

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2005

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HOUSE BILL 222*
Committee Substitute Favorable 4/7/05

Short Title: Coordination of Children's Services/Study.

(Public)

Sponsors:

Referred to:

February 15, 2005

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT TO IMPROVE THE COORDINATION OF SERVICES TO CHILDREN,
YOUTH, AND FAMILIES BY CREATING CHILDREN'S SERVICES WORK
GROUPS, BY ESTABLISHING AN INDEPENDENT STUDY COMMISSION TO
MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS ON HOW TO ELIMINATE BARRIERS TO
COLLABORATION BETWEEN AND AMONG CHILD-SERVING AGENCIES,
AND TO MAKE AN APPROPRIATION AS RECOMMENDED BY THE JOINT
LEGISLATIVE OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE ON MENTAL HEALTH,
DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES, AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE SERVICES.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

SECTION 1. The General Statutes are amended by adding a new Chapter to
read:

"Chapter 143C.

"Coordination of Children's Services.

"§ 143C-1. Intent; purpose.

It is the intent of the General Assembly to (i) improve the safety and well-being of North Carolina's children, youth, and families; (ii) support collaboration among State, regional, and local agencies that deliver services to children, youth, and families; (iii) make more effective use of existing federal, State, and local resources and programs for children, youth, and families; and (iv) streamline service delivery, fill service gaps, and eliminate duplication of services for children, youth, and families.

The Department of Health and Human Services, the Department of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, the Department of Public Instruction, the Administrative Office of the Courts, and other affected State agencies share responsibility and accountability to assure effective collaboration among State and local agencies to improve outcomes for children and their families leading to full participation in their communities and schools."

SECTION 2.(a) The General Assembly recognizes that services to children, youth, and families are most effective when they are child- and family-centered,

1 strengths-based, community-based, use multidisciplinary approaches, use
2 evidence-based practices when appropriate, and recognize and respect cultural
3 differences. These practices can be successfully implemented only where there is
4 significant and ongoing collaboration and coordination among multiple public agencies.
5 The General Assembly also recognizes that while agencies are making significant
6 progress towards implementing these practices, there is also a need to focus State-level
7 policy in order to provide support, remove barriers, and more fully implement these
8 goals.

9 **SECTION 2.(b)** There is established a children's services work group. It
10 shall be located in the Department of Administration for budgetary and staffing
11 purposes only. The Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services, the
12 Secretary of the Department of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, the Chair
13 of the State Board of Education, the Superintendent of Public Instruction, and the Chief
14 Justice of the North Carolina Supreme Court shall each designate at least one
15 representative to serve on the work group from among the programs, divisions, or
16 departments under that administrator's control that provide services to children and
17 youths. Each administrator named in the preceding sentence shall also appoint to serve
18 on the work group at least one parent of a child or youth who has or is at risk for
19 behavioral, social, health, or safety problems or academic failure, at least one member
20 of a local collaborative body, and at least one private sector service provider. The Chair
21 of the State Board of Education and the Superintendent of Public Instruction may make
22 joint appointments.

23 **SECTION 2.(c)** The work group shall meet at least monthly. The first
24 meeting of the work group shall occur not less than 30 days after the effective date of
25 this section. The Department of Health and Human Services, the Department of Juvenile
26 Justice and Delinquency Prevention, the Department of Public Instruction, and the
27 Administrative Office of the Courts shall, in this order and on a rotating basis, host the
28 monthly meetings of the work group. The Department of Administration shall provide
29 staff and clerical support to the work group.

30 **SECTION 2.(d)** The work group shall:

- 31 (1) Identify common outcome measures for child-serving agencies that
32 can be used for monitoring the safety, health, and well-being of North
33 Carolina's children, youth, and families, including preventative
34 measures.
- 35 (2) Identify strategies for funding flexibility between State and local
36 agencies, including shared funding streams and the removal of
37 financial and bureaucratic barriers.
- 38 (3) Develop a common service terminology to be used across
39 child-serving agencies that is appropriate and assists collaboration and
40 coordination.
- 41 (4) Make recommendations regarding the creation of a shared database to
42 track population and program outcomes information while protecting
43 individual confidentiality.

- 1 (5) Develop mechanisms that would allow agencies to share information
2 about individual children receiving multiple services. Any
3 recommendations must take into account confidentiality requirements,
4 be voluntary on the part of the party receiving services, and be
5 time-limited. The mechanisms may address intake, assessment, and
6 release procedures.
- 7 (6) Examine State and local training needs for implementing increased
8 coordination and collaboration.
- 9 (7) Study other issues the work group determines would improve
10 coordination and collaboration between child-serving agencies.

11 **SECTION 2.(e)** A majority of the work group shall constitute a quorum for
12 the transaction of business.

13 **SECTION 2.(f)** Members of the work group shall receive per diem,
14 subsistence, and travel allowances at the rate established in G.S. 138-5 or G.S. 138-6 as
15 appropriate.

16 **SECTION 2.(g)** Upon the approval of the Secretary of the Department of
17 Health and Human Services, the Secretary of the Department of Juvenile Justice and
18 Delinquency Prevention, the Chair of the State Board of Education, the Superintendent
19 of Public Instruction, and the Chief Justice of the North Carolina Supreme Court, the
20 work group shall submit its findings and recommendations to the Coordination of
21 Children's Services Study Commission created under Section 4 of this act. The work
22 group shall submit an interim report no later than December 15, 2005, and a final report
23 no later than April 15, 2006. The reports shall specify those recommendations that may
24 be implemented without statutory changes and those that would require statutory
25 authorization.

26 If the General Assembly has not adjourned by those dates, or if the
27 membership of the Study Commission has not been appointed, the work group shall
28 submit its reports to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee, the Joint
29 Legislative Corrections, Crime Control, and Juvenile Justice Oversight Committee, the
30 Joint Legislative Health Care Oversight Committee, and the Joint Legislative Oversight
31 Committee on Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities, and Substance Abuse
32 Services.

33 The work group shall expire upon the filing of the final report.

34 **SECTION 3.** The Directors of the Bill Drafting, Research, and Fiscal
35 Research Divisions of the General Assembly shall establish a children's services work
36 group comprised of the legislative staff assigned to subject areas or agencies involving
37 the child-serving programs administered by the Department of Health and Human
38 Services, the Department of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, the
39 Administrative Office of the Courts, and the Department of Public Instruction.

40 The work group shall: (i) monitor the proceedings of the children's services
41 work group created under Section 2 of this act; (ii) provide information to legislators
42 and legislative bodies regarding the recommendations of the work group and methods
43 by which the General Assembly may implement those recommendations; and (iii)

1 provide a mechanism to improve coordination, collaboration, and education regarding
2 children's services across State and local agencies among legislative staff.

3 This section shall expire upon the convening of the 2009 General Assembly.
4 However, this shall in no way limit the Division Directors' authority to direct legislative
5 staff to continue to implement the purposes of this section.

6 **SECTION 4.(a)** There is created the Coordination of Children's Services
7 Study Commission ("Commission"). The Commission shall consist of 18 members
8 appointed as follows:

9 (1) Nine members appointed by the Speaker of the House of
10 Representatives as follows:

11 a. Five members of the House of Representatives, of whom at
12 least one shall also serve on the House of Representatives
13 Health and Human Services Appropriations Subcommittee, at
14 least one shall also serve on the House of Representatives
15 Education Committee, at least one shall also serve on the House
16 of Representatives Health Committee, and at least one shall also
17 serve on a House of Representatives Judiciary Committee; and

18 b. Four members of the public, including a district court judge, a
19 member of a local collaborative body, a private sector service
20 provider, and a parent of a child who has or is at risk for
21 behavioral, social, health, or safety problems or academic
22 failure.

23 (2) Nine members appointed by the President Pro Tempore of the Senate
24 as follows:

25 a. Five members of the Senate, of whom at least one shall also
26 serve on the Senate Health and Human Services Appropriations
27 Subcommittee, at least one shall also serve on the Senate
28 Education Committee, at least one shall also serve on the Senate
29 Health Committee, and at least one shall also serve on a Senate
30 Judiciary Committee; and

31 b. Four members of the public, including a parent of a child who
32 has or is at risk for behavioral, social, health, or safety problems
33 or academic failure, a child who has or is at risk for behavioral,
34 social, health, or safety problems or academic failure, a member
35 of a local board of education, and a member of a board of
36 county commissioners.

37 The Speaker of the House of Representatives shall appoint a cochair, and the
38 President Pro Tempore of the Senate shall appoint a cochair for the Commission. The
39 Commission may meet at any time upon the joint call of the cochairs. Vacancies on the
40 Commission shall be filled by the same appointing authority as made the initial
41 appointment.

42 **SECTION 4.(b)** The purpose of the Commission is to study and recommend
43 changes to improve collaboration and coordination among agencies that provide
44 services to children, youth, and families with multiple service needs. The Commission's

1 recommendations shall include mechanisms for establishing clear State leadership,
2 consistent policy direction, and increased accountability at the State and local levels. As
3 part of its work, the Commission shall:

- 4 (1) Identify existing State, regional, and local collaborative bodies
5 (including their charges, scopes of authority, and accountability
6 requirements) that have been created by legislation, administrative
7 rule, or agency policy and that are charged with serving, protecting, or
8 improving the well-being of North Carolina's children, youth, and
9 families. Once it has identified the collaborative bodies, the
10 Commission shall consider how they could be consolidated,
11 reorganized, or eliminated in order to improve their effectiveness and
12 accountability, increase the likelihood that key players will actively
13 participate, and reduce unnecessary duplication of effort. The
14 Commission shall also consider the creation of a mechanism for
15 coordination and communication among the State and local
16 collaborative bodies, incentives for collaboration, clarification of roles
17 among agencies, and ways to monitor the extent to which groups are
18 collaborating.
- 19 (2) Study the practices of agencies currently implementing a system of
20 care platform of practices and make recommendations regarding
21 whether to adopt those practices statewide and across child-serving
22 agencies as the preferred mechanism for providing services to
23 children, youth, and families. In examining this issue, the Commission
24 shall identify those State and local agencies that are currently
25 implementing practices that are consistent with a system of care, those
26 states that have implemented a system of care as a statewide policy
27 initiative, and the extent to which a system of care is cost-effective.
- 28 (3) The Commission shall also examine the following principles that are
29 associated with a system of care and determine whether to recommend
30 the adoption of a State policy that reflects these principles:
 - 31 a. Services for children should promote success, safety, and
32 permanence.
 - 33 b. Services should be child- and family-centered, giving priority to
34 keeping children with their families, in their home, school, and
35 community.
 - 36 c. Services should actively promote early identification and
37 intervention.
 - 38 d. Services should be designed to protect the rights of children.
 - 39 e. Services shall be integrated and comprehensive, addressing the
40 child's physical, educational, social, and emotional needs
41 through a single child and family team.
 - 42 f. Services shall be outcomes-accountable and tied to a unified
43 child and family plan.
 - 44 g. Agency resources and services shall be shared and coordinated.

- 1 h. Services shall be provided as close to home as appropriate in
2 the least restrictive setting consistent with what is known to be
3 effective.
4 i. Services shall be culturally competent.
5 j. Services shall address the unique strengths, needs, and potential
6 of each child and family, and shall be sufficiently flexible to
7 meet highly individualized child and family needs.
8 k. Management of the child-serving system is a responsibility
9 shared among all public and private child-serving agencies that
10 should be held collectively accountable for outcomes.

11 (4) In reviewing principles relating to a system of care, the Commission
12 shall determine whether they articulate goals that are measurable and if
13 not, determine whether they could be modified to reflect measurable
14 goals.

15 (5) Receive and study the recommendations contained in the reports
16 submitted by the work group created in Section 2 of this act and
17 determine whether to recommend any of the statutory proposals.

18 (6) Study any other issues the Commission determines would improve
19 coordination and collaboration among child-serving agencies.

20 **SECTION 4.(c)** Upon approval of the Legislative Services Commission, the
21 Legislative Services Officer shall assign professional and clerical staff to assist in the
22 work of the Commission. Clerical staff shall be furnished to the Commission through
23 the offices of the House of Representatives and Senate Supervisors of Clerks. The
24 Commission may meet in the Legislative Building or the Legislative Office Building
25 upon the approval of the Legislative Services Commission. The members of the
26 Commission, while in the discharge of official duties, may exercise all the powers
27 provided under the provisions of G.S. 120-19 through G.S. 120-19.4, including the
28 power to request all officers, agents, agencies, and departments of the State to provide
29 any information, data, or documents within their possession, ascertainable from their
30 records, or otherwise available to them, and the power to subpoena witnesses. Members
31 of the Commission shall receive per diem, subsistence, and travel allowances at the rate
32 established in G.S. 120-3.1, 138-5, or 138-6 as appropriate.

33 **SECTION 4.(d)** The Commission shall submit an interim report to the 2006
34 Regular Session of the 2005 General Assembly that contains its recommendations and
35 legislative proposals. It shall submit a final report to the 2007 Regular Session of the
36 2007 General Assembly. Upon the earlier of the filing of its final report or the
37 convening of the 2007 General Assembly, the Commission shall terminate.

38 **SECTION 5.** There is appropriated from the General Fund to the
39 Department of Administration the sum of one hundred ten thousand dollars (\$110,000)
40 for the 2005-2006 fiscal year to carry out the provisions of this act.

41 **SECTION 6.** Section 5 of this act becomes effective July 1, 2005. The
42 remainder of this act is effective when it becomes law.