



General Assembly

January Session, 2023

**Raised Bill No. 6902**

LCO No. 5749



Referred to Committee on APPROPRIATIONS

Introduced by:  
(APP)

**AN ACT CONCERNING YOUTH SERVICE BUREAUS AND  
ESTABLISHMENT OF A JUVENILE DIVERSIONARY PROGRAM.**

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective January 1, 2024*) (a) The Commissioner of  
2 Children and Families and the Chief Court Administrator shall develop,  
3 in consultation with The Consultation Center at Yale, a program to  
4 divert from the juvenile justice and court system juveniles who (1) have  
5 committed a first or second criminal offense, (2) have been charged with  
6 a minor criminal offense, or (3) are chronically absent from school.

7 (b) Such program shall be administered by the Commissioner of  
8 Children and Families and the Chief Court Administrator and shall be  
9 known as the Diversion First program. The program shall first be  
10 implemented in one or more municipalities in the state having a  
11 population of ninety thousand or more. The program shall: (1) Serve as  
12 a single point of contact for program participants seeking services  
13 provided by a network of community-based agencies; and (2) include a  
14 centralized decision-making process regarding program eligibility,  
15 service coordination, referrals for services to such agencies and tracking

16 of program participant outcomes. Such agencies shall provide services  
17 that include, but need not be limited to, (A) anger management, (B)  
18 family counseling, (C) substance abuse education, (D) assessment and  
19 treatment for substance abuse, (E) domestic violence identification and  
20 prevention, and (F) community service opportunities. The  
21 Commissioner of Children and Families and the Chief Court  
22 Administrator shall collaborate with school districts in the  
23 municipalities in which the program operates to provide program  
24 participants with tutoring services, special education and truancy  
25 prevention services.

26 (c) The Commissioner of Children and Families and the Chief Court  
27 Administrator shall develop the program to utilize existing community  
28 services in the municipality in which the program operates. Said  
29 commissioner and administrator, in consultation with municipal police  
30 departments and youth service bureaus, as described in section 10-19m  
31 of the general statutes, as amended by this act, serving the municipality  
32 in which the program operates, shall identify (1) all community services  
33 that are available to children who are referred to the program and  
34 members of their families; and (2) gaps in such services. Said  
35 commissioner and administrator, in consultation with such municipal  
36 police departments and youth service bureaus, shall take steps to  
37 eliminate such service gaps.

38 (d) Municipal police departments in which the Diversion First  
39 program operates shall consider referring to the program juveniles  
40 involved in criminal activity or who are chronically absent from school.  
41 The program shall provide opportunities for victim input utilizing a  
42 restorative justice model and allow for identification of measurable  
43 outcomes.

44 Sec. 2. Section 10-19m of the general statutes is repealed and the  
45 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective January 1, 2024*):

46 (a) For the purposes of this section, "youth" means a person from birth  
47 to eighteen years of age. Any one or more municipalities having a

48 population of less than seventy thousand or any one or more private  
49 youth-serving organizations, designated to act as agents of one or more  
50 municipalities [, may] having a population of less than seventy  
51 thousand, shall establish a multipurpose youth service bureau for the  
52 purposes of evaluation, planning, coordination and implementation of  
53 services, including prevention and intervention programs for  
54 delinquent, predelinquent, pregnant, parenting and troubled youths  
55 referred to such bureau by schools, police, juvenile courts, adult courts,  
56 local youth-serving agencies, parents and self-referrals. A youth service  
57 bureau shall be the coordinating unit of community-based services to  
58 provide comprehensive delivery of prevention, intervention, treatment  
59 and follow-up services.

60 (b) A youth service bureau established pursuant to subsection (a) of  
61 this section may provide, but shall not be limited to the delivery of, the  
62 following services: (1) [Individual] Screening using a validated risk and  
63 needs assessment screening tool to develop a plan for services; (2)  
64 comprehensive case management and coordination services; (3)  
65 individual and group counseling; [(2)] (4) parent training and family  
66 therapy; [(3)] (5) restorative justice practices; (6) work placement and  
67 employment counseling; [(4)] (7) educational advocacy and educational  
68 supports; (8) alternative and special educational opportunities; [(5)] (9)  
69 recreational and youth enrichment programs; [(6)] (10) outreach  
70 programs to [insure] ensure participation and planning by the entire  
71 community for the development of regional and community-based  
72 youth services; [(7)] (11) preventive programs, including youth  
73 pregnancy, youth suicide, violence, alcohol and drug prevention; and  
74 [(8)] (12) programs that develop positive youth involvement. Such  
75 services shall be designed to [meet the needs of youths by the diversion  
76 of troubled] divert youths from the justice system [as well as by the  
77 provision of] and provide opportunities for all youths to function as  
78 responsible members of their communities. If the youth service bureau  
79 has identified services that are needed by a youth but cannot be  
80 provided by the youth service bureau, the youth service bureau shall  
81 refer such youth to an appropriate service provider in the community

82 who can provide the needed services. Not later than fifteen days after  
83 such referral, the referring youth service bureau shall consult with the  
84 provider to whom it referred such youth for a service status report. If  
85 the youth service bureau determines that the diversion to community  
86 services was unsuccessful, the youth service bureau shall refer such  
87 youth back to the juvenile justice and court system.

88 (c) The Commissioner of Children and Families shall adopt  
89 regulations, in accordance with the provisions of chapter 54,  
90 establishing minimum performance standards for such youth service  
91 bureaus and the criteria for qualifying for state cost-sharing grants,  
92 including, but not limited to, allowable sources of funds covering the  
93 local share of the costs of operating such bureaus, acceptable in-kind  
94 contributions and application procedures. The commissioner shall, [on  
95 December 1, 2011] not later than December 1, 2024, and biennially  
96 thereafter, submit a state-wide performance report to the [General  
97 Assembly] Juvenile Justice Policy and Oversight Committee established  
98 pursuant to section 46b-121n on the referral or diversion of children and  
99 youth under the age of eighteen years from the juvenile justice system  
100 and the court system. Such report shall include, but not be limited to, (1)  
101 demographic data on age, race, ethnicity and gender of children and  
102 youth receiving services from youth service bureaus, (2) results of any  
103 screenings conducted, (3) data on the types of services provided, (4) data  
104 on program completion and outcomes, (5) the number of times any child  
105 or youth is so diverted, (6) the number of children and youth diverted,  
106 (7) the type of service provided to any such child [, by whom] or youth,  
107 (8) identification of the juvenile justice or court system from which such  
108 child or youth was diverted, (9) the ages of the children and youth  
109 diverted, (10) identification of any youth service bureau not meeting  
110 established minimum performance standards, established by the  
111 commissioner pursuant to this subsection, and (11) an outline of a  
112 performance improvement plan, developed in accordance with  
113 subsection (d) of this section, for such youth service bureau, and such  
114 other information and statistics as the General Assembly may request  
115 from time to time. Any such report shall contain no identifying

116 information about any particular child or youth.

117 (d) The Commissioner of Children and Families shall develop and  
118 implement a performance improvement plan for each youth service  
119 bureau not meeting the minimum performance standards established  
120 by the commissioner and shall offer technical and other needed  
121 assistance to such youth service bureau directly or through a third party  
122 to comply with such performance standards.

123 (e) Each youth service bureau shall, not later than September 1, 2024,  
124 and annually thereafter, report the following information to the  
125 Commissioner of Children and Families: (1) Demographic data on  
126 children and youth served, including age, race, ethnicity and gender; (2)  
127 results of any screening conducted; (3) services provided; (4) service  
128 completion; and (5) outcome data. Any such report shall not contain  
129 identifying information about any particular child or youth.

130 (f) For purposes of this section, "divert" means to provide an  
131 alternative to a court referral for a juvenile arrested for the first or second  
132 time of an infraction or misdemeanor, including, but not limited to: (1)  
133 Simple trespass under section 53a-110a; (2) creating a public disturbance  
134 under section 53a-181a; (3) disorderly conduct under section 53a-182; (4)  
135 fifth degree larceny under section 53a-125a; (5) sixth degree larceny  
136 under section 53a-125b; and (6) breach of the peace under section 53a-  
137 181.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	January 1, 2024	New section
Sec. 2	January 1, 2024	10-19m

**APP**      *Joint Favorable*

**JUD**      *Joint Favorable*