



General Assembly

January Session, 2023

Raised Bill No. 6900

LCO No. 5449



Referred to Committee on APPROPRIATIONS

Introduced by:
(APP)

***AN ACT CONCERNING THE BEHAVIORAL AND MENTAL HEALTH
POLICY OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE.***

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

1 Section 1. Section 2-137 of the general statutes is repealed and the
2 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October 1, 2023*):

3 (a) There is established a Children's Behavioral and Mental Health
4 Policy and [Oversight] Planning Committee. The committee shall
5 evaluate the availability and efficacy of prevention, early intervention,
6 and mental health treatment services and options for children from birth
7 to age eighteen and make recommendations to the General Assembly
8 and executive agencies regarding the governance and administration of
9 the mental health care system for children. The committee shall be
10 within the Legislative Department.

11 (b) The committee shall consist of the following members:

12 (1) The chairpersons and ranking members of the joint standing
13 committees of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters
14 relating to public health, human services, children and appropriations

15 and the budgets of state agencies, or their designees;

16 (2) Three appointed by the speaker of the House of Representatives,
17 one of whom shall be a member of the General Assembly and two of
18 whom shall be providers of mental, emotional or behavioral health
19 services for children in the state;

20 (3) Three appointed by the president pro tempore of the Senate, one
21 of whom shall be a member of the General Assembly and two of whom
22 shall be representatives of private advocacy groups that provide
23 services for children and families in the state;

24 (4) One appointed by each of the two legislative chairpersons of the
25 committee, selected pursuant to subsection (e) of this section;

26 ~~[(4)]~~ (5) Two appointed by the majority leader of the House of
27 Representatives, who shall be representatives of children's hospitals;

28 ~~[(5)]~~ (6) One appointed by the majority leader of the Senate, who shall
29 be a representative of public school superintendents in the state;

30 ~~[(6)]~~ (7) Two appointed by the minority leader of the House of
31 Representatives, who shall be representatives of families with children
32 who have been diagnosed with mental, emotional or behavioral health
33 disorders;

34 ~~[(7)]~~ (8) Two appointed by the minority leader of the Senate, who
35 shall be providers of mental or behavioral health services;

36 ~~[(8)]~~ (9) The Commissioners of Children and Families, Correction,
37 Developmental Services, Early Childhood, Education, Insurance,
38 Mental Health and Addiction Services, Public Health and Social
39 Services, or their designees;

40 ~~[(9)]~~ (10) The executive director of the Office of Health Strategy, or
41 the executive director's designee;

42 ~~[(10)]~~ (11) The Child Advocate, or the Child Advocate's designee;

43 ~~[(11)]~~ ~~(12)~~ The Healthcare Advocate, or the Healthcare Advocate's
44 designee;

45 ~~[(12)]~~ ~~(13)~~ The executive director of the Court Support Services
46 Division of the Judicial Branch, or the executive director's designee;

47 ~~[(13)]~~ ~~(14)~~ The executive director of the Commission on Women,
48 Children, Seniors, Equity and Opportunity, or the executive director's
49 designee;

50 ~~[(14)]~~ ~~(15)~~ The Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management, or
51 the secretary's designee; and

52 ~~[(15)]~~ ~~(16)~~ One representative from each administrative services
53 organization under contract with the Department of Social Services to
54 provide such services for recipients of assistance under the HUSKY
55 Health program, who shall be ex-officio, nonvoting members.

56 (c) Any member of the committee appointed under subdivisions (1)
57 to ~~[(7)]~~ ~~(8)~~, inclusive, of subsection (b) of this section may be a member
58 of the General Assembly.

59 (d) Any vacancy shall be filled by the appointing authority.

60 (e) The chairpersons of the committee shall be the Secretary of the
61 Office of Policy and Management, or the secretary's designee, and [a
62 member] two members of the General Assembly [selected jointly] one
63 each selected by the speaker of the House of Representatives and the
64 president pro tempore of the Senate from among the members serving
65 pursuant to subdivision (1), (2) or (3) of subsection (b) of this section.
66 [shall be co-chairpersons of the committee. Such co-chairpersons] The
67 three chairpersons shall schedule the first meeting of the committee,
68 which shall be held not later than [sixty days after May 4, 2022] October
69 1, 2023.

70 (f) Members of the committee shall serve without compensation,
71 except for necessary expenses incurred in the performance of their
72 duties.

73 (g) Not later than January 1, 2023, the committee shall report, in
74 accordance with section 11-4a, to the joint standing committees of the
75 General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to
76 appropriations and the budgets of state agencies, public health, human
77 services and children, and the Secretary of the Office of Policy and
78 Management, regarding the following:

79 (1) Any statutory and budgetary changes needed concerning the
80 mental health system of prevention, development and treatment that
81 the committee recommends to (A) improve developmental, mental
82 health and behavioral health outcomes for children; (B) improve
83 transparency and accountability with respect to state-funded services
84 for children and youth with an emphasis on goals identified by the
85 committee for community-based programs and facility-based
86 interventions; and (C) promote the efficient sharing of information by
87 state and state-funded agencies to ensure the regular collection and
88 reporting of data regarding children and families' access to, utilization
89 of and benefit from services necessary to promote public health and
90 mental and behavioral health outcomes for children and youth and their
91 families; [.]

92 (2) The gaps in services identified by the committee with respect to
93 children and families involved in the mental health system, and
94 recommendations to address such gaps in services;

95 (3) Strengths and barriers identified by the committee that support or
96 impede the mental health needs of children and youth with specific
97 recommendations for reforms;

98 (4) An examination of the way state agencies can work collaboratively
99 through school-based efforts and other processes to improve mental
100 health and developmental outcomes for children;

101 (5) An examination of disproportionate access and outcomes across
102 the mental health care system for children of color;

103 (6) An examination of disproportionate access and outcomes across

104 the mental health care system for children with developmental
105 disabilities;

106 (7) A plan to ensure a quality assurance framework for facilities and
107 programs that are part of the mental health care system and are operated
108 privately or by the state that includes data regarding efficacy and
109 outcomes; and

110 (8) A governance structure for the children's mental health system
111 that will best facilitate the public policy and healthcare goals of the state
112 to ensure that all children and families can access high-quality mental
113 health care.

114 (h) The committee shall complete its duties under this section after
115 requesting consultation with one or more organizations that focus on
116 the quality of services for children or research related to the well-being
117 of children, including, but not limited to, The Child Health and
118 Development Institute or Connecticut Voices for Children. The
119 committee may accept administrative support and technical and
120 research assistance from any such organization. The committee shall
121 work in collaboration with any results-first initiative implemented
122 pursuant to any section of the general statutes or any public or special
123 act.

124 (i) The committee shall be given access to data collected by the state
125 on matters related to children's behavioral health from the relevant state
126 agencies or directly from contracted administrative service
127 organizations, as applicable.

128 (j) The committee shall include two or more subcommittees chaired
129 by a member of the committee to inform its recommendations. The
130 subcommittees may focus on: Workforce-related issues, school-based
131 health, prevention, and intermediate or acute care. All subcommittees
132 shall examine gaps, reimbursement rates, parity in the outcomes of
133 services and the efficacy of services.

134 (k) The committee shall establish a time frame for reviewing and

135 making follow-up reports on the status or progress of the committee's
136 recommendations and activities. Each report submitted by the
137 committee pursuant to this subsection shall include specific
138 recommendations to improve outcomes related to children's mental,
139 emotional or behavioral health and a timeline indicating dates by which
140 specific tasks or outcomes should be achieved.

141 (l) The committee shall develop a strategic plan that integrates the
142 recommendations identified pursuant to subsection (g) of this section.
143 The plan may include short-term, medium-term and long-term goals. In
144 developing the plan, the committee shall collaborate with any state
145 agency with responsibilities relating to the mental health system.

146 (m) Not later than August 1, 2023, the committee shall report, in
147 accordance with section 11-4a, such plan together with an account of
148 progress made toward the full implementation of such plan and any
149 recommendations concerning the implementation of identified goals in
150 the plan to the joint standing committees of the General Assembly
151 having cognizance of matters relating to appropriations and the budgets
152 of state agencies, public health, human services and children, and the
153 Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management.

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| This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections: | | |
| Section 1 | <i>October 1, 2023</i> | 2-137 |

Statement of Purpose:

To change the name of the committee to reference children and to change the committee chair appointments.

[Proposed deletions are enclosed in brackets. Proposed additions are indicated by underline, except that when the entire text of a bill or resolution or a section of a bill or resolution is new, it is not underlined.]