
SENATE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Senator Anthony Portantino, Chair
2023 - 2024 Regular Session

AB 273 (Ramos) - Foster care: missing children and nonminor dependents

Version: July 10, 2023

Urgency: No

Hearing Date: September 1, 2023

Policy Vote: HUMAN S. 5 - 0, JUD. 11 - 0

Mandate: Yes

Consultant: Agnes Lee

Bill Summary: AB 273 would update and expand the obligations of social workers, probation officers, and juvenile courts when foster youth and nonminor dependents are missing from foster care.

***** ANALYSIS ADDENDUM – SUSPENSE FILE *****

The following information is revised to reflect amendments
adopted by the committee on September 1, 2023

Fiscal Impact:

- One-time General Fund automation costs, likely hundreds of thousands in 2023-24, for the Child Welfare Services California Automated Response and Engagement System (CARES).
- Unknown ongoing local costs, likely millions (General Fund and federal funds), for county welfare departments for social worker resources to conduct the required activities. Unknown General Fund costs to county probation departments for probation officers to conduct the required activities. To the extent the bill increases county costs already borne by a local agency for programs or levels of service mandated by the 2011 Realignment, the bill would apply to local agencies only to the extent that the state provides annual funding for the cost increases.
- Ongoing General Fund cost pressures, likely hundreds of thousands, for additional court workload. Although courts are not funded on the basis of workload, if funding is not provided for the new workload created by this bill, it may result in delays and prioritization of court cases.

Author Amendments: Author amendments make revisions, including:

- Make revisions to requirements for “ongoing and intensive due diligence efforts” of social workers and probation officers.
- Authorize that the required hearing may be rescinded upon stipulation by all parties if the minor or nonminor dependent is found prior to the hearing or if the hearing coincides with a previously scheduled hearing in the case that falls within the 10 court days.
- Require that if the absence from care is habitual and an ongoing occurrence, the social worker must seek the input of the child and family team to discuss the factors

that are contributing to the child being absent from care and develop appropriate plans to stabilize the placement or change the placement.

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