

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

LS 7110
BILL NUMBER: SB 246

NOTE PREPARED: Feb 17, 2026
BILL AMENDED: Feb 16, 2026

SUBJECT: Court Procedures.

FIRST AUTHOR: Sen. Freeman
FIRST SPONSOR: Rep. Bascom

BILL STATUS: As Passed House

FUNDS AFFECTED: **GENERAL**
 DEDICATED
 FEDERAL

IMPACT: Local

Summary of Legislation: The bill requires the names and specified other information of child victims, child witnesses, and certain other persons to be redacted in criminal actions. It requires the use of an anonymous designator such as "Child Witness No. 1" when redacting a name, and prohibits redaction that uses the person's initials or that describes the person in terms of a family relationship. It specifies that certain procedures concerning the deposition of a child victim in a criminal case apply to a child less than 17 years of age (under current law, the procedures apply to a child less than 16 years of age).

Effective Date: July 1, 2026.

Explanation of State Expenditures:

Explanation of State Revenues:

Explanation of Local Expenditures: *Court Reporters:* The courts may incur some minimal costs for training court reporters on the proposed redaction procedures for child victims, child witnesses, and other persons in criminal actions. However, any additional expenditures would likely be very small.

Additional Information - "*Criminal Actions*" applies to the following: 1) an action to prosecute a misdemeanor or felony; 2) a criminal appeal or a postconviction proceeding; or 3) a document, such as a probable cause affidavit prepared by a law enforcement officer and submitted to a judicial officer, as part of an investigation into the possible commission of a misdemeanor or felony, even if the investigation does not result in a prosecution.

When preparing transcripts for public access, under Rule 5(C)(2), a court reporter must exclude the names of child witnesses in cases involving sex offenses from public access, and any references shall be replaced with initials or similar designations that ensure their anonymity.

Explanation of Local Revenues:

State Agencies Affected: Indiana Supreme Court.

Local Agencies Affected: Trials courts; court reporters.

Information Sources: Indiana Public Access to Court Records, Rule 5: Records Excluded from Public Access (effective January 1, 2024), <https://rules.incourts.gov/Content/records/rule5/01-01-2022.htm>.

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