



# Fiscal Note

**Drafting Number:** LLS 23-0776  
**Prime Sponsors:** Rep. Parenti

**Date:** February 16, 2023  
**Bill Status:** House Public & Behavioral Health  
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**Bill Topic:** **CHILD WELFARE AND JUVENILE COURT JURISDICTION**

**Summary of Fiscal Impact:**

<input type="checkbox"/> State Revenue	<input type="checkbox"/> TABOR Refund
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> State Expenditure	<input type="checkbox"/> Local Government
<input type="checkbox"/> State Transfer	<input type="checkbox"/> Statutory Public Entity

The bill expands the jurisdiction of juvenile courts in child welfare proceedings, allowing them to make permanent allocations of parental responsibilities in certain circumstances and order name changes for children and youth in dependency and neglect cases. The bill impacts state workload on an ongoing basis.

**Appropriation Summary:** No appropriation is required.

**Fiscal Note Status:** The fiscal note reflects the introduced bill.

## Summary of Legislation

The bill expands the jurisdiction of juvenile courts in child welfare proceedings. It allows juvenile courts to make permanent allocations of parental responsibilities without a full adjudication for each parent to determine neglect or dependency. Instead, at least one parent, legal guardian, or legal custodian requires an adjudication or continued adjudication. The bill also allows juvenile courts to order name changes for children and youth in dependency and neglect cases and foster youth in transition cases, similar to district and county courts, and removes the requirement to provide public notice of name changes for children or youth who have been found to be neglected or dependent, or are being assessed for neglect or dependency.

## State Expenditures

The bill may impact workload in the Judicial Department and the independent judicial agencies involved in child welfare cases—the Office of Respondent Parents' Counsel and the Office of the Child's Representative—on an ongoing basis, but the overall workload impact is expected to be minimal and no change in appropriations is required. For trial courts, workload may decrease from the ability to allocate parental responsibilities in cases when a parent or legal guardian is on a deferred

adjudication; conversely, there may be an increase in costs for any additional time in hearings related to name changes. For the independent judicial offices involved in child welfare cases, the ability for juvenile courts to allocate parental responsibility without an adjudication for both parents may reduce costs for staff, but it may increase costs for any litigation related to parental responsibilities.

## **Effective Date**

The bill takes effect 90 days following adjournment of the General Assembly sine die, assuming no referendum petition is filed.

## **State and Local Government Contacts**

Child Welfare  
Human Services

Counties  
Information Technology

District Attorneys  
Law