

Senate Fiscal Agency
P. O. Box 30036
Lansing, Michigan 48909-7536

SFA**BILL ANALYSIS**

Telephone: (517) 373-5383
Fax: (517) 373-1986
TDD: (517) 373-0543

Senate Bill 1125 (Substitute S-1 as reported)
Sponsor: Senator Dale L. Shugars
Committee: Judiciary

CONTENT

The bill would amend the Child Protection Law to include a “nonparent adult” as a person responsible for a child’s health or welfare, for purposes of reporting child abuse and child neglect.

The Law requires various professionals to report suspected cases of child abuse or neglect to the Family Independence Agency, which must investigate and keep a central registry of reported child abuse or neglect. The Law’s definitions of “child abuse” and “child neglect” refer to harm or threatened harm to a child’s health or welfare by a parent, legal guardian, or any other person responsible for the child’s health or welfare. “Person responsible for the child’s health or welfare” means a parent, a legal guardian, a person 18 years of age or older who resides for any length of time in the same home in which the child resides, or an owner, operator, volunteer, or employee of a child care organization or adult foster care home.

The bill would include a nonparent adult in the definition of “person responsible for the child’s health or welfare”. “Nonparent adult” would mean a person who was at least 18 years old and who, regardless of his or her domicile, met all of the following criteria in relation to a child over whom the family court took jurisdiction in an abuse or neglect case:

- Had substantial and regular contact with the child.
- Had a close personal relationship with the child or with a person responsible for the child’s health or welfare.
- Was not that child’s parent or a person otherwise related to the child by blood or affinity to the third degree.

MCL 722.622

Legislative Analyst: S. Lowe

FISCAL IMPACT

The bill would have an indeterminate impact on State government. Currently the Family Independence Agency investigates allegations of abuse or neglect against parents, legal guardians, or other adults living in the household. To add adults who do not fall under those definitions would increase the reportable child abuse and neglect incidents that the department must investigate. The number of these cases is not known at this time. However, an estimate of costs would include staff time for investigation and services. Each protective services staff person responsible for case investigations usually handles an average of 12 cases at any one time. Each staff person responsible for case services handles an average of 24 cases at any one time. The average annual cost of a staff person, including associated benefits and support services and staff costs, is \$75,000 to \$77,000.

Date Completed: 5-15-98

Fiscal Analyst: C. Cole