

**LEGISLATIVE SERVICES AGENCY
OFFICE OF FISCAL AND MANAGEMENT ANALYSIS**

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FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

LS 6450

BILL NUMBER: HB 1123

NOTE PREPARED: Jan 18, 2024

BILL AMENDED:

SUBJECT: Child Advocacy Centers.

FIRST AUTHOR: Rep. DeVon

FIRST SPONSOR:

BILL STATUS: CR Adopted - 1st House

FUNDS AFFECTED: **GENERAL**
 DEDICATED
 FEDERAL

IMPACT: State & Local

Summary of Legislation: This bill provides that the Department of Child Services (DCS) may use a Child Advocacy Center (CAC) to coordinate a multidisciplinary team for responding to reports involving child abuse or neglect.

It requires the CAC to:

- (1) coordinate a multidisciplinary team that consists of certain professionals;
 - (2) ensure that the multidisciplinary team members have certain training;
 - (3) provide a dedicated child-focused setting designed to provide a safe, comfortable, and neutral place for a forensic interview and other CAC services;
 - (4) use written protocols for case review;
 - (5) use a case tracking system to provide information on essential demographic and case information;
- and
- (6) verify that multidisciplinary team members responsible for providing medical evaluations and mental health services have certain training.

It provides the CAC's agents and employees civil immunity in certain circumstances. It also allows otherwise confidential information regarding an investigation of child abuse or neglect to be made available to CAC.

Effective Date: July 1, 2024.

Explanation of State Expenditures: The bill should have minimal workload impact on the DCS.

Child Advocacy Centers: The bill codifies the administrative function of Child Advocacy Centers (CAC) and

should have no fiscal impact on the DCS, county prosecutors, local law enforcement, mental health providers, medical providers, child protective services, and victim advocacy organizations.

Explanation of State Revenues:

Explanation of Local Expenditures: The bill expands immunity from civil liability to an agent or employee of the CAC for acts or omissions related to the agent's or employee's participation in the multi-disciplinary team. The bill could reduce local expenditure costs for litigation and civil fines and court fees.

Explanation of Local Revenues:

State Agencies Affected: Department of Child Services.

Local Agencies Affected: County prosecutors; Local units; courts.

Information Sources: Department of Child Services, Child Welfare Policy Manual, October 23, 2023, <https://www.in.gov/dcs/policies/child-welfare-policies/>; Indiana Chapter of National Children's Alliance, Marion County Child Advocacy Center - Indianapolis, <https://incacs.org/cacs/marioncounty-cac/>.

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