the Chairs of the House Appropriations Committee on Health and Human Services by June 1, 2022.

## **Part II. Guardianship Assistance Program**

**Section 6.(a)** would require the Department to do the following regarding the Guardianship Assistance Program and Kinship Care Program: (i) implement oversight mechanisms, (ii) increase utilization, (iii) explore reducing the age of children served, (iv) reduce the age of eligibility of the Guardianship Assistance Program to 12 years of age, and (v) provide recommendations for incentivizing use. **Section 6.(c)** would direct the Department to report on these activities to the Chairs of the Senate Appropriations Committee on Health and Human Services and the Chairs of the House Appropriations Committee on Health and Human Services by February 1, 2022.

## **Part III. Memorandum of Agreement for Staffing**

**Section 7.(a)** would instruct the Division and the North Carolina Association of Regional Councils of Government to explore entering into a memorandum of agreement to coordinate the use office space and office-related needs between regions and evaluate estimated costs. **Section 7.(b)** would direct the Department to report on these estimated costs and sample agreements to the Chairs of the Senate Appropriations Committee on Health and Human Services and the Chairs of the House Appropriations Committee on Health and Human Services by June 1, 2022.

## **Part IV. Family First Prevention Services Act**

**Section 8** would direct the Department to compile a list of programs that qualify for federal reimbursement through the Family First Prevention Services Act and to submit an annual report to the Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Health and Human Services on December 1, 2022, that identifies federal funds the State has received for all qualifying programs and strategies to expand the qualifying programs.

## **Part V. Confidentiality Laws**

**Section 9** would charge the Division with conducting a study of specified criteria of all confidentiality laws that apply to State social services and programs. The Division shall infer about any revisions necessary to improve collaboration or delivery of services. **Section 9(b)** would instruct the Division to work with various State entities in developing this study. **Section 9(c)** would require the Division to report the results to the to the Chairs of the Senate Appropriations Committee on Health and Human Services and the Chairs of the House Appropriations Committee on Health and Human Services by June 1, 2022.

## **Part VI. Eliminate Permanency Innovation Initiative Oversight Committee**

**Section 10** would repeal G.S. 131D-10.9A, and therefore eliminate the Permanency Innovation Initiative Oversight Committee.

## **Part VII. Notification for School Social Workers of Compulsory Attendance Requirement**

**Section 11.(a)** would require the Department of Public Instruction to annually notify school social workers of the continuous attendance requirement of a child age two to seven enrolled in school.

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