

2024 -- S 2972

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LC005831
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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2024

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A N A C T

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

Introduced By: Senators Murray, DiPalma, Acosta, Felag, Zurier, Valverde, Lauria, and
Euer

Date Introduced: April 05, 2024

Referred To: Senate Judiciary

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Section 42-72-5.3 of the General Laws in Chapter 42-72 entitled "Department
2 of Children, Youth and Families" is hereby amended to read as follows:

3 **42-72-5.3. Accreditation.**

4 (a) The standards set by the Council on Accreditation (COA) are nationally recognized as
5 best practices for protecting and providing services to abused and neglected children;

6 (b) Achieving and maintaining these standards requires a solid commitment from the
7 legislative, executive and judicial branches of government;

8 (c) It is the intent of the general assembly to provide the resources for the department of
9 children, youth and families to meet, achieve and sustain accreditation by the Council on
10 Accreditation;

11 (d) The department of children, youth and families ([the "department"](#)) shall initiate the
12 process for seeking COA accreditation no later than September 1, 2019, and shall submit an
13 accreditation plan to the governor, the speaker of the house of representatives, the president of the
14 senate, the chairperson of the house committee on health, education and welfare, the chairperson
15 of the senate committee on health and human services, the chairpersons of the finance committees
16 of the house and senate, and to the chairpersons of the judiciary committees of the house and senate
17 no later than October 1, 2020. Said plan shall include, at a minimum, the following:

18 (1) Inputs, including updated staffing requirements, a timetable for achieving those

1 requirements, and any additional costs associated with achieving accreditation;

2 (2) Outcomes, including an assessment based on statistical and other evidence, of the
3 impact of accreditation on the number of abused and neglected children, the nature of their abuse,
4 and the relationships between such children and their families.

5 (e) [Deleted by P.L. 2019, ch. 88, art. 13, § 15].

6 (f) Caseloads for department workers.

7 (1) Regardless of the status of COA accreditation, the department shall apply general
8 caseload limits for department workers in a manner similar to those contained in COA caseload
9 standards for public agencies. More specifically, caseloads for workers shall support the
10 achievement of child and family outcomes, shall be regularly reviewed, and generally shall not
11 exceed the following:

12 (i) Twelve (12) active investigations at a time, including no more than eight (8) new
13 investigations per month;

14 (ii) Fourteen (14) families receiving ongoing in-home services;

15 (iii) Twelve (12) children in out-of-home care, and their families; and

16 (iv) Eight (8) children in treatment foster care, and their families.

17 (2) By “generally,” it is understood that there may be circumstances under which caseloads
18 may exceed these limits, such as when the department is faced with temporary staff vacancies or
19 when administrative case functions are assigned to other personnel; however, the department shall
20 make all efforts to meet the caseload numbers set forth in this subsection.

21 (g) The department shall conduct a pay rate review annually for current employees, to
22 ensure the department is competitive with its compensation to employees. The department shall
23 conduct an analyses of New England states pay salaries for similar employees, and shall
24 compensate current employees based on the data collected. The director is hereby authorized to
25 promulgate rules and regulations necessary to carry out the provisions of this subsection.

26 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

- 1 This act would establish general caseload limits for DCYF workers similar to those
- 2 contained in the Council on Accreditation standards.
- 3 This act would take effect upon passage.

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