

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY JANUARY 4, 2012

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY APRIL 25, 2011

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY MARCH 30, 2011

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE—2011–12 REGULAR SESSION

ASSEMBLY BILL

No. 671

Introduced by Assembly Member Portantino

February 17, 2011

An act to add Section 16501.4 to the Welfare and Institutions Code, relating to child welfare services.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 671, as amended, Portantino. Child welfare services: education and training requirements.

Existing law requires the establishment and support of a public system of statewide child welfare services, for the protection of children who are alleged to be abused or neglected. Existing law provides for a statewide multipurpose child welfare training program to develop and implement statewide coordinated training programs designed specifically to meet the needs of county child protective services social workers assigned emergency response, family maintenance, family reunification, permanent placement, and adoption responsibilities.

This bill would specify education and training requirements for social work supervisors and other personnel performing social work activities in a county child welfare services agency. This bill would exempt a social worker employed before January 1, ~~2012~~ 2013, from related field practice, course work, and experience requirements, as prescribed.

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

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

SECTION 1. It is the intent of the Legislature in enacting this act to improve outcomes and increase consumer protection in child welfare services by improving the educational standards of supervisors in child welfare services to ensure that each supervisor has the appropriate training, experience, and education.

SEC. 2. Section 16501.4 is added to the Welfare and Institutions Code, to read:

16501.4. (a) (1) The educational requirements for social work supervisors for a county child welfare services agency shall be a master's degree *in social work* from an accredited or ~~state-approved~~ *state-approved* graduate school in social work or social welfare; ~~or equivalent education and experience, as determined by the department except as provided in paragraph (2).~~

(2) A person who possesses a master's degree from an accredited or state-approved graduate school in any of the following areas, ~~or equivalent education and experience, as determined by the department~~ *at least three years experience in child welfare as determined by the department*, shall be qualified to perform supervisory social work activities in a county child welfare services agency:

(A) Marriage, family, and child counseling.

(B) Child psychology.

(C) Child development.

(D) Counseling psychology.

(E) Social psychology.

(F) Clinical psychology.

(G) Educational psychology, consistent with the scope of practice as described in Section 4989.14 of the Business and Professions Code.

(H) Education, with emphasis on counseling.

~~(b) (1) In addition to the degree requirements specified in subdivision (a), all of the following course work and field practice or experience shall be required of all newly hired county social work personnel, effective January 1, 2012:~~

~~(A) At least four semester units of field practice at the master's level or six months' full-time equivalent experience in a county child welfare services agency setting.~~

1 ~~(B) At least nine semester units of course work related to human~~
2 ~~development or human behavior, or two years of experience~~
3 ~~working with children and families as a major responsibility of~~
4 ~~the position under the supervision of a supervising social worker.~~

5 ~~(C) At least three semester units in working with minority~~
6 ~~populations or six months of experience in working with minority~~
7 ~~populations and training in cultural competency and working with~~
8 ~~minority populations within the first six months of employment;~~
9 ~~as a condition of employment.~~

10 ~~(D) At least three semester units in child welfare or at least two~~
11 ~~years of experience in a county child welfare services setting.~~

12 ~~(2) (A) A person who does not satisfy the requirements~~
13 ~~specified in subdivision (a) or paragraph (1) may apply for an~~
14 ~~exception, as provided for in subdivisions (c) and (d).~~

15 ~~(B) Exceptions granted by the department prior to January 1,~~
16 ~~2012, shall remain in effect.~~

17 ~~(3) (A) Persons hired on or after January 1, 2012, who do not~~
18 ~~satisfy the requirements specified in paragraph (1) shall be required~~
19 ~~to successfully complete those requirements in order to be~~
20 ~~employed as social work supervisors in a county child welfare~~
21 ~~services setting.~~

22 ~~(B) An employee hired prior to January 1, 2012, shall not be~~
23 ~~required to satisfy the requirements of paragraph (1) in order to~~
24 ~~remain employed as a social work supervisor in a county child~~
25 ~~welfare services agency.~~

26 ~~(4) Course work and field practice or experience completed to~~
27 ~~fulfill the degree requirements of subdivision (a) may be used to~~
28 ~~satisfy the requirements of this subdivision.~~

29 ~~(c) A person seeking an exception to the requirements of~~
30 ~~subdivision (a) or (b) based on completion of equivalent education~~
31 ~~and experience shall apply to the department pursuant to the~~
32 ~~process established by the department.~~

33 ~~(d) The State Department of Social Services shall complete the~~
34 ~~process for the exception to minimum education and experience~~
35 ~~requirements described in subdivision (a) or (b) within 30 days of~~
36 ~~receiving the exception application of a social work supervisor~~
37 ~~from the county child welfare services agency.~~

1 ***(b) The degree requirements and experience requirements***
2 *described in this section shall only apply to supervisors hired on*
3 *or after January 1, 2013.*