

DCF LEGISLATIVE TESTIMONY



January 31, 2023

TESTIMONY OF

Tanya Keys, Deputy Secretary

Kansas Department for Children and Families

TESTIMONY ON

Neutral Written Only HB 2021

Chair

Representative Owens

Vice Chair

Representative Smith

Ranking Minority

Representative Highberger

and

Members of the Committee

SUMMARY OF ISSUE & DCF POSITION

Chair Owens and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity provide neutral testimony on House Bill 2021. HB 2021 concerns children and minors; relates to risk and needs assessment for certain children in need of care; allows for overall case length limit extensions for certain juvenile offenders; requires the department of corrections to create juvenile justice data systems and increases use of evidence-based programs account money.

CONTEXT & HISTORY

Since implementation of SB 367 and most recently through the 2019 and 2020 Crossover Youth Workgroups, complicating factors and service gaps have been identified that may prevent some youth who are in the custody of the Secretary of the Department for Children and Families (DCF) from accessing local service array or supports offered through Kansas Department of Corrections (KDOC) evidenced based community programs. In addition, over time, discussion has occurred in some local communities and among policy makers that implementation of SB 367 may have had unintended consequences of diverting or shifting youth and their families who previously were served by the juvenile justice system to other state agencies — particularly the Kansas Department for Children and Families (DCF) — for services. These discussions have resulted in increasing collaboration at state and local levels to access evidence-based programs, services and supports in formal and informal ways to best support families and their children.

EFFECT OF LEGISLATION & FISCAL IMPACT

This bill requires the Secretary of KDOC and the Secretary of DCF to enter into a memorandum of understanding to coordinate administering a risk and needs assessment to children and youth who have been identified as exhibiting behavior that could lead to offending behavior during the course of a child in need of care proceeding. The memorandum of understanding includes procedures to allow certain youth to participate in evidence-based community programs. Further, this bill provides flexibility so that if a child is eligible to receive services from DCF, KDOC, or the judicial branch, the agencies collaborate to provide that service.

There is no fiscal impact to DCF assuming there is no cost to administer a specific risk assessment (use fee) for each youth and no cost to procure any new risk assessment tool or instrument.

DCF POSITION

DCF is neutral on House Bill 2021 at this time.