
SENATE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Senator Sabrina Cervantes, Chair
2025 - 2026 Regular Session

AB 1688 (Carrillo) - Child abuse or neglect: reporting

Version: June 17, 2026

Policy Vote: PUB. S. 6 - 0, HUMAN S. 5 - 0

Urgency: No

Mandate: Yes

Hearing Date: August 3, 2026

Consultant: Bob Franzoia

Bill Summary: AB 1688 would require notice of incidents of reasonably suspected abuse or neglect, alleged to have occurred in a facility licensed by the Department of Social Services (CDSS) to be provided to attorneys who represent the parents of the child as well as to attorneys who represent a child in that placement, as specified. By expanding the duties of local agencies that receive reports alleging abuse or neglect to children, this bill would impose a state mandated local program.

Fiscal Impact: Up to \$2.4 million for county social workers to send required reports. (General Fund)

Estimated one time information technology upgrade costs of \$825,000 to CDSS. (General Fund).

Background: In 2022, CDSS data indicates 170 children were victims of abuse or neglect by their foster parents. The notice requirement may be larger than the number of individual children as the bill would require the county welfare agency to send a copy to attorneys who represent a child with an open dependency case in that placement, which would include foster care, congregate care, placement in a short term residential therapeutic program facility, or a relative placement.

Proposed Law: The administrative cost of the notice requirement is estimated, as follows:

- 1) The number of reports leading to an open case is unknown. As such, the estimate reflects a cost per 10,000 children to illustrate the potential impact of the bill. Actual costs will depend on the number of children impacted.
- 2) Social workers will require 2.5 hours to send notice of the report.
- 3) The social worker cost is \$99.46 per hour.
- 4) Total \$2.4 million General Fund; the amount of federal funding is based on the federal medical assistance percentage of 50 percent for administrative costs for those cases that are federally eligible. The percent of federally eligible cases is 53 percent in FY 2026-27.

Additionally, this bill will have a one-time automation impact for the required updates to the Child Welfare Services - California Automated Response and Engagement System (CWS-CARES). This includes enabling functionality to redact and send a notice of the report to attorneys and others specified. Enabling the creation of the notice and sending this notice to the attorneys and others specified requires adding additional functionality. These updates will occur in FY 2027-28, as the requirements within this bill will not be

available within CWS-CARES Version 1, which is scheduled to go live October 2026. The estimated implementation of this bill to accommodate the required updates is in Version 2, which is scheduled to go live April 2028.

Related Legislation: AB 1192 (Carrillo), 2026, was similar to this bill but required a redacted copy of the report be provided to the parent's attorney and all attorneys representing children in that placement. The redacted copy required personal identifying information be removed. AB 1192 was held on the Assembly Appropriations Committee Suspense File.

Staff Comments: This bill will result in a major local assistance fiscal impact to CDSS. This cost reflects creating the notice, identifying the proper contacts, and sending notices to parents' and other children's attorneys for their review. The number of abuse or neglect allegations or reports that are received and lead to an open child welfare services case is unknown. Approximately one in six children reported for abuse or neglect have allegations substantiated. However, this figure is for all children and not specifically for children with open cases.

Although these are state-mandated costs, they are not reimbursable, but instead must be funded by the state pursuant to Proposition 30, which requires legislation enacted after September 30, 2012, that has an overall effect of increasing the costs already borne by a local agency for programs or levels of service mandated by realignment (including child welfare services and foster care) to apply to local agencies only to the extent the state provides annual funding for the cost increase.

Proposed Author Amendments: The author has suspense file amendments which would implement language specifying the notice would be for substantiated reports, clarify out-of-home placement terminology and provide guardrails that maintain the confidentiality of each party if a notice is sent.