
By: **Delegates Branch, Anderson, Barve, Bohanan, Cadden, G. Clagett, Conway, DeBoy, Doory, Eckardt, Franchot, Gaines, Griffith, Haynes, James, Jones, Leopold, Levy, Madaleno, Marriott, McIntosh, Niemann, Paige, Proctor, Rosenberg, and F. Turner**

Introduced and read first time: February 8, 2006

Assigned to: Appropriations

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Child Welfare Accountability Act of 2006**

3 FOR the purpose of requiring the Secretary of Human Resources and the Secretary of
4 Budget and Management to develop and implement a certain system of
5 accountability to measure the efficiency and effectiveness of certain child
6 welfare services; providing for the purpose of the outcome measurement system;
7 requiring the Secretary of Human Resources to adopt regulations; requiring a
8 variety of indicators to be used to measure the effectiveness of certain child
9 welfare services; requiring certain measures to be utilized by certain entities;
10 requiring the Department of Human Resources to have a quality assessment
11 process for casework services; authorizing a certain entity to review and provide
12 guidance on the quality assessment process of the Department of Human
13 Resources; requiring certain case reviews and system performance reviews to
14 make certain determinations; requiring the Secretary of Human Resources to
15 enter into a memorandum of understanding with a certain entity to assist in the
16 development and implementation of a local department self-assessment process
17 at certain intervals and requiring a local department of social services to
18 incorporate certain results; requiring the local department of social services to
19 develop a child welfare plan after a certain requirement is met; requiring the
20 Secretary of Human Resources to adopt certain regulations; requiring the
21 Secretary of Human Resources to enter into a memorandum of understanding
22 with a certain entity to collect and maintain certain information; requiring
23 certain information to be reported at a certain time; authorizing certain units of
24 State government to contribute information to a certain entity; requiring the
25 Secretary of Human Resources and the Secretary of Budget and Management to
26 ensure that certain caseload ratios are achieved using certain criteria; requiring
27 the Department of Human Resources, in consultation with a certain entity, to
28 develop a methodology to calculate caseload ratios; requiring the Department of
29 Human Resources to enter into a written contract with a certain entity to
30 annually review the calculation of caseload ratios used by the Department of
31 Human Resources; requiring the Department of Human Resources to establish a
32 Child Welfare Training Academy and train certain individuals; authorizing the

1 Department of Human Resources to provide training to certain individuals;
2 requiring the Secretary of Human Resources to submit a certain report on the
3 outcome measurement system on or before a certain date; requiring the outcome
4 measurement system indicators to be based on certain information; requiring
5 the Child and Family Services Advisory Board in the Department of Human
6 Resources to review, assess, and provide guidance on the outcome-based system
7 of accountability; requiring the Department of Human Resources to pursue
8 national accreditation for each local department of social services; requiring the
9 Department of Human Resources to study the recruitment, selection, and
10 retention of the child welfare workforce and submit a report to certain entities;
11 requiring the Department of Budget and Management and the Department of
12 Human Resources, on or before a certain date, to report on an assessment of
13 certain accounting structures and workload measures; requiring the Secretary
14 of Human Resources and the University of Maryland School of Social Work, on
15 or before a certain date, to enter into a memorandum of understanding to
16 implement a local department self-assessment process and to collect and
17 maintain certain data; requiring the University of Maryland School of Social
18 Work to report on the measurement of performance and the collection of certain
19 data; providing for a delayed effective date; providing for the effective dates of
20 this Act; providing for the termination of certain provisions of this Act; defining
21 certain terms; and generally relating to child welfare accountability.

22 BY adding to
23 Article - Family Law
24 Section 5-1301 through 5-1311, inclusive, to be under the new subtitle "Subtitle
25 13. Child Welfare Accountability"
26 Annotated Code of Maryland
27 (2004 Replacement Volume and 2005 Supplement)

28 Preamble

29 WHEREAS, Each year the Maryland child welfare system touches the lives of
30 90,000 children and their families; and

31 WHEREAS, When abused and neglected children do not receive necessary,
32 timely, and appropriate services and interventions, the human and social costs are
33 enormous; and

34 WHEREAS, Inadequate resources in the child welfare system prevent abused
35 and neglected children and their families from receiving high quality services and
36 require agencies to focus on meeting only the most pressing needs and to aim only for
37 compliance with State and federal minimum standards; and

38 WHEREAS, In order for abused and neglected children and their families to
39 receive high quality services, the child welfare system must aim to create a culture of
40 excellence and to develop child welfare best practices that provide cutting edge
41 services to children and families; and

1 WHEREAS, In order to create a culture of excellence and to develop child
2 welfare best practices in the child welfare system, the Governor and the General
3 Assembly must make a long-term commitment to enhanced and stable funding and
4 support for abused and neglected children; and

5 WHEREAS, The Governor's Office for Children and the Children's Cabinet will
6 work together to prevent child abuse and neglect; and

7 WHEREAS, A culture of excellence in the child welfare system cannot be
8 accomplished without a long-term commitment to the communities within the State
9 that contribute the highest number of children to out-of-home care; now, therefore,

10 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF
11 MARYLAND, That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

12 **Article - Family Law**

13 **SUBTITLE 13. CHILD WELFARE ACCOUNTABILITY.**

14 5-1301.

15 (A) IN THIS SUBTITLE THE FOLLOWING WORDS HAVE THE MEANINGS
16 INDICATED.

17 (B) "ABUSE" HAS THE MEANING STATED IN § 5-701 OF THIS TITLE.

18 (C) "ADMINISTRATION" MEANS THE SOCIAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION OF
19 THE DEPARTMENT.

20 (D) "CHILD" MEANS ANY INDIVIDUAL UNDER THE AGE OF 18 YEARS.

21 (E) "INDICATED" HAS THE MEANING STATED IN § 5-701 OF THIS TITLE.

22 (F) "KINSHIP CARE" HAS THE MEANING STATED IN § 5-501 OF THIS TITLE.

23 (G) "LOCAL DEPARTMENT" MEANS A LOCAL DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL
24 SERVICES FOR A COUNTY.

25 (H) "NEGLECT" HAS THE MEANING STATED IN § 5-701 OF THIS TITLE.

26 (I) "OUT-OF-HOME PLACEMENT" MEANS PLACEMENT OF A CHILD INTO
27 FOSTER CARE, KINSHIP CARE, GROUP CARE, OR RESIDENTIAL TREATMENT CARE.

28 (J) "RULED OUT" HAS THE MEANING STATED IN § 5-701 OF THIS TITLE.

29 (K) "SECRETARY" MEANS THE SECRETARY OF HUMAN RESOURCES.

30 (L) "UNSUBSTANTIATED" HAS THE MEANING STATED IN § 5-701 OF THIS
31 TITLE.

1 5-1302.

2 (A) THE SECRETARY AND THE SECRETARY OF BUDGET AND MANAGEMENT
3 SHALL DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT AN OUTCOME-BASED SYSTEM OF
4 ACCOUNTABILITY FOR MEASURING THE EFFICIENCY AND EFFECTIVENESS OF CHILD
5 WELFARE SERVICES FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES IN THE STATE.

6 (B) THE OUTCOME MEASUREMENT SYSTEM SHALL:

7 (1) ADDRESS AREAS OF SAFETY, PERMANENCE, AND WELL-BEING FOR
8 ALL CHILDREN IN THE STATE CHILD WELFARE SYSTEM;

9 (2) MEASURE PERFORMANCE AT THE STATE AND LOCAL LEVELS;

10 (3) EXPAND ON FEDERAL OUTCOME MEASURES; AND

11 (4) USE THE INDICATORS IN §§ 5-1303 THROUGH 5-1306 OF THIS
12 SUBTITLE TO MEASURE OUTCOMES.

13 (C) THE SECRETARY SHALL ADOPT REGULATIONS THAT ESTABLISH
14 GUIDELINES FOR THE COLLECTION OF INFORMATION AT THE STATE AND LOCAL
15 LEVELS UNDER THIS SUBTITLE.

16 5-1303.

17 THE EFFECTIVENESS OF EFFORTS TO ADDRESS CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT
18 SHALL BE MEASURED BY:

19 (1) THE RECURRENCE WITHIN 12 MONTHS OF CHILD ABUSE OR
20 NEGLECT AMONG VICTIMS OF INDICATED ABUSE OR NEGLECT;

21 (2) THE PERCENTAGE OF SCREENED OUT REPORTS OF CHILD ABUSE OR
22 NEGLECT THAT ARE DOCUMENTED AS REVIEWED BY A SUPERVISOR;

23 (3) THE INCIDENCE OF CHILD ABUSE OR NEGLECT FOR A CHILD WHO, IN
24 THE PRIOR 12 MONTHS, WAS NOT REMOVED FROM THE HOME FOLLOWING AN
25 INVESTIGATION THAT FOUND INDICATED OR UNSUBSTANTIATED ABUSE OR
26 NEGLECT;

27 (4) THE PERCENTAGE OF CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES
28 INVESTIGATIONS THAT ARE INITIATED AND COMPLETED IN ACCORDANCE WITH §
29 5-706 OF THIS TITLE;

30 (5) FOR ALL INDICATED AND SUBSTANTIATED CASES OF ABUSE AND
31 NEGLECT, THE PERCENTAGE OF CHILDREN WHO:

32 (I) RECEIVE FAMILY PRESERVATION SERVICES; AND

33 (II) ARE ABLE TO REMAIN SAFELY IN THEIR OWN HOMES; AND

1 (6) ANY OTHER INDICATORS ADOPTED BY THE SECRETARY UNDER §
2 5-1302 OF THIS SUBTITLE.

3 5-1304.

4 THE EFFECTIVENESS OF EFFORTS TO PROTECT CHILDREN REMOVED FROM
5 THEIR HOMES FROM ABUSE AND NEGLECT SHALL BE MEASURED BY:

6 (1) THE INCIDENCE OF INDICATED OR UNSUBSTANTIATED FINDINGS OF
7 CHILD ABUSE OR NEGLECT OF CHILDREN IN THE CUSTODY OF A LOCAL
8 DEPARTMENT, OR A PLACEMENT AGENCY, FOR PLACEMENTS:

9 (I) IN FOSTER CARE HOMES;

10 (II) IN KINSHIP CARE HOMES;

11 (III) IN RESIDENTIAL TREATMENT CENTERS OR GROUP HOMES;

12 (IV) WITH FAMILY MEMBERS; AND

13 (V) IN OTHER FORMS OF SUBSTITUTE CARE;

14 (2) THE INCIDENCE OF INDICATED OR UNSUBSTANTIATED FINDINGS OF
15 CHILD ABUSE OR NEGLECT WITHIN 12 MONTHS FOLLOWING THE RELEASE OF THE
16 CHILD COMMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT; AND

17 (3) ANY OTHER INDICATORS ADOPTED BY THE SECRETARY UNDER §
18 5-1302 OF THIS SUBTITLE.

19 5-1305.

20 THE EFFECTIVENESS OF EFFORTS TO ADDRESS PERMANENCY AND STABILITY
21 IN THE LIVING SITUATIONS OF CHILDREN IN THE CUSTODY OF A LOCAL
22 DEPARTMENT, OR A PLACEMENT AGENCY, SHALL BE MEASURED BY:

23 (1) THE PERCENTAGE OF CHILDREN WHO EXIT FOSTER CARE WITHIN 18
24 MONTHS AFTER INITIAL PLACEMENT;

25 (2) THE PERCENTAGE OF CHILDREN WITH MULTIPLE PLACEMENTS IN
26 FOSTER CARE;

27 (3) THE PERCENTAGE OF CHILDREN IN THE CUSTODY OF A LOCAL
28 DEPARTMENT, OR A PLACEMENT AGENCY, WHO HAVE SIBLINGS LIVING IN
29 DIFFERENT PLACEMENTS;

30 (4) THE PERCENTAGE OF CHILDREN WITH PERMANENCY PLANS OF
31 REUNIFICATION WHO RECEIVE:

32 (I) WEEKLY VISITS WITH THEIR PARENTS; AND

- 1 (II) MORE FREQUENT EXTENDED VISITS WITHIN A 2-MONTH
2 PERIOD PRIOR TO THE SCHEDULED DATE OF REUNIFICATION;
- 3 (5) THE PERCENTAGE OF CHILDREN WHO EXIT FOSTER CARE AND ARE:
- 4 (I) REUNIFIED WITH A PARENT OR GUARDIAN;
- 5 (II) PLACED WITH A RELATIVE WHO IS AWARDED CUSTODY AND
6 GUARDIANSHIP;
- 7 (III) ADOPTED; OR
- 8 (IV) PLACED WITH A NONRELATED GUARDIAN;
- 9 (6) THE PERCENTAGE OF CHILDREN IN AN OUT-OF-HOME PLACEMENT
10 LIVING IN:
- 11 (I) KINSHIP CARE HOMES;
- 12 (II) RESTRICTED FOSTER HOMES;
- 13 (III) REGULAR FOSTER HOMES;
- 14 (IV) TREATMENT FOSTER HOMES;
- 15 (V) GROUP HOMES;
- 16 (VI) RESIDENTIAL TREATMENT CENTERS; AND
- 17 (VII) OTHER SPECIFIED TYPES OF PLACEMENTS;
- 18 (7) THE NUMBER OF FOSTER HOMES AVAILABLE FOR CHILDREN IN THE
19 CUSTODY OF A LOCAL DEPARTMENT, OR A PLACEMENT AGENCY;
- 20 (8) THE PERCENTAGE OF FOSTER HOMES AND KINSHIP CARE HOMES
21 RECEIVING:
- 22 (I) DAY CARE; AND
- 23 (II) RESPITE CARE;
- 24 (9) THE PERCENTAGE OF FOSTER HOMES AND KINSHIP CARE HOMES IN
25 WHICH THE FOLLOWING HAVE BEEN CONDUCTED ON A TIMELY BASIS:
- 26 (I) REQUIRED CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECKS;
- 27 (II) FIRE AND SAFETY INSPECTIONS;
- 28 (III) HEALTH AND SAFETY CHECKS;
- 29 (IV) RECONSIDERATIONS, AS APPLICABLE; AND

1 (V) ANY OTHER SAFETY MEASURES ADOPTED BY REGULATION;

2 (10) THE NUMBER OF CHILDREN WHO ARE RECOMMITTED TO THE
3 DEPARTMENT WITHIN 12 MONTHS OF RELEASE FROM COMMITMENT TO THE
4 DEPARTMENT; AND

5 (11) ANY OTHER INDICATORS ADOPTED BY THE SECRETARY UNDER §
6 5-1302 OF THIS SUBTITLE.

7 5-1306.

8 THE EFFECTIVENESS OF EFFORTS TO ADDRESS THE HEALTH, MENTAL HEALTH,
9 EDUCATION, AND WELL-BEING OF A CHILD COMMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT
10 SHALL BE MEASURED BY:

11 (1) THE PROVISION OF SUPPORT SERVICES TO PARENTS, ACCORDING TO
12 THE TERMS AND TIMELINESS OF CASE PLANS AND SERVICE AGREEMENTS, THAT ARE
13 APPROPRIATE FOR ADDRESSING THE PROBLEMS OF PARENTS THAT RESULTED IN
14 THE OUT-OF-HOME PLACEMENT OF THE CHILD;

15 (2) THE PERCENTAGE OF CHILDREN IN OUT-OF-HOME PLACEMENTS
16 WHO RECEIVED A COMPREHENSIVE ASSESSMENT IN COMPLIANCE WITH FEDERAL
17 REGULATIONS FOR THE EARLY AND PERIODIC, SCREENING, DIAGNOSIS, AND
18 TREATMENT PROGRAM WITHIN 60 DAYS OF ENTERING OUT-OF-HOME PLACEMENT;

19 (3) THE PERCENTAGE OF ELIGIBLE CHILDREN ENTERING FOSTER CARE
20 OR KINSHIP CARE WHO:

21 (I) HAVE BEEN EXAMINED BY A MEDICAL PROVIDER WITHIN 10
22 DAYS OF ENTRY INTO THE OUT-OF-HOME PLACEMENT; AND

23 (II) HAVE A DESIGNATED HEALTH CARE PROVIDER WITHIN 10 DAYS
24 OF ENTRY INTO THE OUT-OF-HOME PLACEMENT; AND

25 (4) ANY OTHER INDICATORS ADOPTED BY THE SECRETARY UNDER §
26 5-1302 OF THIS SUBTITLE.

27 5-1307.

28 (A) THE MEASURES IN §§ 5-1303 THROUGH 5-1306 OF THIS SUBTITLE SHALL BE
29 USED BY THE LOCAL DEPARTMENTS AND THE ADMINISTRATION, AND MAY BE USED
30 BY AN ENTITY THAT ENTERS INTO A MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING WITH THE
31 DEPARTMENT, TO MEASURE THE EFFICIENCY AND THE EFFECTIVENESS OF CHILD
32 WELFARE SERVICES.

33 (B) INFORMATION COLLECTED BY THE STATE OR FEDERAL GOVERNMENT
34 REGARDING THE STATE CHILD WELFARE SYSTEM MAY ALSO BE USED BY THE
35 ENTITIES IN SUBSECTION (A) OF THIS SECTION TO MEASURE THE EFFECTIVENESS
36 OF THE CHILD WELFARE SYSTEM, INCLUDING:

1 (1) THE MARYLAND CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES REVIEW;

2 (2) THE ADOPTION AND FOSTER CARE ANALYSIS AND REPORTING
3 SYSTEM CRITERIA; AND

4 (3) THE L. J. V. MASSINGA CONSENT DECREE CRITERIA.

5 5-1308.

6 (A) (1) THE DEPARTMENT SHALL HAVE A PROCESS FOR THE ASSESSMENT
7 OF THE QUALITY OF CASEWORK SERVICES.

8 (2) AN ENTITY THAT SPECIALIZES IN CHILD WELFARE SERVICES THAT
9 ENTERS INTO A MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING WITH THE DEPARTMENT MAY
10 REVIEW AND PROVIDE GUIDANCE ON THE QUALITY ASSESSMENT PROCESS
11 DEVELOPED BY THE DEPARTMENT.

12 (B) THE QUALITY ASSESSMENT SHALL EXAMINE WHETHER THE OUTCOME
13 INDICATORS ESTABLISHED IN §§ 5-1303 THROUGH 5-1306 OF THIS SUBTITLE HAVE
14 BEEN SUBSTANTIALLY ACHIEVED.

15 (C) (1) THE PROCESS DESCRIBED IN SUBSECTION (A) OF THIS SECTION
16 SHALL ASSESS THE QUALITY OF CASEWORK SERVICES THROUGH IN-DEPTH CHILD
17 AND FAMILY CASE REVIEWS THAT INVOLVE DIRECT INTERVIEWS BY QUALIFIED AND
18 TRAINED REVIEWERS WITH:

19 (I) CHILDREN;

20 (II) FAMILY MEMBERS;

21 (III) CASEWORKERS;

22 (IV) JUDGES;

23 (V) COURT-APPOINTED SPECIAL ADVOCATES;

24 (VI) FOSTER PARENTS;

25 (VII) TEACHERS;

26 (VIII) MEDICAL PERSONNEL; AND

27 (IX) OTHERS INVOLVED IN PROVIDING SUPPORT TO THE FAMILY.

28 (2) THE CHILD AND FAMILY CASE REVIEWS SHALL DETERMINE
29 WHETHER:

30 (I) CHILDREN ARE SAFE;

31 (II) THE NEEDS OF CHILDREN ARE MET, SPECIFICALLY THAT THE
32 CHILDREN:

1 1. ARE ENROLLED IN SCHOOL; AND

2 2. HAVE ALL TIMELY MEDICAL, DENTAL, AND MENTAL
3 HEALTH SERVICES, BASED ON THE CHILD'S NEEDS; AND

4 (III) THE VISITATION BETWEEN SEPARATED FAMILY MEMBERS IS
5 OCCURRING FREQUENTLY AND REGULARLY, CONSISTENT WITH THE BEST
6 INTERESTS OF THE CHILD.

7 (3) THE PERFORMANCE REVIEWS SHALL DETERMINE WHETHER:

8 (I) 1. THE FAMILY PARTICIPATED IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF
9 THE SERVICE AGREEMENT AND THE CASE PLAN;

10 2. THE SERVICE AGREEMENT ADDRESSED THE BEHAVIORS
11 AND CIRCUMSTANCES THAT LED TO CHILD ABUSE OR NEGLECT; AND

12 3. THE CASE PLAN AND SERVICE AGREEMENT WERE TIMELY
13 INITIATED;

14 (II) THE CASE PLAN WAS IMPLEMENTED AND PROGRESS WAS
15 MADE;

16 (III) ALL MEMBERS OF THE TEAM OF PROFESSIONALS WORKING
17 WITH THE FAMILY AND THE CHILD MET AT REGULAR INTERVALS TO MAKE CHANGES
18 TO SERVICES AND SUPPORTS AS NECESSARY; AND

19 (IV) 1. A CASEWORKER WAS PROMPTLY AND REGULARLY
20 ASSIGNED AND ACCESSIBLE TO THE CASE;

21 2. THE ASSIGNED CASEWORKER VISITED THE CHILD AT
22 LEAST ONCE PER MONTH; AND

23 3. A SUPERVISOR HAS BEEN REGULARLY ASSIGNED AND
24 ACCESSIBLE TO THE CASE.

25 5-1309.

26 (A) THE DEPARTMENT SHALL ENTER INTO A MEMORANDUM OF
27 UNDERSTANDING WITH AN ENTITY THAT HAS EXPERTISE IN CHILD WELFARE BEST
28 PRACTICES TO ASSIST IN THE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF A LOCAL
29 DEPARTMENT SELF-ASSESSMENT PROCESS TO MONITOR THE QUALITY OF:

30 (1) CHILD WELFARE SERVICES PROVIDED BY THE LOCAL
31 DEPARTMENTS; AND

32 (2) THE MANAGEMENT OF THE CHILD WELFARE SYSTEM BY THE
33 ADMINISTRATION.

34 (B) A LOCAL DEPARTMENT SELF-ASSESSMENT SHALL BE CONDUCTED EVERY
35 3 YEARS.

1 (C) IN CONDUCTING THE SELF-ASSESSMENT, A LOCAL DEPARTMENT SHALL
2 BE REQUIRED TO:

3 (1) INCORPORATE THE RESULTS FROM THE OUTCOME MEASURES IN §§
4 5-1303 THROUGH 5-1306 OF THIS SUBTITLE; AND

5 (2) INCORPORATE THE RESULTS OF THE QUALITY ASSESSMENT OF
6 CASEWORK SERVICES IN § 5-1308 OF THIS SUBTITLE.

7 (D) AFTER A LOCAL DEPARTMENT SELF-ASSESSMENT IS CONDUCTED BY THE
8 ADMINISTRATION, THE LOCAL DEPARTMENTS SHALL DEVELOP A PLAN TO:

9 (1) MAINTAIN PERFORMANCE THAT MEETS STANDARDS;

10 (2) STRENGTHEN AREAS NEEDING IMPROVEMENT; AND

11 (3) DESCRIBE HOW AREAS NEEDING IMPROVEMENT WILL BE
12 ADDRESSED AND HOW IMPROVEMENTS WILL BE MEASURED.

13 (E) THE SECRETARY SHALL ADOPT REGULATIONS GOVERNING THE LOCAL
14 DEPARTMENT SELF-ASSESSMENT PROCESS, INCLUDING:

15 (1) THE DEVELOPMENT OF QUALITY ASSURANCE PROCEDURES;

16 (2) PERFORMANCE STANDARDS;

17 (3) THE TIMING OF THE ASSESSMENT;

18 (4) THE SCOPE OF THE ASSESSMENT;

19 (5) THE PROCESS BY WHICH THE ADMINISTRATION MAY ACCEPT OR
20 REJECT THE LOCAL ASSESSMENT AND THE PLAN; AND

21 (6) THE PROCESS BY WHICH THE ADMINISTRATION SHALL USE THE
22 ASSESSMENTS OF THE LOCAL DEPARTMENTS TO DEVELOP THE STATEWIDE
23 ASSESSMENT UNDER TITLE 45 § 1355.33(B) OF THE CODE OF FEDERAL REGULATIONS.

24 (F) (1) THE DEPARTMENT SHALL ENTER INTO A MEMORANDUM OF
25 UNDERSTANDING WITH AN ENTITY WITH EXPERTISE IN CHILD WELFARE BEST
26 PRACTICES TO COLLECT AND MAINTAIN INFORMATION NECESSARY TO CONDUCT A
27 LOCAL DEPARTMENT SELF-ASSESSMENT AND STATEWIDE ASSESSMENT.

28 (2) ON OR BEFORE JANUARY 1, 2008, AND ANNUALLY THEREAFTER, THE
29 ENTITY THAT ENTERS INTO A MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING WITH THE
30 DEPARTMENT, AS REQUIRED BY THIS SUBTITLE, SUBJECT TO § 2-1246 OF THE STATE
31 GOVERNMENT ARTICLE, SHALL REPORT TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY ON:

32 (I) THE MEASUREMENT OF PERFORMANCE OF THE LOCAL
33 DEPARTMENTS AND THE ADMINISTRATION, AS PROVIDED IN SUBSECTION (A) OF
34 THIS SECTION; AND

1 (II) THE INFORMATION COLLECTED AND MAINTAINED UNDER
2 PARAGRAPH (1) OF THIS SUBSECTION.

3 (3) ANY UNIT OF STATE GOVERNMENT SUBSTANTIVELY INVOLVED
4 WITH ABUSED OR NEGLECTED CHILDREN MAY CONTRIBUTE INFORMATION TO THE
5 ENTITY PROVIDED IN PARAGRAPH (1) OF THIS SUBSECTION.

6 5-1310.

7 (A) THE SECRETARY AND THE SECRETARY OF BUDGET AND MANAGEMENT
8 SHALL ENSURE THAT SUFFICIENT NUMBERS OF QUALIFIED CHILD WELFARE STAFF,
9 AS SPECIFIED IN ARTICLE 88A, § 3A OF THE CODE, ARE HIRED AND RETAINED IN
10 ORDER TO ACHIEVE CASELOAD RATIOS IN CHILD WELFARE SERVICES CONSISTENT
11 WITH THE CHILD WELFARE LEAGUE OF AMERICA CASELOAD STANDARDS.

12 (B) THE DEPARTMENT, IN CONSULTATION WITH AN APPROPRIATE ENTITY
13 WITH EXPERTISE IN CHILD WELFARE SERVICES CASELOAD RATIOS, SHALL DEVELOP
14 A METHODOLOGY TO CALCULATE CASELOAD RATIOS IN CHILD WELFARE SERVICES
15 FOR THE STATE.

16 (C) THE DEPARTMENT SHALL ENTER INTO A WRITTEN CONTRACT WITH AN
17 ENTITY THAT HAS EXPERTISE IN CHILD WELFARE SERVICES CASELOAD RATIOS TO
18 ANNUALLY REVIEW THE CALCULATION OF CASELOAD RATIOS USED BY THE
19 DEPARTMENT.

20 5-1311.

21 (A) THE DEPARTMENT SHALL ESTABLISH AND MAINTAIN A CHILD WELFARE
22 TRAINING ACADEMY TO PROVIDE TRAINING ON BEST PRACTICES FOR THE
23 FOLLOWING INDIVIDUALS:

- 24 (1) CHILD WELFARE STAFF;
- 25 (2) CHILD WELFARE ADMINISTRATORS;
- 26 (3) FOSTER PARENTS; AND
- 27 (4) KINSHIP CAREGIVERS.

28 (B) THE DEPARTMENT MAY PROVIDE TRAINING ON BEST PRACTICES FOR THE
29 FOLLOWING INDIVIDUALS:

- 30 (1) THE STATE CITIZENS' REVIEW BOARD FOR CHILDREN STAFF AND
31 VOLUNTEERS; AND
- 32 (2) COURT APPOINTED SPECIAL ADVOCATE STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS.

33 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That,

34 (1) on or before December 31, 2007, the Secretary of Human Resources
35 shall submit to the Governor and, subject to § 2-1246 of the State Government

1 Article, to the Senate Finance Committee, the House Appropriations Committee, and
2 the House Judiciary Committee, a report on the outcome measurement system, as
3 described in § 5-1302 of the Family Law Article as enacted by Section 1 of this Act.

4 (2) the outcome measurement system indicators, as described in §
5 5-1303 through § 5-1306 of the Family Law Article as enacted by Section 1 of this
6 Act, shall be based on the recommendations of the Task Force on Child Welfare
7 Accountability, the Department of Human Resources' Program Improvement Plan,
8 and national best practices; and

9 (3) the Child and Family Services Advisory Board in the Department of
10 Human Resources shall review, assess, and provide guidance on the outcome-based
11 system of accountability, as described in § 5-1302 of the Family Law Article as
12 enacted by Section 1 of this Act.

13 SECTION 3. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That the Department of
14 Human Resources shall pursue national accreditation for each local department of
15 social services.

16 SECTION 4. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That, on or before July 1, 2007,
17 the Department of Human Resources shall:

18 (1) conduct a comprehensive study of the recruitment, selection, and
19 retention of the child welfare workforce for the purpose of developing strategies to
20 lower the turnover rate and increase the qualifications of the workforce; and

21 (2) in accordance with § 2-1246 of the State Government Article, report
22 to the Governor, the Senate Finance Committee, the House Appropriations
23 Committee, and the House Judiciary Committee on the findings and
24 recommendations of the Department.

25 SECTION 5. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That, on or before December 1,
26 2006, the Department of Budget and Management and the Department of Human
27 Resources shall report to the Governor and, subject to § 2-1246 of the State
28 Government Article, the Senate Finance Committee, the House Appropriations
29 Committee, and the House Judiciary Committee on an assessment of the accounting
30 structure and workload measures used by the Social Services Administration and the
31 local departments of social services to determine the changes that are necessary to
32 adopt the recommendations of the Task Force on Child Welfare Accountability
33 relating to:

34 (1) flexible budgeting to meet the needs of families;

35 (2) cost accounting for the child welfare system; and

36 (3) measuring performance of the child welfare system.

37 SECTION 6. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That, on or before January 1,
38 2007, the Secretary of Human Resources and the University of Maryland School of
39 Social Work shall enter into a memorandum of understanding setting forth the

1 responsibilities of each entity to implement a local department self-assessment
2 process to monitor the quality of casework services and to collect and maintain child
3 welfare services data.

4 SECTION 7. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That Section 1 of this Act shall
5 take effect January 1, 2007.

6 SECTION 8. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That, except as provided in
7 Section 7 of this Act, this Act shall take effect July 1, 2006. Section 6 of this Act shall
8 remain effective for a period of 6 years and, at the end of June 30, 2012, with no
9 further action required by the General Assembly, Section 6 of this Act shall be
10 abrogated and of no further force and effect.