



# House of Representatives

## File No. 956

General Assembly

January Session, 2025

**(Reprint of File Nos. 470 and 915)**

Substitute House Bill No. 7108  
As Amended by House Amendment  
Schedule "A"

Approved by the Legislative Commissioner  
May 27, 2025

### **AN ACT CONCERNING AUTISM AND INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY SERVICES AND ABUSE AND NEGLECT INVESTIGATIONS.**

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

1       Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective from passage*) (a) Not later than January 15,  
2       2026, and annually thereafter, the Commissioner of Developmental  
3       Services shall file a report regarding abuse and neglect reports filed and  
4       investigations conducted pursuant to sections 17a-247b, 17a-247f and  
5       46a-11c of the general statutes. Such report shall include: (1) The number  
6       of abuse and neglect complaints received by the Department of  
7       Developmental Services in the previous calendar year, including deaths  
8       of persons reported; (2) the number and type of complaints that were  
9       investigated by the department and the percentage of such complaints  
10      investigated directly by the department or by private providers; (3) the  
11      number and percentage of cases that were substantiated; and (4) what,  
12      if any, administrative action was taken by the department regarding  
13      such substantiated complaints, including distribution of outcomes and  
14      recommendations. The commissioner shall post the report on the

15 department's Internet web site and file the report, in accordance with  
16 the provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes, with the joint  
17 standing committees of the General Assembly having cognizance of  
18 matters relating to human services and public health.

19 (b) Not later than February 1, 2026, and every five years thereafter,  
20 the commissioner shall review the policies and procedures of the  
21 department as they relate to reports and investigations of abuse and  
22 neglect and post any updates to the policies and procedures on the  
23 department's Internet web site. Such review shall include: (1) Ensuring  
24 the policies and procedures reflect the current process in place for  
25 investigating reports of abuse and neglect; (2) reviewing the  
26 department's method for sharing information regarding substantiated  
27 abuse and neglect complaints with the person reported to be the victim  
28 of such abuse or neglect or such person's legal representative while  
29 continuing to maintain confidentiality of the records as prescribed in  
30 section 17a-247d of the general statutes; and (3) obtaining feedback on  
31 the policies and procedures from qualified providers as determined by  
32 the commissioner.

33 Sec. 2. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2025*) Not later than September 30, 2025,  
34 and quarterly thereafter, the Commissioner of Developmental Services  
35 shall file a report describing (1) progress in expending funds  
36 appropriated for programs administered by the Department of  
37 Developmental Services, (2) what services such funds were spent on, (3)  
38 whether lapsed funds are anticipated at the end of the fiscal year ending  
39 on June thirtieth, (4) if applicable, reasons appropriated funds were not  
40 expended, and (5) waiting lists for services provided by the department.  
41 The commissioner shall file the report, in accordance with the provisions  
42 of section 11-4a of the general statutes, with the joint standing  
43 committees of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters  
44 relating to appropriations and the budgets of state agencies, human  
45 services and public health and post the report on the Internet web site  
46 of the Department of Developmental Services.

47 Sec. 3. (*Effective from passage*) (a) The Commissioner of Developmental

48 Services shall appoint a working group which shall be convened by the  
49 commissioner, or the commissioner's designee, to study information  
50 and make recommendations relevant to the current and potential future  
51 use of Southbury Training School. The working group shall include, but  
52 need not be limited to, representatives from the (1) Southbury Training  
53 School Board of Trustees, (2) Southbury Home and School Association,  
54 (3) nonprofit entity designated pursuant to section 46a-10b of the  
55 general statutes to be the protection and advocacy organization for  
56 persons with disabilities in the state, and (4) Department of  
57 Developmental Services.

58 (b) The commissioner may appoint additional persons or solicit  
59 additional input from other stakeholders, including, but not limited to,  
60 representatives from other state agencies, legislators and the town of  
61 Southbury. Such study shall include, but need not be limited to,  
62 considerations of current and future supports delivered on the school  
63 campus, disposition of buildings and grounds, and costs related to any  
64 recommendations.

65 (c) On or before February 1, 2026, the Commissioner of  
66 Developmental Services shall submit a report, in accordance with the  
67 provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes, on the working  
68 group's findings and recommendations to the joint standing committees  
69 of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to  
70 appropriations and the budgets of state agencies, human services and  
71 public health.

72 Sec. 4. (*Effective from passage*) The Commissioner of Social Services, in  
73 consultation with the Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management,  
74 shall apply for any available federal funding or private grant funding to  
75 conduct a state-wide autism needs assessment. If funded, the needs  
76 assessment shall (1) collect data from people living with autism  
77 spectrum disorder and their caregivers to inform policy and service  
78 delivery in the state, and (2) be made available on the Internet web site  
79 of the Department of Social Services.

80       Sec. 5. (*Effective from passage*) (a) The Secretary of the Office of Policy  
81       and Management, in consultation with the Governor's Kids Cabinet,  
82       shall establish a working group to examine the feasibility of an  
83       interagency complex case team for young adults ages seventeen to  
84       twenty-two with intellectual or developmental disabilities, including  
85       autism spectrum disorder, who (1) may have co-occurring mental or  
86       behavioral health needs, (2) are in urgent need of community placement  
87       or agency services, and (3) qualify for support from more than one state  
88       agency.

89       (b) Not later than February 1, 2026, the secretary shall file a report, in  
90       accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes,  
91       with the joint standing committees of the General Assembly having  
92       cognizance of matters relating to human services and public health. The  
93       report shall contain the working group's (1) findings on the necessity of  
94       creating a formalized process to address long hospital stays for such  
95       young adults and safe discharges with community supports, (2)  
96       summary of best practices identified in other states, (3)  
97       recommendations concerning state appropriations necessary to  
98       operationalize any recommended process, (4) recommendations  
99       regarding a referral process for complex case team management, and (5)  
100      proposed legislation to implement any recommended process. The  
101      working group shall terminate upon completion of the report or  
102      February 1, 2026, whichever is sooner.

103      Sec. 6. (*Effective July 1, 2025*) The joint standing committees of the  
104      General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to  
105      appropriations and the budgets of state agencies, human services and  
106      public health may annually hold a joint informational hearing to review  
107      the status of efforts by the Departments of Developmental Services and  
108      Social Services to ensure the safety of and quality of care for persons  
109      with disabilities receiving services funded by federal Medicaid waiver  
110      programs. The hearing may address matters, including, but not limited  
111      to, (1) how the agencies are addressing audit findings and  
112      recommendations made by the Office of the Inspector General for the  
113      United States Department of Health and Human Services and the state

114 Auditors of Public Accounts concerning prevention of abuse and  
115 neglect of such persons, (2) timely reporting of abuse and neglect  
116 complaints concerning such persons, and (3) corrective action related to  
117 such complaints.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	<i>from passage</i>	New section
Sec. 2	<i>July 1, 2025</i>	New section
Sec. 3	<i>from passage</i>	New section
Sec. 4	<i>from passage</i>	New section
Sec. 5	<i>from passage</i>	New section
Sec. 6	<i>July 1, 2025</i>	New section

Section 1	<i>from passage</i>	New section
Sec. 2	<i>July 1, 2025</i>	New section
Sec. 3	<i>from passage</i>	New section
Sec. 4	<i>from passage</i>	New section
Sec. 5	<i>from passage</i>	New section
Sec. 6	<i>July 1, 2025</i>	New section

*The following Fiscal Impact Statement and Bill Analysis are prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose. In general, fiscal impacts are based upon a variety of informational sources, including the analyst's professional knowledge. Whenever applicable, agency data is consulted as part of the analysis, however final products do not necessarily reflect an assessment from any specific department.*

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### **OFA Fiscal Note**

**State Impact:** None

**Municipal Impact:** None

### **Explanation**

**Sections 1-3** establish various reporting requirements for the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) and require a working group to study and make recommendations on the current and future use of Southbury Training School. This has no fiscal impact to the state as DDS already has the necessary resources and expertise to do so.

**Section 4** requires the Department of Social Services (DSS) to apply for any available federal or private grant funding to conduct a statewide autism needs assessment. To the extent DSS is awarded such funding, the agency will utilize the funds to conduct the needs assessment.

**Section 5** requires the Office of Policy and Management (OPM) to establish a working group to study the feasibility of an interagency complex case team for young adults with intellectual or developmental disabilities and co-occurring needs, and to submit a report of findings and recommendations to the General Assembly by February 1, 2026. This does not result in a fiscal impact to the state as OPM already has the necessary resources and expertise to do so.

House "A" strikes the language of the underlying bill and associated fiscal impact and results in the fiscal impacts described above.

### **The Out Years**

The annualized ongoing fiscal impact identified above would continue into the future subject to inflation.

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**OLR Bill Analysis****sHB 7108 (as amended by House "A")\******AN ACT CONCERNING AUTISM AND INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY SERVICES AND ABUSE AND NEGLECT INVESTIGATIONS.*****SUMMARY**

This bill sets reporting and other requirements related to people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) and autism spectrum disorder.

The bill requires the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) to:

1. report on abuse and neglect reports filed and investigations conducted under existing laws and review related DDS policies and procedures (§ 1),
2. report on its use of funds appropriated for its programs (§ 2), and
3. establish a working group to study recommendations on Southbury Training School (§ 3).

The bill also requires the (1) Department of Social Services (DSS) to apply for any available federal funding or private grant funding to conduct a state-wide autism needs assessment (§ 4) and (2) Office of Policy and Management (OPM) to establish a working group on the feasibility of an interagency complex case team for young adults with IDD, including autism spectrum disorder (§ 5).

Lastly, the bill allows the Appropriations, Human Services, and Public Health committees to annually hold a joint informational hearing to review DDS and DSS efforts to ensure the safety and quality of care for people with disabilities receiving services funded by federal



Medicaid waiver programs. Hearing topics may include (1) how the agencies are addressing audit findings and recommendations on abuse and neglect prevention from state and federal auditors and (2) timely abuse and neglect complaint reporting and related corrective action (§ 6).

\*House Amendment "A" strikes the underlying bill, which included more prescriptive reporting requirements on abuse and neglect and required, rather than allowed, legislative committees to hold joint informational hearings. The amendment adds provisions on the Southbury Training School working group, the complex case team working group, and the state-wide autism needs assessment.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage, except the provisions (1) requiring DDS to report on spending appropriated funds and (2) allowing a joint information hearing are effective July 1, 2025.

## **§ 1 — DDS ABUSE AND NEGLECT REPORTS AND INVESTIGATIONS**

Existing law requires DDS to maintain a registry of certain former employees who were fired from or left their jobs due to substantiated abuse or neglect, and make the registry available to specified agencies and employers. The law also requires DDS to investigate reports of abuse and neglect of people with IDD and people who receive services from DSS's Division of Autism Spectrum Disorder Services.

The bill requires the DDS commissioner to report annually, beginning by January 15, 2026, on abuse and neglect reports filed under these laws to the Human Services and Public Health committees, and post the report on its website. The report must include:

1. the number of abuse and neglect complaints the department received in the previous year and deaths reported;
2. the number and type of complaints that DDS investigated and the percentage investigated directly by the department or by private providers;

3. the number and percentage of cases that were substantiated; and
4. any administrative action taken by DDS regarding substantiated complaints, including a distribution of their outcomes and any recommendations.

The bill also requires the DDS commissioner, starting by February 1, 2026, to review department policies and procedures on abuse and neglect investigations and reports every five years and post any updates to policies and procedures on its website. The review must include:

1. ensuring the policies and procedures reflect the current process in place for investigating abuse and neglect reports,
2. reviewing DDS's method for sharing information on substantiated abuse and neglect complaints with the reported victim or his or her legal representative while keeping records related to its registry of former employees confidential, and
3. getting feedback on the policies and procedures from qualified providers as the DDS commissioner determines.

## **§ 2 — DDS REPORT ON APPROPRIATED FUNDS**

The bill requires the DDS commissioner to report quarterly, beginning by September 30, 2025, to the Appropriations, Human Services, and Public Health committees and post the report on its website. The report must describe:

1. progress in expending funds appropriated for programs DDS administers;
2. what services these funds were spent on;
3. whether lapsed funds are anticipated at the end of the fiscal year;
4. reasons appropriated funds were not expended, if applicable; and

5. waiting lists for DDS services.

### **§ 3 — SOUTHBURY TRAINING SCHOOL WORKING GROUP**

The bill requires the DDS commissioner, or his designee, to convene a working group to study information and make recommendations on the current and potential future use of Southbury Training School. The commissioner must appoint the working group, and its members must at least include representatives from:

1. the Southbury Training School Board of Trustees,
2. Southbury Home and School Association,
3. the protection and advocacy system (i.e. Disability Rights Connecticut), and
4. DDS.

The bill allows the commissioner to appoint additional people to the working group or solicit additional input from other stakeholders (e.g., representatives from other state agencies, legislators, and the town of Southbury). The study must at least consider current and future supports delivered on the school campus, disposition of buildings and grounds, and costs for any recommendations.

The commissioner must report on the working group's findings and recommendations to the Appropriations, Human Services, and Public Health committees by February 1, 2026.

### **§ 4 — STATE-WIDE AUTISM NEEDS ASSESSMENT**

The bill requires the DSS commissioner, in consultation with OPM, to apply for any available federal funds or private grants to conduct a state-wide autism needs assessment. Under the bill, if this assessment is funded, it must collect data from people living with autism spectrum disorder and their caregivers to inform policy and service delivery. The bill requires DSS to make any funded assessment available on its website.

**§ 5 — INTERAGENCY COMPLEX CASE TEAM WORKING GROUP**

The bill requires OPM, in consultation with the Governor's Kids Cabinet, to establish a working group on the feasibility of an interagency complex case team for young adults (ages 17 to 22) with IDD, including autism spectrum disorder, who also:

1. may have co-occurring mental or behavioral health needs,
2. are in urgent need of community placement or agency services, and
3. qualify for support from more than one state agency.

The bill requires the OPM secretary to report to the Human Services and Public Health committees by February 1, 2026, on the working group's:

1. findings on the need to create a formalized process to address long hospital stays for these young adults and safe discharges with community supports,
2. summary of best practices identified in other states,
3. recommendation on state appropriations needed to operationalize any recommended process,
4. recommendations on a referral process for complex case team management, and
5. proposed legislation to implement any recommended process.

Under the bill, the working group terminates on February 1, 2026, or when it completes its report, whichever is sooner.

**BACKGROUND*****Legislative History***

The House referred the bill (File 470) to the Appropriations Committee, which reported out a substitute that eliminates provisions

requiring (1) OPM to revisit the “intellectual disability” statutory definition and related eligibility criteria and report on people who are denied services, (2) DDS to evaluate and report on services for certain people with autism spectrum disorder, and (3) OPM’s statewide autism services coordinator to serve as a liaison to hospitals.

**COMMITTEE ACTION**

## Human Services Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 22 Nay 0 (03/18/2025)

## Appropriations Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 50 Nay 0 (05/05/2025)