

RÉSUMÉ DIGEST

ACT 325 (SB 137)

2023 Regular Session

Barrow

New law requires the legislative auditor to appoint a state child ombudsman, subject to legislative appropriation, who has knowledge of the child welfare system and the legal system and is qualified by training and experience to perform the duties of the ombudsman. New law further provides for the legislative auditor to employ necessary personnel to perform the duties assigned to the ombudsman.

New law provides for the duties of the state child ombudsman who shall independently monitor and evaluate the public and private agencies involved in the protection of children and delivery of services to children with the goal of safeguarding the welfare of children through educational advocacy, system reform, public awareness, and training.

New law requires the state child ombudsman to prepare the following reports:

- (1) A biennial, in-depth report on conditions of confinement regarding children 21 years of age or younger who are held in secure detention in any facility operated by a state agency.
- (2) An annual report on the goals of and projects undertaken by him, within available appropriations, that are consistent with his duties and responsibilities.

New law requires any state agency having responsibility for the custody or care of children to provide monthly notice to the ombudsman of the death of a child in its custody or care. New law further requires the ombudsman to notify the senator and representative who represent the district in which a child has died as a result of abuse or neglect within 24 hours of his knowledge of the death of the child.

New law provides that the standing committee of each house having responsibility for oversight shall perform a biennial review and evaluation of the ombudsman.

New law provides that the state child ombudsman or his designee shall serve as a member of the State Child Death Review Panel.

Effective when an Act of the Louisiana Legislature containing a specific appropriation of monies for the implementation of new law becomes effective.

(Amends R.S. 40:2019(C)(intro para); adds R.S. 24:513(D)(7) and 525 and R.S. 40:2019(C)(23))