



House of Representatives

General Assembly

File No. 389

February Session, 2026

Substitute House Bill No. 5476

House of Representatives, April 2, 2026

The Committee on Government Oversight reported through REP. DATHAN of the 142nd Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the House, that the substitute bill ought to pass.

AN ACT CONCERNING OVERSIGHT OF EFFORTS TO PREVENT HUMAN TRAFFICKING.

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

1 Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2026*) (a) There is established, within
2 the Office of Policy and Management, a Human Trafficking Prevention
3 Coordinator. The coordinator shall be appointed by the Secretary of the
4 Office of Policy and Management, and shall have experience with
5 working with victims of human trafficking. The coordinator shall
6 coordinate the efforts among executive branch state agencies and law
7 enforcement to prevent human trafficking in the state.

8 (b) The coordinator (1) shall conduct comprehensive planning on
9 efforts to combat human trafficking in the state and coordinate the
10 activities and programs of executive branch state agencies in prevention
11 efforts; (2) shall work in partnership with the Trafficking in Persons
12 Council, established pursuant to section 46a-170 of the general statutes,
13 as amended by this act, and other multidisciplinary partners to help

14 align state-wide prevention, identification and response activities; (3)
15 may enter into such contractual agreements, in accordance with
16 established procedures, as may be necessary for the discharge of the
17 coordinator's duties; and (4) unless otherwise provided by law, may
18 receive any money, revenue or services from the federal government,
19 corporations, associations or individuals. All executive branch state
20 agencies shall provide any assistance, information or data needed by the
21 coordinator to perform the duties established under this section, to the
22 extent permitted under state and federal law.

23 (c) The coordinator shall develop and implement a training
24 curriculum which may consist of recorded trainings, which can be
25 adapted for specific state agencies. Such training shall implement best
26 practices and include, but need not be limited to, (1) awareness and
27 compliance with the laws and protocols concerning trafficking of minor
28 children, (2) identification of, access to and provision of services for
29 victims of trafficking, (3) de-escalation and harm reduction techniques
30 when encountering victims of trafficking, and (4) techniques on
31 receiving disclosures of trauma from minor children and adults. The
32 coordinator may offer such training to state agencies, law enforcement
33 agencies, health care facilities, human services agencies, school
34 personnel and nonprofit organizations.

35 (d) The coordinator shall create a database for state agencies to report
36 incidents of human trafficking in the state. Such database shall protect
37 the personal information of any victims of human trafficking and such
38 information shall not be disclosed under the Freedom of Information
39 Act, as defined in section 1-200 of the general statutes.

40 (e) The coordinator shall develop and maintain a state-wide
41 directory, organized by region, that identifies providers of services for
42 victims of human trafficking. The coordinator shall evaluate the
43 availability of such services and identify any gaps in funding or
44 geographic regions where services are lacking.

45 (f) Not later than January 1, 2027, and annually thereafter, the
46 coordinator shall submit a report, in accordance with the provisions of

47 section 11-4a of the general statutes, to the joint standing committees of
48 the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to
49 government oversight, the judiciary and appropriations and the
50 budgets of state agencies. Such report shall include, but need not be
51 limited to, the activities of the coordinator during the prior year and any
52 recommendations for legislation to implement the coordinator's
53 recommendations.

54 Sec. 2. Subsections (a) and (b) of section 46a-170 of the 2026
55 supplement to the general statutes are repealed and the following is
56 substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2026*):

57 (a) There is established a Trafficking in Persons Council that shall be
58 within the Commission on Women, Children, Seniors, Equity and
59 Opportunity for administrative purposes only.

60 (b) The council shall consist of the following members: (1) The Chief
61 State's Attorney, or a designee; (2) the Chief Public Defender, or a
62 designee; (3) the Commissioner of Emergency Services and Public
63 Protection, or the commissioner's designee; (4) the Labor Commissioner,
64 or the commissioner's designee; (5) the Commissioner of Social Services,
65 or the commissioner's designee; (6) the Commissioner of Public Health,
66 or the commissioner's designee; (7) the Commissioner of Mental Health
67 and Addiction Services, or the commissioner's designee; (8) the
68 Commissioner of Children and Families, or the commissioner's
69 designee; (9) the Commissioner of Consumer Protection, or the
70 commissioner's designee; (10) the Commissioner of Developmental
71 Services, or the commissioner's designee; (11) the Commissioner of
72 Transportation, or the commissioner's designee; (12) the director of the
73 Basic Training Division of the Police Officer Standards and Training
74 Council, or the director's designee; (13) the Child Advocate, or the Child
75 Advocate's designee; (14) the Victim Advocate, or the Victim Advocate's
76 designee; (15) a chairperson of the Commission on Women, Children,
77 Seniors, Equity and Opportunity, or the chairperson's designee; (16) the
78 Secretary of the State, or the Secretary's designee; (17) the Human
79 Trafficking Prevention Coordinator; (18) one representative of the Office

80 of Victim Services of the Judicial Branch appointed by the Chief Court
81 Administrator; [(17)] (19) a municipal police chief appointed by the
82 Connecticut Police Chiefs Association, or a designee; [(18)] (20) the
83 Commissioner of Education, or the commissioner's designee; [(19)] (21)
84 a judge of the Superior Court, appointed by the Chief Court
85 Administrator; [(20)] (22) a state's attorney appointed by the Chief
86 State's Attorney; [(21)] (23) a public defender appointed by the Chief
87 Public Defender; and [(22)] (24) sixteen public members appointed as
88 follows: The Governor shall appoint four members, one of whom shall
89 represent victims of commercial exploitation of children, one of whom
90 shall represent sex trafficking victims who are children and one of
91 whom shall represent a coalition of children's advocacy centers and
92 multidisciplinary teams that are dedicated to serving child abuse
93 victims and their families, the president pro tempore of the Senate shall
94 appoint two members, one of whom shall represent the Connecticut
95 Alliance to End Sexual Violence and one of whom shall represent an
96 organization that provides civil legal services to low-income
97 individuals, the speaker of the House of Representatives shall appoint
98 two members, one of whom shall represent the Connecticut Coalition
99 Against Domestic Violence and one of whom shall represent the
100 Connecticut Lodging Association, the majority leader of the Senate shall
101 appoint two members, one of whom shall represent an organization that
102 deals with behavioral health needs of women and children and one of
103 whom shall represent the Connecticut Coalition to End Homelessness,
104 the majority leader of the House of Representatives shall appoint two
105 members, one of whom shall represent an organization that advocates
106 on social justice and human rights issues and one of whom shall
107 represent the Connecticut Criminal Defense Lawyers Association, the
108 minority leader of the Senate shall appoint two members, one of whom
109 shall represent the Connecticut Immigrant and Refugee Coalition and
110 one of whom shall represent massage therapists, and the minority
111 leader of the House of Representatives shall appoint two members, one
112 of whom shall represent the Motor Transport Association of
113 Connecticut, Inc. and one of whom shall represent an organization that
114 works with adult victims of trafficking.

115 Sec. 3. Subsection (b) of section 17a-3 of the general statutes is
116 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October*
117 *1, 2026*):

118 (b) The state-wide program of services shall provide services and
119 placements that are clinically indicated and appropriate to the needs of
120 each child or youth. In furtherance of this purpose, the department shall:
121 (1) Develop a comprehensive program for prevention and treatment of
122 problems experienced by children and youths and provide a flexible,
123 innovative and effective program for the placement, care and treatment
124 of children and youths committed by any court to the department,
125 transferred to the department by other departments, or voluntarily
126 admitted to the department; (2) provide appropriate services to the
127 families of children and youths as needed to achieve the purposes of
128 sections 17a-1 to 17a-26, inclusive, 17a-28 to 17a-49, inclusive, and 17a-
129 51; (3) establish incentive paid work programs for children and youths
130 under the care of the department and the rates to be paid such children
131 and youths for work done in such programs, and may provide
132 allowances to children and youths in the custody of the department; (4)
133 collect, interpret and publish statistics relating to children and youths
134 committed to the department; (5) conduct studies of any program,
135 service or facility developed, operated, contracted for, licensed or
136 supported by the department in order to evaluate its effectiveness; (6)
137 establish staff development and other training and educational
138 programs designed to improve the quality of departmental services and
139 programs, which shall include, but not be limited to, training in the
140 prevention, identification and effects of family violence and the training
141 on human trafficking developed under section 17a-106h, as amended by
142 this act, and may establish educational or training programs for
143 children, youths, parents or other interested persons on any matter
144 related to the promotion of the well-being of children, including, but not
145 limited to, the prevention and treatment of mental illness, substance use
146 disorders and other disabilities in children and youths; (7) require each
147 social worker trainee to complete the training in the prevention,
148 identification and effects of family violence established pursuant to
149 subdivision (6) of this subsection and on and after January 1, 2027, the

150 training on human trafficking developed under section 17a-106h, as
151 amended by this act, prior to being assigned a case load; (8) develop and
152 implement aftercare and follow-up services appropriate to the needs of
153 any child or youth under the care of the department; (9) establish a case
154 audit unit to monitor each regional office's compliance with regulations
155 and procedures; (10) develop and maintain a database listing available
156 community service programs funded by the department; (11) provide
157 outreach and assistance to persons caring for children whose parents are
158 unable to care for such children by informing such persons of programs
159 and benefits for which they may be eligible; and (12) collect data
160 sufficient to identify the housing needs of children served by the
161 department and share such data with the Department of Housing.

162 Sec. 4. Section 17a-106h of the 2026 supplement to the general statutes
163 is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from*
164 *passage*):

165 (a) The Commissioner of Children and Families, in consultation with
166 the Commissioner of Emergency Services and Public Protection, shall
167 develop an initial educational training program and refresher training
168 program for the accurate and prompt identification and reporting of
169 suspected human trafficking.

170 (b) The training program shall include a presentation, developed and
171 approved by said commissioners, that offers awareness of human
172 trafficking issues and guidance to (1) law enforcement personnel, (2)
173 judges of the Superior Court, (3) prosecutors, (4) public defenders and
174 other attorneys who represent criminal defendants, (5) hospital
175 emergency room staff, urgent care facility staff and emergency medical
176 services personnel who have contact with patients, and (6) persons
177 employed by a local or regional board of education or a constituent unit,
178 as defined in section 10a-1, who have contact with students. The
179 Commissioner of Children and Families shall, within available
180 appropriations, provide the training developed pursuant to this section
181 to all employees of the Department of Children and Families and all
182 providers that provide services pursuant to a contract with the

183 department.

184 (c) [Any] (1) Except as provided in subdivision (2) of this subsection,
185 any person described in subsection (b) of this section shall complete the
186 initial educational training program not later than July 1, 2018, and shall
187 complete the refresher training program every three years thereafter,
188 provided any person being employed as such a person shall complete
189 such initial educational training program not later than six months after
190 beginning such employment or July 1, 2018, whichever is later.

191 (2) Each employee of the Department of Children and Families or
192 contracted-with provider shall complete the initial educational training
193 program not later than July 1, 2027, and shall complete the refresher
194 training program every three years thereafter, provided any such
195 employee shall complete such initial educational training program not
196 later than six months after beginning such employment or July 1, 2027,
197 whichever is later, or in the case of a provider, not later than six months
198 after entering into a contract with the department or July 1, 2027,
199 whichever is later.

200 Sec. 5. (NEW) (*Effective October 1, 2026*) (a) The Chief Court
201 Administrator shall, within available appropriations, develop and
202 provide training to all employees of the Court Support Services Division
203 within the Judicial Branch regarding the trafficking of minor children.
204 The training shall include, but need not be limited to, (1) awareness and
205 compliance with the laws and protocols concerning human trafficking,
206 (2) identification of, access to and provision of services for victims of
207 trafficking, (3) de-escalation and harm reduction techniques when
208 encountering victims of human trafficking, and (4) techniques on
209 receiving disclosures of trauma from minor children. The Chief Court
210 Administrator may use the training curriculum developed by the
211 Human Trafficking Prevention Coordinator pursuant to section 1 of this
212 act to satisfy the requirements of this section.

213 (b) Each employee of the division shall complete the initial
214 educational training program not later than July 1, 2027, and shall
215 complete the refresher training program every three years thereafter,

216 provided any such employee shall complete such initial educational
217 training program not later than six months after beginning such
218 employment or July 1, 2027, whichever is later.

219 Sec. 6. (*Effective from passage*) Not later than July 1, 2027, the
220 Commissioner of Children and Families, in conjunction with the
221 appropriate local law enforcement agency, shall assess the security of
222 the placement location, whether public or private, of any child who is
223 placed in out-of-home care by the Department of Children and Families
224 pursuant to an emergency order under subsection (e) of section 17a-101g
225 of the general statutes or an order of temporary custody or an order of
226 commitment under section 46b-129 of the general statutes, and
227 determine whether additional lighting, security cameras or other
228 measures are needed to increase the security of such location. Not later
229 than August 1, 2027, the commissioner shall submit a report containing
230 the results of such assessment, in accordance with the provisions of
231 section 11-4a of the general statutes, to the joint standing committees of
232 the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to children
233 and government oversight.

234 Sec. 7. Subsection (a) of section 46a-13l of the general statutes is
235 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1,*
236 *2026*):

237 (a) The Child Advocate shall:

238 (1) Evaluate the delivery of services to children by state agencies and
239 those entities that provide services to children through funds provided
240 by the state;

241 (2) Review periodically the procedures established by any state
242 agency providing services to children to carry out the provisions of
243 sections 46a-13k to 46a-13p, inclusive, with a view toward the rights of
244 the children and recommend revisions to such procedures;

245 (3) Review complaints of persons concerning the actions of any state
246 or municipal agency providing services to children and of any entity

247 that provides services to children through funds provided by the state,
248 make appropriate referrals and investigate those where the Child
249 Advocate determines that a child or family may be in need of assistance
250 from the Child Advocate or that a systemic issue in the state's provision
251 of services to children is raised by the complaint;

252 (4) Pursuant to an investigation, provide assistance to a child or
253 family who the Child Advocate determines is in need of such assistance
254 including, but not limited to, advocating with an agency, provider or
255 others on behalf of the best interests of the child;

256 (5) Periodically review the facilities and procedures of any and all
257 institutions or residences, public or private, where a juvenile has been
258 placed by any agency or department, including, but not limited to,
259 Specialized Trauma-Informed Treatment Assessment and Reunification
260 Enhancement Plan homes;

261 (6) Recommend changes in state policies concerning children
262 including changes in the system of providing juvenile justice, child care,
263 foster care and treatment;

264 (7) Take all possible action including, but not limited to, conducting
265 programs of public education, undertaking legislative advocacy and
266 making proposals for systemic reform and formal legal action, in order
267 to secure and ensure the legal, civil and special rights of children who
268 reside in this state;

269 (8) Provide training and technical assistance to attorneys
270 representing children and guardians ad litem appointed by the Superior
271 Court;

272 (9) Periodically review the number of special needs children in any
273 foster care or permanent care facility and recommend changes in the
274 policies and procedures for the placement of such children;

275 (10) Serve or designate a person to serve as a member of the child
276 fatality review panel established in subsection (b) of this section;

277 (11) Take appropriate steps to advise the public of the services of the
278 Office of the Child Advocate, the purpose of the office and procedures
279 to contact the office;

280 (12) Prepare an in-depth report on conditions of confinement,
281 including, but not limited to, compliance with section 46a-152,
282 regarding children twenty-one years of age or younger who are held in
283 secure detention or correctional confinement in any facility operated by
284 a state agency. Such report shall be submitted, in accordance with the
285 provisions of section 11-4a, to the joint standing committee of the
286 General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to children not
287 later than March 1, 2017, and every two years thereafter; and

288 (13) Present to the advisory committee, established pursuant to
289 section 46a-13r at least three times each year, a report on the goals of and
290 projects undertaken by the Office of the Child Advocate, within
291 available appropriations, that are consistent with the responsibilities of
292 the Child Advocate.

293 Sec. 8. (*Effective from passage*) (a) There is established a temporary task
294 force to be known as the Human Trafficking Prevention and Response
295 Task Force, which shall (1) be made up of the existing membership of
296 the Statewide Steering Committee of the Regionalized Human
297 Trafficking Recovery Taskforce established by the Division of Criminal
298 Justice, including representation from relevant state agencies, law
299 enforcement, prosecutors, providers that specialize in providing
300 services to trafficking victims, child advocacy centers and
301 multidisciplinary teams, survivor-informed representatives and other
302 members appointed by the Regionalized Human Trafficking Recovery
303 Taskforce as necessary to carry out the purposes of this section, and (2)
304 serve as a public-private partnership to implement the
305 recommendations set forth in the Regionalized Human Trafficking
306 Recovery Taskforce's report entitled "A Blueprint to Strengthen
307 Connecticut's Response to Human Trafficking".

308 (b) Such implementation shall include, but need not be limited to:

309 (1) Advancing development of a permanent state-wide governing
310 body to coordinate the state's anti-trafficking response across agencies
311 and service providers and to create state-wide standards related to such
312 coordination;

313 (2) Creating and implementing a standardized, cross-disciplinary
314 human trafficking training framework and centralized learning
315 management system;

316 (3) Developing and implementing a unified state-wide data collection
317 process based on shared definitions, standardized reporting fields and
318 secure data-sharing protocols;

319 (4) Designing and implementing standardized, trauma-informed
320 screening questions and referral pathways to ensure consistent
321 identification of and response to victims of human trafficking across
322 systems;

323 (5) Expanding and strengthening state-wide service capacity by
324 mapping and verifying existing providers, identifying service and
325 funding gaps and supporting development of a vetted state-wide
326 resource directory; and

327 (6) Reviewing trafficking trends, identifying systemic gaps and
328 developing policy recommendations to be submitted to the Trafficking
329 in Persons Council, established pursuant to section 46a-170 of the
330 general statutes, as amended by this act, consistent with the work
331 undertaken pursuant to this subsection.

332 (c) The task force shall not replace or supersede the statutory
333 authority of Trafficking in Persons Council, established pursuant to
334 section 46a-170 of the general statutes, as amended by this act.

335 (d) Not later than January 1, 2027, and annually thereafter until three
336 years after the effective date of this section or the submission of a final
337 report, whichever is later, the task force shall submit a report, in
338 accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes,
339 to the joint standing committees of the General Assembly having

340 cognizance of matters relating to government oversight and the
341 judiciary. Such report shall include any activities of the task force during
342 the year preceding the report, and the final report shall detail the
343 proposed structure, authority and funding of the permanent state-wide
344 governing body described in subdivision (1) of subsection (b) of this
345 section. The task force shall terminate on the date that it submits such
346 final report.

347 Sec. 9. Subsection (b) of section 17a-106a of the general statutes is
348 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1,*
349 *2026*):

350 (b) The Commissioner of Children and Families, as department head
351 of the lead agency, and the appropriate state's attorney [may] shall
352 establish multidisciplinary teams for the purposes of (1) reviewing
353 particular cases or particular types of cases, (2) coordinating the
354 intervention in and prevention of child abuse or neglect or trafficking of
355 children and the treatment of abused, neglected or trafficked children in
356 each judicial district, (3) reviewing selected cases of child abuse or
357 neglect or trafficking of children, (4) advancing and coordinating the
358 prompt investigation of suspected cases of child abuse or neglect or
359 trafficking of children, (5) reducing the trauma experienced by alleged
360 victims of such abuse or neglect or trafficking and, (6) ensuring the
361 treatment of abused, neglected or trafficked children and the protection
362 of such children and their families. The head of the local law
363 enforcement agency or such head's designee may request the assistance
364 of the Division of State Police within the Department of Emergency
365 Services and Public Protection in order to accomplish such purposes.

366 Sec. 10. Section 17a-106f of the general statutes is repealed and the
367 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2026*):

368 (a) The Commissioner of Children and Families may: (1) Provide
369 child welfare services for any minor child residing in the state who is
370 identified by the Department of Children and Families as a victim of
371 trafficking, as defined in section 46a-170, as amended by this act; and (2)
372 provide appropriate services to a minor child residing in the state who

373 the Department of Children and Families reasonably believes may be a
 374 victim of trafficking in order to safeguard the welfare of such minor
 375 child. For purposes of this section and section 17a-106a, as amended by
 376 this act, "minor child" means any person under eighteen years of age.

377 (b) The Commissioner of Children and Families [may] shall, within
 378 available appropriations, provide training to law enforcement officials
 379 regarding the trafficking of minor children. The training shall include,
 380 but not be limited to, (1) awareness and compliance with the laws and
 381 protocols concerning trafficking of minor children, (2) identification of,
 382 access to and provision of services for minor children who are victims
 383 of trafficking, and (3) any other services the department deems
 384 necessary to carry out the provisions of this section and section 17a-106a,
 385 as amended by this act.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	July 1, 2026	New section
Sec. 2	July 1, 2026	46a-170(a) and (b)
Sec. 3	October 1, 2026	17a-3(b)
Sec. 4	from passage	17a-106h
Sec. 5	October 1, 2026	New section
Sec. 6	from passage	New section
Sec. 7	July 1, 2026	46a-131(a)
Sec. 8	from passage	New section
Sec. 9	July 1, 2026	17a-106a(b)
Sec. 10	July 1, 2026	17a-106f

Statement of Legislative Commissioners:

In Section 1(b), a reference to "section 46a-170" and "to the extent permitted under state and federal law" were added for clarity.

GOS Joint Favorable Subst.

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.

OFA Fiscal Note

State Impact:

Agency Affected	Fund-Effect	FY 27 \$	FY 28 \$
Policy & Mgmt., Off.	GF - Cost	382,560	205,470
Children & Families, Dept.	GF - Cost	Up to 375,000	Up to 125,000
State Comptroller - Fringe Benefits ¹	GF - Cost	54,370	54,370
Children & Families, Dept.	GF - Potential Cost	Significant	Significant

Note: GF=General Fund

Municipal Impact:

Municipalities	Effect	FY 27 \$	FY 28 \$
Various Municipal Police Departments	STATE MANDATE ² - Potential Cost	See Below	None

Explanation

The bill makes various changes related to human trafficking prevention efforts, resulting in a cost to the General Fund of at least \$811,930 in FY 27 and \$384,840 annually thereafter.

Section 1 creates a human trafficking prevention coordinator

¹The fringe benefit costs for most state employees are budgeted centrally in accounts administered by the Comptroller. The estimated active employee fringe benefit cost associated with most personnel changes is 41.82% of payroll in FY 27.

² State mandate is defined in Sec. 2-32b(2) of the Connecticut General Statutes, "state mandate" means any state initiated constitutional, statutory or executive action that requires a local government to establish, expand or modify its activities in such a way as to necessitate additional expenditures from local revenues.

position with the Office of Policy and Management (OPM) which results in a cost of \$132,560 in FY 27 and an annual cost of \$130,470 beginning in FY 28 to OPM and a corresponding cost of \$54,370 in fringe benefits annually to the Office of the State Comptroller beginning in FY 27. The bill establishes various requirements that this position must meet.

The bill also results in a one-time cost to OPM of \$250,000 in FY 27 for a consultant and an annual cost of \$75,000 beginning in FY 28 associated with building and maintaining a database.

Section 4 requires all Department of Children and Families (DCF) employees and its contracted providers to complete human trafficking educational training, resulting in a cost of up to \$125,000 in FY 27 and annually thereafter to either hire one new training staff position or contract with an external training provider. For current agency staff, initial training must be completed by the end of FY 27, and refresher trainings every three years thereafter. New staff must complete initial training no later than six months after employment.

Section 6 requires DCF, by July 1, 2027, to assess location security of any child placed in out-of-home care³ resulting in a one-time cost to DCF of \$250,000 in FY 27 to hire a security contractor to conduct the assessment. If additional lighting, security cameras, or other measures are determined necessary to increase the security of certain placement locations, the bill provides no instruction or funding for further action. There are potential significant costs to the agency if they were to be responsible for identified security improvements, as well as the potential to incur significant liabilities if they fail to address them.

This section additionally requires the security assessment to be performed in conjunction with local law enforcement agencies, resulting in potential costs to various municipal police departments in FY 27 only, which will depend on the number of such locations within a given municipality, as well as whether police departments incur overtime or

³ DCF has approximately 80 residential facilities that provide out-of-home placement opportunities and most are privately run. There are also approximately 2,000 families licensed as foster/kinship caregivers serving approximately 3,000 children.

other staffing costs associated with conducting these assessments.

The Out Years

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

OLR Bill Analysis**sHB 5476*****AN ACT CONCERNING OVERSIGHT OF EFFORTS TO PREVENT HUMAN TRAFFICKING.*****SUMMARY**

This bill makes several statutory changes related to preventing human trafficking in the state.

First, the bill creates a human trafficking prevention coordinator position within the Office of Policy and Management (OPM) to coordinate efforts between executive branch agencies and law enforcement to prevent human trafficking in the state. It requires all executive branch agencies to give any information, data, or assistance the coordinator needs for this purpose, as long as state or federal law permits it.

The bill increases training on human trafficking laws, available services, and victim interaction for certain professionals. Among other things, it (1) requires, instead of allows, the Department of Children and Families (DCF) to provide training for law enforcement and (2) requires DCF and the chief court administrator to train their employees and, for DCF, contracted-with service providers. These trainings must all be done within available appropriations.

The bill also does the following:

1. creates a temporary task force to work and report on implementing recommendations from the Regionalized Human Trafficking Recovery Taskforce, including setting up a proposed structure, authority, and funding for a permanent statewide entity that coordinates anti-trafficking response across agencies and service providers;

2. requires, instead of allows, DCF and the state's attorneys to set up multidisciplinary teams to, among other things, review cases, coordinate intervention and prevention, and ensure treatment of abused, neglected, or trafficked children (see BACKGROUND) (§ 9);
3. increases the Trafficking in Persons Council's membership by adding the new human trafficking prevention coordinator and the secretary of the state or her designee (see BACKGROUND) (§ 2); and
4. requires DCF and local law enforcement to assess the security of out-of-home care locations where children are placed due to certain court orders.

Lastly, it makes several minor, technical, and conforming changes, including specifying that the child advocate's existing responsibility for reviewing where children are placed by a state agency or department includes reviewing Specialized Trauma-Informed Treatment Assessment and Reunification (STTAR) Enhancement Plan homes (§ 7). (STTAR is a short-term group home program for children DCF removes from their homes due to high-risk situations.)

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2026, except the DCF employee and service provider training, security assessment, and temporary task force provisions are effective upon passage, and the provisions on Judicial Branch employee training and DCF's powers and duties are effective October 1, 2026.

§ 1 — HUMAN TRAFFICKING PREVENTION COORDINATOR

Position Appointment

Under the bill, the OPM secretary appoints the human trafficking prevention coordinator, who must have experience working with human trafficking victims.

Responsibilities

General. The bill tasks the coordinator with (1) comprehensive

planning efforts against human trafficking in the state and (2) coordinating executive branch agency activities and programs to prevent human trafficking. It requires the coordinator to work with the Trafficking in Persons Council and other multidisciplinary partners to align statewide prevention, identification, and response activities (see BACKGROUND).

The bill authorizes the coordinator to (1) enter into necessary contracts, in accordance with established procedures, and (2) receive money, revenue, or services from the federal government, corporations, associations, or individuals, unless the law provides otherwise.

Training. The bill requires the coordinator to develop and implement a training curriculum that is adaptable for specific state agencies. The curriculum must implement best practices and may consist of recordings.

Under the bill, the training must at least include the following:

1. awareness of and compliance with the laws and protocols on trafficking minor children;
2. how to identify, get access to, and provide services for trafficking victims; and
3. techniques for (a) de-escalating and reducing harm when encountering victims and (b) receiving trauma disclosures from minor children and adults.

The bill allows the coordinator to offer the training to state agencies, law enforcement agencies, health care facilities, human services agencies, school personnel, and nonprofits.

Database and Directory. The bill requires the coordinator to create a database for state agencies to report human trafficking incidents. Under the bill, the database must protect victims' personal information, and this information is exempt from disclosure under state freedom of information laws.

The bill also requires the coordinator to develop and maintain a statewide directory of service providers for human trafficking victims. The directory must be organized by region, and the coordinator must evaluate the services' availability and identify any funding gaps or regions lacking services.

Reporting. Under the bill, the coordinator must, beginning by January 1, 2027, annually submit a report to the Appropriations, Government Oversight, and Judiciary committees that (1) describes the coordinator's activities from the prior year and (2) includes any recommendations, including for implementing legislation.

§§ 3-5 & 10 — AGENCY TRAINING REQUIREMENTS

DCF

Existing law requires DCF, with the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection, to develop initial and refresher training programs on accurately and promptly identifying and reporting human trafficking. The bill requires DCF, within available appropriations, to give this training to all its employees and its contracted-with service providers. It correspondingly explicitly includes this training in DCF's listed statutory responsibilities for developing and training staff.

Under the bill, each employee and service provider must complete (1) an initial training program by the later of July 1, 2027, or six months after beginning their employment or the applicable contract date, and (2) refresher training every three years.

Judicial Branch

The bill requires the chief court administrator, within available appropriations, to develop and provide training for all Judicial Branch Court Support Services Division employees on the trafficking of minor children.

Under the bill, the trainings must at least include:

1. awareness of and compliance with the laws and protocols on trafficking;

2. how to identify, get access to, and provide services for trafficking victims; and
3. techniques for (a) de-escalating and reducing harm when encountering victims and (b) receiving trauma disclosures.

The bill allows for the use of the human trafficking prevention coordinator's training curriculum described above to meet these requirements (see § 1).

Each employee must complete (1) an initial training program by the later of July 1, 2027, or six months after beginning their employment or the applicable contract date, and (2) refresher training every three years.

Law Enforcement

The bill requires, instead of allows, DCF to provide training to law enforcement officials on the trafficking of minor children. By law, unchanged by the bill, this training must be done within available appropriations and at least include information about the laws and protocols on trafficking minor children and how to identify, get access to, and provide services for victims.

§ 6 — OUT-OF-HOME PLACEMENT SECURITY ASSESSMENT

The bill requires the DCF commissioner, by July 1, 2027, to assess the security of the placement location of any child DCF places in out-of-home care due to an emergency order, temporary custody order, or commitment order.

Under the bill, the assessment is for determining if additional lighting, security cameras, or other measures are needed to increase security. It must be done in conjunction with the appropriate local law enforcement agency.

The commissioner must submit a report to the Children and Government Oversight committees with the assessment's results by August 1, 2027.

§ 8 — TEMPORARY HUMAN TRAFFICKING TASK FORCE

The bill creates the temporary Human Trafficking Prevention and Response Task Force to implement the recommendations of “A Blueprint to Strengthen Connecticut’s Response to Human Trafficking” from the Regionalized Human Trafficking Recovery Taskforce (RHTRT; see BACKGROUND).

Under the bill, this temporary task force must consist of the RHTRT’s statewide steering committee’s existing members, who represent state agencies, law enforcement, prosecutors, service providers, child advocacy centers, multidisciplinary teams, and survivors, and others RHTRT appoints. The bill specifies that it does not take over any of the Trafficking in Persons Council’s responsibilities.

Purpose

To implement the recommendations, the bill requires the task force to work on the following:

1. advancing development of a permanent statewide entity to coordinate anti-trafficking response across agencies and service providers, including associated standards;
2. creating and implementing a standard, cross-disciplinary training framework and centralized learning management system;
3. developing and implementing a unified statewide data collection process with shared definitions, standard reporting fields, and secure data-sharing protocols;
4. designing and implementing standard, trauma-informed screening questions and referral methods so that there is consistent identification of and response to victims across systems;
5. expanding and strengthening statewide service capacity by mapping and verifying providers, identifying service and funding gaps, and supporting the creation of a vetted resource

directory; and

6. reviewing trafficking trends, identifying systemic gaps, and developing policy recommendations for submission to the Trafficking in Persons Council.

Reporting and Work Completion

By January 1, 2027, the task force must submit to the Government Oversight and Judiciary committees its first report of its activities from the prior year. It must continue with these reports each year until the later of (1) three years after the bill's passage or (2) when it submits its final report.

Under the bill, the final report must set out the proposed structure, authority, and funding of the permanent statewide entity to coordinate anti-trafficking response. The task force ends on the date it submits this last report.

BACKGROUND

Related Bill

sHB 5004 (File 103), favorably reported by the Children Committee, requires DCF to develop and provide a mandatory training program for its employees about human trafficking and how to interact with victims (§ 8).

Multidisciplinary Teams for Child Abuse, Neglect, or Trafficking

Under current law, the multidisciplinary teams that DCF and state's attorneys may establish include various professionals, including DCF, law enforcement, a victim advocate, and a forensic interviewer. These teams' purposes are to, among other things, (1) protect abused, neglected, or trafficked children and their families and (2) advance and coordinate investigations of alleged abuse, neglect, and trafficking (CGS 17a-106a).

Regionalized Human Trafficking Recovery Task Force

RHTRT is a greater-Hartford area partnership to combat trafficking, bringing together law enforcement, prosecutors, advocates, and service

providers to investigate cases, help victims, and increase prevention efforts.

Trafficking in Persons Council

By law, among other things, the Trafficking in Persons Council coordinates human trafficking data collection and analysis and consults with government and non-government organizations in developing recommendations to strengthen efforts to prevent trafficking, protect and help victims, and prosecute traffickers (CGS § 46a-170).

COMMITTEE ACTION

Government Oversight Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 12 Nay 0 (03/17/2026)