



January 30, 2025

HOUSE BILL No. 1273

DIGEST OF HB 1273 (Updated January 29, 2025 10:28 am - DI 119)

Citations Affected: IC 2-5.

Synopsis: Child welfare task force. Establishes the child welfare task force (task force) to study specified topics regarding child welfare services in Indiana. Requires the task force to submit a report not later than October 15, 2026, and not later than October 15, 2027, for review by the interim study committee on child services.

Effective: July 1, 2025.

DeVon, McGuire, Lauer

January 13, 2025, read first time and referred to Committee on Family, Children and Human Affairs.
January 30, 2025, reported — Do Pass.

HB 1273—LS 7382/DI 148



January 30, 2025

First Regular Session of the 124th General Assembly (2025)

PRINTING CODE. Amendments: Whenever an existing statute (or a section of the Indiana Constitution) is being amended, the text of the existing provision will appear in this style type, additions will appear in **this style type**, and deletions will appear in ~~this style type~~.

Additions: Whenever a new statutory provision is being enacted (or a new constitutional provision adopted), the text of the new provision will appear in **this style type**. Also, the word **NEW** will appear in that style type in the introductory clause of each SECTION that adds a new provision to the Indiana Code or the Indiana Constitution.

Conflict reconciliation: Text in a statute in *this style type* or ~~this style type~~ reconciles conflicts between statutes enacted by the 2024 Regular Session of the General Assembly.

HOUSE BILL No. 1273

A BILL FOR AN ACT to amend the Indiana Code concerning family law and juvenile law.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Indiana:

1 SECTION 1. IC 2-5-1.3-13, AS AMENDED BY P.L.9-2024,
2 SECTION 6, IS AMENDED TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE
3 JULY 1, 2025]: Sec. 13. (a) A study committee shall study the issues
4 assigned by the legislative council that are within the subject matter for
5 the study committee, as described in section 4 of this chapter.

6 (b) In addition to the issues assigned under subsection (a), the
7 interim study committee on roads and transportation shall advise the
8 bureau of motor vehicles regarding the suitability of a special group (as
9 defined in IC 9-13-2-170) to receive a special group recognition license
10 plate for the special group (as defined in IC 9-13-2-170) for the first
11 time under IC 9-18.5-12-4 and the suitability of a special group (as
12 defined in IC 9-13-2-170) to continue participating in the special group
13 recognition license plate program under IC 9-18.5-12-5.

14 (c) In addition to the issues assigned under subsection (a), the
15 interim study committee on corrections and criminal code shall review
16 current trends with respect to criminal behavior, sentencing,
17 incarceration, and treatment and may:

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- 1 (1) identify particular needs of the criminal justice system that can
 2 be addressed by legislation; and
 3 (2) prepare legislation to address the particular needs found by the
 4 committee.
- 5 (d) In each even-numbered year, in addition to the issues assigned
 6 under subsection (a), the interim study committee on courts and the
 7 judiciary shall review, consider, and make recommendations
 8 concerning all requests for new courts, new judicial officers, and
 9 changes in jurisdiction of existing courts. A request under this
 10 subsection must include at least the following information to receive
 11 full consideration by the committee:
- 12 (1) The level of community support for the change, including
 13 support from the local fiscal body.
- 14 (2) The results of a survey that shall be conducted by the county
 15 requesting the change, sampling members of the bar, members of
 16 the judiciary, and local officials to determine needs and concerns
 17 of existing courts.
- 18 (3) Whether the county is already using a judge or magistrate
 19 from an overserved area of the judicial district.
- 20 (4) The relative severity of need based on the most recent
 21 weighted caseload measurement system report published by the
 22 office of judicial administration.
- 23 (5) Whether the county is using any problem solving court as
 24 described in IC 33-23-16-11, and, if so, the list of problem solving
 25 courts established in the county, and any evaluation of the impact
 26 of the problem solving courts on the overall judicial caseload.
- 27 (6) A description of the:
- 28 (A) county's population growth in the ten (10) years before the
 29 date of the request; and
- 30 (B) projected population growth in the county for the ten (10)
 31 years after the date of the request, to the extent available;
 32 and any documentation to support the information provided under
 33 this subdivision.
- 34 (7) A description of the county's use of pre-incarceration
 35 diversion services and post-incarceration reentry services in an
 36 effort to decrease recidivism.
- 37 (8) If the request is a request for a new court or new courts, an
 38 acknowledgment from the county fiscal body (as defined in
 39 IC 36-1-2-6) with the funding sources and estimated costs the
 40 county intends to pay toward the county's part of the operating
 41 costs associated with the new court or new courts.
- 42 The office of judicial administration shall post the list of required



1 information provided under this subsection on its website.

2 (e) In each even-numbered year, in addition to the issues assigned
3 under subsection (a), the interim study committee on courts and the
4 judiciary shall review the most recent weighted caseload measurement
5 system report published by the office of judicial administration and do
6 the following:

7 (1) Identify each county in which the number of courts or judicial
8 officers exceeds the number used by the county in that report
9 year.

10 (2) Determine the number of previous report years in which the
11 number of courts or judicial officers in a county identified in
12 subdivision (1) exceeded the number used by the county in that
13 particular report year.

14 (3) Make a recommendation on whether the number of courts or
15 judicial officers in the county should be decreased.

16 The office of judicial administration shall post a list of the number of
17 courts or judicial officers used in each county for each report year, and
18 the number of years in which the number of courts or judicial officers
19 in the county has exceeded the number used by the county, on its
20 website.

21 (f) In addition to studying the issues assigned under subsection (a),
22 the interim study committee on child services shall:

23 (1) review the annual reports submitted by:

24 (A) each local child fatality review team under IC 16-49-3-7;

25 (B) the statewide child fatality review committee under
26 IC 16-49-4-11; and

27 (C) the department of child services under IC 31-25-2-24;
28 during the immediately preceding twelve (12) month period, and
29 may make recommendations regarding changes in policies or
30 statutes to improve child safety; and

31 (2) report to the legislative council before November 1 of each
32 interim, in an electronic format under IC 5-14-6, the results of:

33 (A) the committee's review under subdivision (1); and

34 (B) the committee's study of any issue assigned to the
35 committee under subsection (a).

36 (g) In each even-numbered year, in addition to the issues assigned
37 under subsection (a), the interim study committee on government shall
38 do the following:

39 (1) Determine whether a group has met in the immediately
40 preceding two (2) years.

41 (2) Identify all interstate compacts that have been fully
42 operational for at least two (2) years to which the state is a party.



- 1 (3) Consider whether to:
 2 (A) remain a party to; or
 3 (B) withdraw from;
 4 each interstate compact.
 5 (4) If the committee determines that the state should withdraw
 6 from an interstate compact, identify the steps needed to withdraw.
 7 (5) Report before November 1 to the legislative council, in an
 8 electronic format under IC 5-14-6 the committee's:
 9 (A) recommendations for proposed legislation to repeal groups
 10 that have not met during the immediately preceding two (2)
 11 years; and
 12 (B) findings and recommendations regarding the interstate
 13 compacts.

14 As used in this subsection, "group" refers to an authority, a board, a
 15 commission, a committee, a council, a delegate, a foundation, a panel,
 16 or a task force that is established by statute, has at least one (1)
 17 legislator assigned to it, and is not staffed by the legislative services
 18 agency.

19 **(h) In 2026 and 2027, in addition to the issues assigned under**
 20 **subsections (a) and (f), the interim study committee on child**
 21 **services shall review the report submitted by the child welfare task**
 22 **force under IC 2-5-55.7-8. This subsection expires December 31,**
 23 **2027.**

24 SECTION 2. IC 2-5-55.7 IS ADDED TO THE INDIANA CODE
 25 AS A NEW CHAPTER TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE
 26 JULY 1, 2025]:

27 **Chapter 55.7. Child Welfare Task Force**

28 **Sec. 1. As used in this chapter, "task force" refers to the child**
 29 **welfare task force established by section 2 of this chapter.**

30 **Sec. 2. The child welfare task force is established.**

31 **Sec. 3. (a) The task force consists of the following twenty-two**
 32 **(22) members, all of whom are voting members:**

33 **(1) Five (5) members of the senate, appointed as follows:**

34 **(A) Three (3) members appointed by the president pro**
 35 **tempore, one (1) of whom serves as co-chair of the task**
 36 **force.**

37 **(B) Two (2) members appointed by the minority leader.**

38 **(2) Five (5) members of the house of representatives,**
 39 **appointed as follows:**

40 **(A) Three (3) members appointed by the speaker, one (1)**
 41 **of whom serves as co-chair of the task force.**

42 **(B) Two (2) members appointed by the minority leader.**



- 1 **(3) One (1) member who is a judge.**
 2 **(4) One (1) member who represents a child placing agency (as**
 3 **defined in IC 31-9-2-17.5).**
 4 **(5) One (1) member who either:**
 5 **(A) is an in-home provider; or**
 6 **(B) provides family preservation services (as defined in**
 7 **IC 31-9-2-44.8).**
 8 **(6) One (1) member who represents a:**
 9 **(A) child caring institution (as defined in IC 31-9-2-16.7);**
 10 **or**
 11 **(B) private secure facility (as defined in IC 31-9-2-96.5).**
 12 **(7) One (1) member who is a group home (as defined in**
 13 **IC 31-9-2-48.5) provider.**
 14 **(8) One (1) member who is an older foster youth services**
 15 **provider.**
 16 **(9) One (1) member who is a preventative provider that runs**
 17 **a child welfare program (as defined in IC 31-26-3.5-1).**
 18 **(10) One (1) member who is a youth with lived experience.**
 19 **(11) One (1) member who is a juvenile probation officer.**
 20 **(12) The director of the department of child services.**
 21 **(13) The deputy director of the department of child services.**
 22 **(14) One (1) member who is appointed by the office of the**
 23 **secretary of family and social services.**
 24 **(b) The president pro tempore shall designate one (1) member**
 25 **appointed under subsection (a)(1)(A) to serve as a co-chair of the**
 26 **task force for the duration of the task force.**
 27 **(c) The speaker shall designate one (1) member appointed under**
 28 **subsection (a)(2)(A) to serve as a co-chair of the task force for the**
 29 **duration of the task force.**
 30 **(d) A member of the task force serves at the will of the**
 31 **member's appointing authority for the duration of the task force.**
 32 **(e) The president pro tempore and the speaker, jointly, shall**
 33 **appoint the members described in subsection (a)(3) through**
 34 **(a)(11).**
 35 **Sec. 4. (a) The task force shall meet at the call of the co-chairs.**
 36 **(b) Twelve (12) members constitute a quorum.**
 37 **(c) The affirmative votes of at least a majority of the members**
 38 **at a meeting at which a quorum is present is necessary for the task**
 39 **force to take official action other than to meet and take testimony.**
 40 **Sec. 5. (a) All task force meetings are open to the public in**
 41 **accordance with and subject to IC 5-14-1.5.**
 42 **(b) All task force records are subject to the requirements of**



- 1 **IC 5-14-3.**
 2 **Sec. 6. The task force shall study the following topics:**
 3 **(1) The standards for child safety as it pertains to qualifying**
 4 **as a child in need of services.**
 5 **(2) The need for various types of child welfare services in**
 6 **Indiana.**
 7 **(3) The need for child welfare service providers in different**
 8 **geographic regions throughout Indiana.**
 9 **(4) Methods to assess the quality of child welfare services**
 10 **offered.**
 11 **(5) The reasonableness of time for a child in need of services**
 12 **to reach permanency.**
 13 **Sec. 7. The legislative services agency shall provide staff support**
 14 **to the task force.**
 15 **Sec. 8. (a) The task force shall submit two (2) reports to the**
 16 **executive director of the legislative services agency, in an electronic**
 17 **format under IC 5-14-6, for review by the interim study committee**
 18 **on child services.**
 19 **(b) A report described in subsection (a) must:**
 20 **(1) be submitted not later than October 15, 2026, and must**
 21 **include:**
 22 **(A) the topics reviewed by the task force; and**
 23 **(B) the task force's findings and recommendations;**
 24 **for the period beginning July 1, 2025, and ending June 30,**
 25 **2026; and**
 26 **(2) be submitted not later than October 15, 2027, and must**
 27 **include:**
 28 **(A) the topics reviewed by the task force; and**
 29 **(B) the task force's findings and recommendations;**
 30 **for the period beginning July 1, 2026, and ending June 30,**
 31 **2027.**
 32 **Sec. 9. This chapter expires December 31, 2027.**



COMMITTEE REPORT

Mr. Speaker: Your Committee on Family, Children and Human Affairs, to which was referred House Bill 1273, has had the same under consideration and begs leave to report the same back to the House with the recommendation that said bill do pass.

(Reference is to HB 1273 as introduced.)

DEVON

Committee Vote: Yeas 10, Nays 0

