

**LEGISLATIVE SERVICES AGENCY**  
**OFFICE OF FISCAL AND MANAGEMENT ANALYSIS**  
**FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT**

**LS 6776**

**BILL NUMBER:** HB 1257

**NOTE PREPARED:** Dec 31, 2025

**BILL AMENDED:**

**SUBJECT:** Child Services Matters.

**FIRST AUTHOR:** Rep. McGuire

**BILL STATUS:** As Introduced

**FIRST SPONSOR:**

**FUNDS AFFECTED:**  **GENERAL**  
**DEDICATED**  
**FEDERAL**

**IMPACT:** State

**Summary of Legislation:** *Statewide Child Fatality Review Committee* - The bill adds four members to the Statewide Child Fatality Review Committee, one of whom is appointed by each of the following: (1) The Speaker of the House of Representatives. (2) The President Pro Tempore of the Senate. (3) the Minority Leader of the House of Representatives. (4) The Minority Leader of the Senate.

*Postadoption Contact Privileges* - The bill provides that a court may grant postadoption contact privileges to the birth parent of a child if the child is at least one year of age (rather than two years of age, under current law).

*DCS* - The bill adds information that must be included in the annual report of the Department of Child Services (DCS) concerning child fatalities in Indiana that are the result of child abuse or neglect. It also provides that the obligation of the department to conduct a detailed assessment of a report of known or suspected child abuse or neglect does not apply if the report is screened out and referred to a law enforcement agency.

*Child Welfare Court Performance Measures Dashboard* - The bill requires the Office of Judicial Administration (OJA) to publish on an online dashboard information regarding adjudication times for petitions for intervention in child in need of services (CHINS) proceedings and proceedings regarding termination of parental rights.

*Disclosure of Information* - The bill provides that the DCS: (1) shall disclose information regarding reported child abuse or neglect to a member of the United States Congress representing Indiana or Indiana General Assembly (state legislator) upon request of the state legislator; (2) may release information to the news media to confirm, clarify, correct, or supplement information concerning reported child abuse or neglect that has been made public by a source other than the Department; and (3) shall report to the news media specified information regarding the death of a child whose death is suspected to be the result of child abuse or neglect. It provides that if the information disclosed or released by the DCS includes a record that is redacted to exclude specified information, the record is not confidential.

The bill provides that the DCS may provide unredacted reports or material to: (1) a service provider that requires access to the unredacted reports or material to assess whether the service provider's services are suitable for the child; and (2) the Attorney General or a prosecutor for purposes of a criminal investigation by the attorney general or prosecutor.

*Statutory Limits* - The bill provides that the statutory limit on the DCS's provision of services to a parent, guardian, or custodian of a child who is the subject of a petition alleging the child to be a CHINS applies: (1) regardless of whether the child has been removed from the home of the parent, guardian, or custodian; (2) regardless of whether the services are provided at the direction of a court or of the department; and (3) beginning on the date on which the CHINS petition is filed.

**Effective Date:** July 1, 2026.

**Explanation of State Expenditures:** This bill could increase the workload of the DCS to (1) provide both redacted and non-redacted information concerning allegations of and/or substantiated instances of child abuse or neglect and (2) include specified information in the agency's annual report. Increases in workload are expected to be accomplished within existing resource and funding levels.

The bill will also increase state expenditures for additional mileage reimbursement by adding four members to the Statewide Child Fatality Review Committee. Increases in state expenditures are expected to be minimal.

*Additional Information:* To date for CY 2025, the DCS has received approximately 12,000 monthly reports of suspected child abuse and neglect in the state, with approximately 2,000 of these reports were substantiated and 10,000 were unsubstantiated each month.

*Child Welfare Court Performance Measures Dashboard* - The Office of Judicial Administration currently publishes information regarding CHINS adjudication times through the Child Welfare Court Performance Measures Dashboard.

**Explanation of State Revenues:**

**Explanation of Local Expenditures:**

**Explanation of Local Revenues:**

**State Agencies Affected:** DCS.

**Local Agencies Affected:**

**Information Sources:** <https://www.in.gov/courts/help/child-welfare/>

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