



Substitute House Bill No. 6183

Public Act No. 25-68

AN ACT CONCERNING THE APPOINTMENT OF THE CHILD ADVOCATE.

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

Section 1. Section 46a-13k of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2025*):

(a) (1) There is established, within the Office of Governmental Accountability established under section 1-300, an Office of the Child Advocate. The Governor, with the approval of the General Assembly, shall appoint a person with knowledge of the child welfare system and the legal system to fill the Office of the Child Advocate. Such person shall be qualified by training and experience to perform the duties of the office as set forth in section 46a-13l.

(2) Upon any vacancy in the position of Child Advocate, the advisory committee established pursuant to section 46a-13r, as amended by this act, shall meet to consider and interview successor candidates and shall submit to the Governor a list of not fewer than three and not more than five of the most outstanding candidates, not later than sixty days after the occurrence of said vacancy. [, except that upon any vacancy in said position occurring after January 1, 2012, but before June 15, 2012, the advisory committee shall submit such list to the Governor on or before

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July 31, 2012.] Such list shall rank the candidates in the order of committee preference. Not later than eight weeks after receiving the list of candidates from the advisory committee, the Governor shall designate a candidate for Child Advocate from among the choices on such list. If at any time any of the candidates withdraw from consideration prior to confirmation by the General Assembly, the designation shall be made from the remaining candidates on the list submitted to the Governor. If, not later than eight weeks after receiving the list, the Governor fails to designate a candidate from the list, the candidate ranked first shall receive the designation and be referred to the General Assembly for confirmation. If the General Assembly is not in session, the designated candidate shall serve as acting Child Advocate and be entitled to the compensation, privileges and powers of the Child Advocate until the General Assembly meets to take action on said appointment.

(3) The person appointed Child Advocate shall serve for a term of [four] five years and may be reappointed in accordance with the provisions of subdivision (4) of this subsection or shall continue to hold office until such person's successor is appointed and qualified. Upon any vacancy in the position of Child Advocate and until such time as a candidate has been confirmed by the General Assembly or, if the General Assembly is not in session, has been designated by the Governor, the Associate Child Advocate shall serve as the acting Child Advocate and be entitled to the compensation, privileges and powers of the Child Advocate.

(4) (A) Not later than twelve months prior to the expiration of the term of the Child Advocate, the advisory committee shall submit a preliminary report, in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a, to the Governor, the Child Advocate and the joint standing committees of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to the judiciary, children and human services, evaluating the work of the Child

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Advocate during the Child Advocate's tenure.

(B) Not later than six months prior to the expiration of the term of the Child Advocate, the advisory committee shall submit a final report, in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a, to the Governor, the Child Advocate and the joint standing committees of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to the judiciary, children and human services, evaluating the work of the Child Advocate during the Child Advocate's tenure and recommending the reappointment of the Child Advocate or the appointment of a new Child Advocate.

(C) Not later than ninety days after the submission of the final report pursuant to subparagraph (B) of this subdivision, the Governor shall notify the advisory committee of the Governor's acceptance or rejection of the advisory committee's recommendation. If the Governor does not provide such notice, the advisory committee's recommendation shall be deemed accepted. If the Governor (i) elects to reappoint the Child Advocate or a recommendation to reappoint the Child Advocate is deemed accepted pursuant to this subparagraph, the Child Advocate shall be referred to the General Assembly for confirmation, or (ii) does not elect to reappoint the Child Advocate or a recommendation to not reappoint the Child Advocate is deemed accepted pursuant to this subparagraph, a new Child Advocate shall be appointed in accordance with the provisions of subdivision (2) of this subsection.

(b) Notwithstanding any other provision of the general statutes, the Child Advocate shall act independently of any state department in the performance of the advocate's duties.

(c) The Child Advocate may, within available funds, appoint such staff as may be deemed necessary provided, for the fiscal years ending June 30, 1996, and June 30, 1997, such staff shall not exceed one and one-half full-time positions or the equivalent thereof. The duties of the staff

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may include the duties and powers of the Child Advocate if performed under the direction of the Child Advocate.

(d) The General Assembly shall annually appropriate such sums as necessary for the payment of the salaries of the staff and for the payment of office expenses and other actual expenses incurred by the Child Advocate in the performance of his or her duties. Any legal or court fees obtained by the state in actions brought by the Child Advocate shall be deposited in the General Fund.

(e) The Child Advocate shall annually submit, in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a, to the Governor, the joint standing committees of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to the judiciary, children and human services and the advisory committee established pursuant to section 46a-13r, as amended by this act, a detailed report analyzing the work of the Office of the Child Advocate.

Sec. 2. Section 46a-13r of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2025*):

(a) There is established an advisory committee to the Office of the Child Advocate established under section 46a-13k, as amended by this act. Said committee shall prepare and submit to the Governor a list of candidates for appointment of the Child Advocate. The advisory committee shall consist of seven members as follows: (1) One appointed by the president pro tempore of the Senate; (2) one appointed by the speaker of the House of Representatives; (3) one appointed by the majority leader of the Senate; (4) one appointed by the majority leader of the House of Representatives; (5) one appointed by the minority leader of the Senate; (6) one appointed by the minority leader of the House of Representatives; and (7) one appointed by the Governor. The committee shall select a chairperson who shall preside at meetings of the committee. No member of the advisory committee shall be a person

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who is a volunteer for, a board member of, or is employed by, any entity or agency subject to the review of, or evaluation or monitoring by the Child Advocate pursuant to section 46a-13l, or is a communicator lobbyist who pursuant to such lobbyist's registration under chapter 10, lobbies on behalf of any entity or agency subject to the review of, or evaluation or monitoring by the Child Advocate pursuant to said section 46a-13l. Each member of the advisory committee shall serve a term of five years and may be reappointed at the conclusion of such term. All initial appointments to the advisory committee shall be made not later than September 1, 2011. Each member of the advisory committee shall serve a five-year term from July first of the year of their appointment. Any vacancy in the membership of the committee shall be filled by the appointing authority for the unexpired portion of the term.

(b) The advisory committee shall meet at least three times each year with the Child Advocate, and the Child Advocate's staff, for the purposes described in subdivision (13) of subsection (a) of section 46a-13l.

(c) The advisory committee shall provide for an annual evaluation of the effectiveness of the Office of the Child Advocate. Such evaluation shall be submitted, in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a, to the joint standing committees of the General Assembly having cognizance of the judiciary, children and human services and the Governor and published on the Internet web site of the Child Advocate.

Governor's Action:
Approved June 23, 2025