

**SFA**

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Fiscal Agency

Lansing, Michigan 48909

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Senate Bill 460 (as reported without amendment)  
 Sponsor: Senator Frederick Dillingham  
 Committee: Human Resources and Senior Citizens

Date Completed: 2-22-90

**RATIONALE**

As a matter of policy, the Michigan Department of Social Services currently requires minors applying for assistance under the Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) program--or persons applying on a minor's behalf--to cooperate with the Department in establishing the identity of, and obtaining child support from, the minor's father. The requirement apparently helps to ensure that every possible effort is made to locate absent fathers and compel them to assume at least some financial responsibility for their children. Some believe that this policy is important enough to the child's health and well-being to warrant the force of law.

- Taking any other action determined by the State Department to be necessary to establish paternity and obtain child support.

An applicant for assistance who failed without good cause to cooperate as required would be ineligible to receive assistance. This provision would not apply to the determination of eligibility for assistance, however, if it conflicted with the provisions of the Social Security Act.

Proposed MCL 400.60b

**FISCAL IMPACT**

The bill closely mirrors current Department of Social Services policy based on Federal statute and regulations, and would have no fiscal impact on State or local government.

**ARGUMENTS****Supporting Argument**

By putting into statute the Department's policy of requiring AFDC applicants to help locate absent fathers, the bill would help ensure that a practice so important to the welfare of a child was not subject to the whim of the Department or of the Federal regulations on which the practice is based, but rather had the force and permanence of State law.

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This analysis was prepared by nonpartisan Senate staff for use by the Senate in its deliberations and does not constitute an official statement of legislative intent.

**CONTENT**

The bill would amend the Social Welfare Act to specify that a person applying for assistance under the Act who is under 18 years of age, or a person who is applying on behalf of a minor, whose parent is absent from the minor's home for reasons other than the parent's death, would be required to cooperate with the State Department of Social Services in efforts to establish paternity and obtain support from the absent parent. Cooperation would include, but not be limited to, all of the following:

- Appearing in the Office of Child Support when requested.
- Identifying the absent parent.
- Providing information about the absent parent's whereabouts, if known.
- Appearing at the office of the county prosecuting attorney, if requested.
- Submitting to genetic testing as described in the Paternity Act.

S.B. 460 (2-22-90)