

**ASSEMBLY BILL**

**No. 363**

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**Introduced by Assembly Member Chu**

February 11, 2005

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An act to amend Section 10601.2 of the Welfare and Institutions Code, relating to public social services.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 363, as introduced, Chu. Child and Family Service Review System.

Under existing law, the State Department of Social Services oversees the administration of county public social services, including child welfare services. Existing law requires the department to establish, by April 1, 2003, the California Child and Family Service Review System, in order to review, commencing January 1, 2004, all county child welfare systems. Existing law requires the department, beginning with the 2002–03 fiscal year, to report to the Assembly and Senate Budget Committees and appropriate legislative policy committees regarding the department's progress relating to federal and state child and family service reviews.

This bill would revise the department's duty to report the above information to instead require the department to provide information to the designated legislative committees. The bill would add to the information required to be provided, to include findings and recommendations for child welfare system improvements identified in county self-assessments and county system improvement plans, including common barriers that inhibit system improvements, and recommendations to overcome the barriers.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: yes.  
State-mandated local program: no.

*The people of the State of California do enact as follows:*

1 SECTION 1. Section 10601.2 of the Welfare and Institutions  
2 Code is amended to read:

3 10601.2. (a) The State Department of Social Services shall  
4 establish, by April 1, 2003, the California Child and Family  
5 Service Review System, in order to review all county child  
6 welfare systems. These reviews shall cover child protective  
7 services, foster care, adoption, family preservation, family  
8 support, and independent living.

9 (b) Child and family service reviews shall maximize  
10 compliance with the federal regulations for the receipt of money  
11 from Subtitle E (commencing with Section 470) of Title IV of  
12 the federal Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. Sec. 670 and  
13 following) and ensure compliance with state plan requirements  
14 set forth in Subtitle B (commencing with Section 421) of Title IV  
15 of the federal Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. Sec. 621 and  
16 following).

17 (c) (1) By October 1, 2002, the California Health and Human  
18 Services Agency shall convene a workgroup comprised of  
19 representatives of the Judicial Council, the State Department of  
20 Social Services, the State Department of Health Services, the  
21 State Department of Mental Health, the State Department of  
22 Education, the Department of Child Support Services, the State  
23 Department of Justice, any other state departments or agencies  
24 the California Health and Human Services Agency deems  
25 necessary, the County Welfare Directors Association, the  
26 California State Association of Counties, the Chief Probation  
27 Officers of California, the California Youth Connection, and  
28 representatives of California Tribes, interested child advocacy  
29 organizations, researchers, and foster parent organizations. The  
30 workgroup shall establish a work plan by which child and family  
31 service reviews shall be conducted pursuant to this section,  
32 including a process for qualitative peer reviews of case  
33 information.

34 (2) At a minimum, in establishing the work plan, the  
35 workgroup shall consider any existing federal program  
36 improvement plans entered into by the state pursuant to federal  
37 regulations, the outcome indicators to be measured, compliance  
38 thresholds for each indicator, timelines for implementation,

1 county review cycles, uniform processes, procedures and review  
2 instruments to be used, a corrective action process, and any  
3 funding or staffing increases needed to implement the  
4 requirements of this section. The agency shall broadly consider  
5 collaboration with all entities to allow the adequate exchange of  
6 information and coordination of efforts to improve outcomes for  
7 foster youth and families.

8 (d) (1) The California Child and Family Service Review  
9 System outcome indicators shall be consistent with the federal  
10 child and family service review measures and standards for child  
11 and family outcomes and system factors authorized by Subtitle B  
12 (commencing with Section 421) and Subtitle E (commencing  
13 with Section 670) of Title IV of the federal Social Security Act  
14 and the regulations adopted pursuant to those provisions (Parts  
15 1355 to 1357, inclusive, of Title 45 of the Code of Federal  
16 Regulations).

17 (2) During the first review cycle pursuant to this section, each  
18 county shall be reviewed according to the outcome indicators  
19 established for the California Child and Family Service Review  
20 System.

21 (3) For subsequent reviews, the workgroup shall consider  
22 whether to establish additional outcome indicators that support  
23 the federal outcomes and any program improvement plan, and  
24 promote good health, mental health, behavioral, educational, and  
25 other relevant outcomes for children and families in California's  
26 child welfare services system.

27 (e) The State Department of Social Services shall identify and  
28 promote the replication of best practices in child welfare service  
29 delivery to achieve the measurable outcomes established  
30 pursuant to subdivision (d).

31 (f) The State Department of Social Services shall ~~report~~  
32 *provide information* to the Assembly and Senate Budget  
33 Committees and appropriate legislative policy committees  
34 annually, beginning with the 2002–03 fiscal year, on ~~both~~ *all* of  
35 the following:

36 (1) The department's progress in planning for the federal child  
37 and family service review to be conducted by the United States  
38 Department of Health and Human Services and, upon completion  
39 of the federal review, the findings of that review, the state's

1 response to the findings, and the details of any program  
2 improvement plan entered into by the state.

3 (2) The department’s progress in implementing the California  
4 child and family service reviews, including, but not limited to the  
5 timelines for implementation, the process to be used, and any  
6 funding or staffing increases needed at the state or local level to  
7 implement the requirements of this section.

8 (3) *The findings and recommendations for child welfare*  
9 *system improvements identified in county self-assessments and*  
10 *county system improvement plans, including information on*  
11 *common statutory, regulatory, or fiscal barriers identified as*  
12 *inhibiting system improvements, and any recommendations to*  
13 *overcome those barriers.*

14 (g) Effective April 1, 2003, the existing county compliance  
15 review system shall be suspended to provide to the State  
16 Department of Social Services sufficient lead time to provide  
17 training and technical assistance to counties for the preparation  
18 necessary to transition to the new child and family services  
19 review system.

20 (h) Beginning January 1, 2004, the department shall  
21 commence individual child and family service reviews of  
22 California counties. County child welfare systems that do not  
23 meet the established compliance thresholds for the outcome  
24 measures that are reviewed shall receive technical assistance  
25 from teams made up of state and peer-county administrators to  
26 assist with implementing best practices to improve their  
27 performance and make progress toward meeting established  
28 levels of compliance.