

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

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FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

LS 6450
BILL NUMBER: HB 1123

NOTE PREPARED: Feb 19, 2024
BILL AMENDED: Feb 19, 2024

SUBJECT: Child Advocacy Centers.

FIRST AUTHOR: Rep. DeVon
FIRST SPONSOR: Sen. Messmer

BILL STATUS: CR Adopted - 2nd House

FUNDS AFFECTED: **GENERAL**
 DEDICATED
 FEDERAL

IMPACT: State & Local

Summary of Legislation: (Amended) 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 specified professionals;
- (2) ensure that the multidisciplinary team members have specified 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;
- (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 specified training.

It provides civil immunity for a CAC's employees, volunteers, and board members under certain circumstances.

It also allows otherwise confidential information regarding an investigation of child abuse or neglect to be made available to a CAC when the CAC has before it an investigation of child abuse or neglect in which it is facilitating a forensic interview or facilitating a case discussion or case review.

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: (Revised) The bill expands immunity from civil liability to an employee, volunteer, or board member of the CAC for acts or omissions related to 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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