

2016 -- S 2502

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LC004827  
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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2016

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A N A C T

RELATING TO STATE AFFAIRS AND GOVERNMENT - DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN,  
YOUTH, AND FAMILIES

Introduced By: Senators Miller, Goldin, DiPalma, Nesselbush, and DaPonte

Date Introduced: February 25, 2016

Referred To: Senate Judiciary

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Chapter 42-72 of the General Laws entitled "Department of Children,  
2 Youth and Families" is hereby amended by adding thereto the following sections:

3 **42-72-36.1. System reform and rebalancing goal.** -- On or before October 1, 2016, the  
4 department of children, youth, and families shall begin to implement a strategy to transition from  
5 reliance on congregate care placements to greater use of foster homes with community-based  
6 services for children and families. Said strategy shall assure quality outcomes, performance  
7 measures and incentives that promote service excellence and improve the system's overall  
8 stability by reinvesting the benefits that accrue from the more efficient and effective utilization of  
9 congregate care, foster homes and community-based services. Attaining system-wide reform of  
10 the magnitude set forth herein shall require rebalancing the system by making significant changes  
11 in the organization, financing and delivery of services that must be implemented incrementally.

12 **42-72-36.2. Recommendations as to allocation of resources.** -- On or before October 1,  
13 2016, the department of children, youth, and families shall recommend the allocation of existing  
14 resources as needed to ensure that those children in need of residential care, including foster  
15 homes and support services receive them in the least restrictive setting appropriate to their needs  
16 and preferences. The department is hereby authorized to utilize screening criteria to avoid  
17 unnecessary congregate care placements of children.

18 **42-72-36.3. Reporting.** -- Annual reports showing progress in residential care system

1 reform and rebalancing shall be submitted by April 1, 2017, and annually thereafter on or before  
2 April 1 of each year by the department to the finance committees of both the senate and the house  
3 of representatives and shall include:

4 (1) The number of congregate care placements and associated funds;

5 (2) The number of foster care placements and associate funds;

6 (3) The percentage of screenings completed within thirty (30) days of placement;

7 (4) Recommendations to promote the expansion of foster homes and community-based  
8 service capacity including payment methodology reforms that increase access to foster homes and  
9 community-based services; and

10 (5) Recommendations for options to pay for certain services and supports necessary to  
11 transition or divert children from restrictive settings and optimize their health and safety when  
12 receiving care in a home or the community.

13 SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon passage.

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EXPLANATION  
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL  
OF

A N A C T

RELATING TO STATE AFFAIRS AND GOVERNMENT - DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN,  
YOUTH, AND FAMILIES

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1           This act would require the DCYF to transition from child placement in group homes to  
2 child placement in foster care. It would also require the DCYF to submit to the house and senate  
3 finance committees, annual reports which would include such details as the number of children in  
4 foster care and those in group homes and the costs associated with those placements, as well as  
5 recommendations for placement and options to pay for certain services for children and families.

6           This act would take effect upon passage.

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