

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2010 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

House Bill 1420 (Delegate Howard)
Health and Government Operations

Task Force to Study the Supervision of Group Homes
PG 405-10

This bill establishes a Task Force to Study the Supervision of Group Homes. The task force must study existing law and regulations that govern the operation of residential child care programs (RCCPs) and make recommendations regarding: (1) placing limits on the number of RCCPs in a defined geographic area; (2) the number of staff required to effectively operate and adequately supervise RCCPs; (3) standards for the operation of RCCPs; (4) the establishment of a RCCP oversight committee to monitor the quality and compliance of programs; and (5) any other issue the task force determines is necessary for the safe and effective operation of RCCPs. The Department of Human Resources (DHR) and the Department of Juvenile Services (DJS) must provide staff support for the task force. The task force must report its findings and recommendations to the Governor and the General Assembly on or before December 31, 2010.

The bill takes effect July 1, 2010, and terminates December 31, 2010.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: None. DHR and DJS can provide staff support for the task force using existing resources.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law/Background: RCCPs, often referred to as group homes, represent one form of out-of-home placements. RCCPs offer homelike settings that provide structure and 24-hour supervision, basic care, social work, and health care services. RCCPs include: (1) facilities for children with developmental disabilities; (2) child care homes; (3) child care institutions; (4) therapeutic group homes; and (5) group homes. The majority of children in RCCPs are in regular group homes. DHR, DJS, and the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene license, monitor, and place children in RCCPs according to individual agency standards.

Several laws have been enacted in recent years to improve the standards in RCCPs. For example, Chapter 454 of 2008 requires the licensing agencies to adopt regulations governing the issuance of a statement of need, which is an official certification of public need for the location and establishment of a residential child care program in a county. The law requires the licensing agencies to consider specified needs of children and consult with stakeholders in the county or region.

Chapter 133 of 2007 requires the Governor's Office for Children and the agencies responsible for out-of-home placement of children to develop and implement a system for outcomes evaluation, to be used to monitor the care, program performance, and capacity of RCCPs.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Department of Human Resources, Department of Juvenile Services, Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - March 18, 2010
mam/hlb

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