



Senate

General Assembly

File No. 492

February Session, 2026

Substitute Senate Bill No. 137

Senate, April 8, 2026

The Committee on Education reported through SEN. MCCRORY, D. of the 2nd Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the Senate, that the substitute bill ought to pass.

AN ACT IMPLEMENTING THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE OFFICE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD.

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

1 Section 1. Subsection (a) of section 10-16z of the 2026 supplement to
2 the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu
3 thereof (*Effective July 1, 2026*):

4 (a) There is established the Early Childhood Cabinet. The cabinet
5 shall consist of: (1) The Commissioner of Early Childhood, or the
6 commissioner's designee, (2) the Commissioner of Education, or the
7 commissioner's designee, (3) the Commissioner of Social Services, or the
8 commissioner's designee, (4) the chancellor of the Connecticut State
9 Colleges and Universities, or the chancellor's designee, (5) the
10 Commissioner of Public Health, or the commissioner's designee, (6) the
11 Commissioner of Developmental Services, or the commissioner's
12 designee, (7) the Commissioner of Children and Families, or the
13 commissioner's designee, (8) the executive director of the Commission
14 on Women, Children, Seniors, Equity and Opportunity or the executive
15 director's designee, (9) the project director of the Connecticut Head Start

16 State Collaboration Office, (10) a parent or guardian of a child who
17 attends or attended a school readiness program appointed by the
18 minority leader of the House of Representatives, (11) a representative of
19 a local provider of early childhood education appointed by the minority
20 leader of the Senate, (12) a representative of the Connecticut Family
21 Resource Center Alliance appointed by the majority leader of the House
22 of Representatives, (13) a representative of a state-funded child care
23 center appointed by the majority leader of the Senate, (14) two
24 appointed by the speaker of the House of Representatives, one of whom
25 is a member of a board of education for a town designated as an alliance
26 district, as defined in section 10-262u, and one of whom is a parent who
27 has a child attending a school in an educational reform district, as
28 defined in section 10-262u, (15) two appointed by the president pro
29 tempore of the Senate, one of whom is a representative of an association
30 of early education and child care providers and one of whom is a
31 representative of a public elementary school with a prekindergarten
32 program, (16) ~~ten~~ eleven appointed by the Governor, one of whom is
33 a representative of the Connecticut Head Start Association, one of
34 whom is a representative of the business community in this state, one of
35 whom is a representative of the philanthropic community in this state,
36 one of whom is a representative of the Connecticut State Employees
37 Association, one of whom is an administrator of the child care
38 development block grant pursuant to the Child Care and Development
39 Block Grant Act of 1990, one of whom is responsible for administering
40 grants received under Section 1419 of Part B of the Individuals with
41 Disabilities Education Act, 20 USC 1419, as amended from time to time,
42 one of whom is responsible for administering the provisions of Title I of
43 the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, 20 USC 6301 et seq., one
44 of whom is responsible for coordinating education services to children
45 and youth who are homeless, one of whom is a licensed family child
46 care home provider and a member of a staffed family child care network
47 identified by the Commissioner of Early Childhood, ~~and~~ one of whom
48 is a parent recommended by a parent advisory group that has been
49 appointed by the Commissioner of Early Childhood, and a physician
50 licensed pursuant to chapter 370, who is a pediatrician, (17) the

51 Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management, or the secretary's
52 designee, (18) the Lieutenant Governor, or the Lieutenant Governor's
53 designee, (19) the Commissioner of Housing, or the commissioner's
54 designee, (20) the Commissioner of Mental Health and Addiction
55 Services, or the commissioner's designee, and (21) the executive director
56 of the Connecticut Library Consortium, or a cooperating library service
57 unit as defined in section 11-9e, or the executive director's designee.

58 Sec. 2. Subsection (a) of section 10-506 of the general statutes is
59 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1,*
60 *2026*):

61 (a) For the fiscal year ending June 30, 2025, and each fiscal year
62 thereafter, the Office of Early Childhood, in consultation with the
63 Department of Education, shall design and administer the Connecticut
64 Smart Start competitive grant program to provide grants to local and
65 regional boards of education for capital and operating expenses related
66 to establishing or expanding a preschool program under the jurisdiction
67 of the board of education for the town. A local or regional board of
68 education may submit an application to the office, in accordance with
69 the provisions of subsection (b) of this section, and may receive (1) a
70 grant for capital expenses in an amount not to exceed seventy-five
71 thousand dollars per classroom for costs related to the renovation of an
72 existing public school to accommodate the establishment or expansion
73 of a preschool program, and (2) an annual grant for operating expenses
74 (A) in an amount not to exceed [~~five~~] six thousand five hundred dollars
75 per child served by such grant, or (B) in an amount not to exceed
76 [~~seventy-five~~] ninety-seven thousand five hundred dollars for each
77 preschool classroom. Each local or regional board of education that
78 establishes or expands a preschool program under this section shall be
79 eligible to receive an annual grant for operating expenses for a period of
80 five years, provided such preschool program meets standards
81 established by the Commissioner of Early Childhood. Such local or
82 regional board of education may submit an application for renewal of
83 such grant to the office.

84 Sec. 3. Subdivision (3) of section 19a-420 of the 2026 supplement to
85 the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu
86 thereof (*Effective July 1, 2026*):

87 (3) "Day camp" means any youth camp which is established,
88 conducted or maintained during daylight hours for [at least three days
89 a] (A) three or more hours per day for three or more days per week with
90 the campers [eating and] sleeping at home, [except for one meal per day]
91 or (B) more than one session per day for two or more hours per session
92 if children are permitted to enroll in more than one session per day, but
93 does not include programs operated by a municipal agency;

94 Sec. 4. (NEW) (*Effective October 1, 2026*) (a) For purposes of this
95 section, "licensee" means any person licensed pursuant to section 19a-
96 421 of the general statutes and "youth camp" has the same meaning as
97 provided in section 19a-420 of the general statutes, as amended by this
98 act.

99 (b) Each licensee shall provide written contact information for the
100 licensee's youth camp, including the name, address and telephone
101 number of the youth camp, to the Office of Early Childhood. Each
102 licensee shall verify and update, as appropriate, such contact
103 information.

104 (c) The Office of Early Childhood shall share, in accordance with a
105 memorandum of understanding or other agreement, any information
106 collected pursuant to subsection (b) of this section with the Department
107 of Emergency Services and Public Protection for use in an emergency
108 notification system, as defined in section 28-25 of the general statutes,
109 that notifies licensees of an emergency situation in the vicinity of a youth
110 camp that may endanger the safety or welfare of the children at such
111 youth camp. Such emergency situation may include, but need not be
112 limited to, a fire, a criminal act, an emergency or an act of nature such
113 as an earthquake, a tornado, a hurricane or a storm.

114 Sec. 5. Section 19a-87e of the general statutes is repealed and the
115 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2026*):

116 (a) The Commissioner of Early Childhood may (1) refuse to license
117 under section 19a-87b, a person to own, conduct, operate or maintain a
118 family child care home, as defined in section 19a-77, (2) refuse to
119 approve under section 19a-87b, a person to act as an assistant or
120 substitute staff member in a family child care home, as defined in section
121 19a-77, or (3) suspend or revoke the license or approval or take any other
122 action that may be set forth in regulation that may be adopted pursuant
123 to section 19a-79 if the person who owns, conducts, maintains or
124 operates the family child care home, the person who acts as an assistant
125 or substitute staff member in a family child care home, a person
126 employed in such family child care home in a position connected with
127 the provision of care to a child receiving child care services or a
128 household member, as defined in subsection (c) of section 19a-87b, who
129 is [sixteen] eighteen years of age or older and resides therein, has been
130 convicted, in this state or any other state of a felony, as defined in section
131 53a-25, involving the use, attempted use or threatened use of physical
132 force against another person, or has a criminal record in this state or any
133 other state that the commissioner reasonably believes renders the
134 person unsuitable to own, conduct, operate or maintain or be employed
135 by a family child care home, or act as an assistant or substitute staff
136 member in a family child care home, or if such persons or a household
137 member has been convicted in this state or any other state of cruelty to
138 persons under section 53-20, injury or risk of injury to or impairing
139 morals of children under section 53-21, abandonment of children under
140 the age of six years under section 53-23, or any felony where the victim
141 of the felony is a child under eighteen years of age, a violation of section
142 53a-70b of the general statutes, revision of 1958, revised to January 1,
143 2019, or section 53a-70, 53a-70a, 53a-71, 53a-72a, 53a-72b or 53a-73a,
144 illegal manufacture, distribution, sale, prescription, dispensing or
145 administration under section 21a-277 or 21a-278, or illegal possession
146 under section 21a-279, or if such person, a person who acts as assistant
147 or substitute staff member in a family child care home or a person
148 employed in such family child care home in a position connected with
149 the provision of care to a child receiving child care services, either fails
150 to substantially comply with the regulations adopted pursuant to

151 section 19a-87b, or conducts, operates or maintains the home in a
152 manner which endangers the health, safety and welfare of the children
153 receiving child care services. Any refusal of a license or approval
154 pursuant to this section shall be rendered in accordance with the
155 provisions of sections 46a-79 to 46a-81, inclusive. Any person whose
156 license or approval has been revoked pursuant to this section shall be
157 ineligible to apply for a license or approval for a period of one year from
158 the effective date of revocation.

159 (b) When the commissioner intends to suspend or revoke a license or
160 approval or take any other action against a license or approval set forth
161 in regulation adopted pursuant to section 19a-79, the commissioner
162 shall notify the licensee or approved staff member in writing of the
163 commissioner's intended action. The licensee or approved staff member
164 may, if aggrieved by such intended action, make application for a
165 hearing in writing over the licensee's or approved staff member's
166 signature to the commissioner. The licensee or approved staff member
167 shall state in the application in plain language the reasons why the
168 licensee or approved staff member claims to be aggrieved. The
169 application shall be delivered to the commissioner within thirty days of
170 the licensee's or approved staff member's receipt of notification of the
171 intended action. The commissioner shall thereupon hold a hearing
172 within sixty days from receipt of such application and shall, at least ten
173 days prior to the date of such hearing, mail a notice, giving the time and
174 place of the hearing, to the licensee or approved staff member. The
175 provisions of this subsection shall not apply to the denial of an initial
176 application for a license or approval under section 19a-87b, provided the
177 commissioner shall notify the applicant of any such denial and the
178 reasons for such denial by mailing written notice to the applicant at the
179 applicant's address shown on the license or approval application.

180 (c) Any person who applies or is licensed to conduct, operate or
181 maintain a family child care home or approved to act as an assistant or
182 substitute staff member in a family child care home shall notify the
183 commissioner of any conviction or placement on the child abuse and
184 neglect registry, established pursuant to section 17a-101k, of the owner,

185 conductor, operator or maintainer of the family child care home or of
186 any household member, as defined in subsection (c) of section 19a-87b,
187 who is [sixteen] eighteen years of age or older, or any person employed
188 in such family child care home in a position connected with the
189 provision of care to a child receiving child care services, [of a crime
190 which affects the commissioner's discretion under subsection (a) of this
191 section,] immediately upon obtaining knowledge of such conviction or
192 placement on the registry. Failure to comply with the notification
193 requirement of this subsection may result in the suspension or
194 revocation of the license or approval or the taking of any other action
195 against a license or approval set forth in regulation adopted pursuant to
196 section 19a-79 and shall subject the licensee or approved staff member
197 to a civil penalty of not more than one hundred dollars per day for each
198 day after the person obtained knowledge of the conviction or placement
199 on the registry.

200 (d) It shall be a class A misdemeanor for any person seeking
201 employment in a position connected with the provision of care to a child
202 receiving family child care home services to make a false written
203 statement regarding prior criminal convictions pursuant to a form
204 bearing notice to the effect that such false statements are punishable,
205 which statement such person does not believe to be true and is intended
206 to mislead the prospective employer.

207 (e) Any person having reasonable cause to believe that a family child
208 care home, as defined in section 19a-77, is operating without a current
209 and valid license or in violation of the regulations adopted under section
210 19a-87b or in a manner which may pose a potential danger to the health,
211 welfare and safety of a child receiving child care services, may report
212 such information to the Office of Early Childhood. The office shall
213 investigate any report or complaint received pursuant to this subsection.
214 The name of the person making the report or complaint shall not be
215 disclosed unless (1) such person consents to such disclosure, (2) a
216 judicial or administrative proceeding results from such report or
217 complaint, or (3) a license action pursuant to subsection (a) of this
218 section results from such report or complaint. All records obtained by

219 the office in connection with any such investigation shall not be subject
220 to the provisions of section 1-210 for a period of thirty days from the
221 date of the petition or other event initiating such investigation, or until
222 such time as the investigation is terminated pursuant to a withdrawal
223 or other informal disposition or until a hearing is convened pursuant to
224 chapter 54, whichever is earlier. A formal statement of charges issued
225 by the office shall be subject to the provisions of section 1-210 from the
226 time that it is served or mailed to the respondent. Records which are
227 otherwise public records shall not be deemed confidential merely
228 because they have been obtained in connection with an investigation
229 under this section.

230 (f) If the commissioner finds that public health, safety or welfare
231 imperatively requires emergency action, and incorporates a finding to
232 that effect in his or her order, the commissioner may order summary
233 suspension or summary probation of a license issued under section 19a-
234 87b pending proceedings for revocation or other action. These
235 proceedings shall be promptly instituted and determined.

236 Sec. 6. Section 10-530 of the general statutes is repealed and the
237 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2026*):

238 (a) As used in this section:

239 (1) "Child care facility" means a "child care center", "group child care
240 home" or "family child care home" that provides "child care services",
241 each as described in section 19a-77, or any provider of child care services
242 under the child care subsidy program established pursuant to section
243 17b-749;

244 (2) "Child care services provider or staff member" means any person
245 who is (A) a licensee, employee, volunteer, [or alternate] staff, program
246 staff, assistant, substitute staff member or household member of a child
247 care facility, (B) a family child care provider, or (C) [any other] a person
248 who provides child care services under the child care subsidy program
249 established pursuant to section 17b-749 but does not include a person
250 who is providing child care services under the child care subsidy

251 program (i) exclusively to children with whom such person is related,
252 and (ii) without being issued a license to provide child care services by
253 the Office of Early Childhood; [and]

254 (3) "Family child care provider" means any person who provides
255 child care services under the child care subsidy program established
256 pursuant to section 17b-749 (A) in a family child care home, as defined
257 in section 19a-77, or (B) in a home not requiring a license pursuant to
258 subdivision (4) of subsection (b) of section 19a-77;

259 (4) "Licensee" means any person licensed under section 19a-80 or 19a-
260 87b to provide child care services;

261 (5) "Employee" means any person paid to work for a family child care
262 provider as a substitute staff member or assistant or as staff or program
263 staff in a child care center or group child care home;

264 (6) "Volunteer" means any person who is not an employee of a child
265 care center or group child care home and whose activities involve the
266 direct care of children or the opportunity for unsupervised access to
267 children;

268 (7) "Staff" means any person employed by a child care center or group
269 child care home, sixteen years of age or older, who is not responsible for
270 providing direct care of children or does not have unsupervised access
271 to children;

272 (8) "Program staff" means any person employed by a child care center
273 or group child care home, sixteen years of age or older, responsible for
274 the direct care of children;

275 (9) "Assistant" means any person who has been approved pursuant
276 to section 19a-87b to provide child care services in a family child care
277 home;

278 (10) "Substitute staff member" means any person who has been
279 approved pursuant to section 19a-87b to provide child care services in a
280 family child care home; and

281 (11) "Household member" means any person, other than the licensee,
282 who is eighteen years of age or older and resides in the family child care
283 home.

284 (b) The comprehensive background checks required pursuant to
285 subsection (c) of section 19a-80, subsection (c) of section 19a-87b and
286 subsection (a) of section 17b-749k, shall be conducted at least once every
287 five years for each child care services provider or staff member [in
288 accordance with the provisions of 45 CFR 98.43, as amended from time
289 to time] and shall include a national and state criminal history records
290 check conducted in accordance with section 29-17a, a check of the state
291 and national sex offender registries, a check of the state child abuse or
292 neglect registry maintained by the Department of Children and Families
293 pursuant to section 17a-101k, and a check of the child abuse or neglect
294 registry for any other state in which such child care services provider or
295 staff member resided in the previous five years.

296 (c) Any person who applies for a position at a child care facility in the
297 state shall not be required to submit to such comprehensive background
298 checks if such person (1) is an employee of a child care facility in the
299 state, or has not been separated from employment as a child care
300 services provider or staff member in the state for a period of more than
301 one hundred eighty days, and (2) has successfully completed such
302 comprehensive background checks in the previous five years. Nothing
303 in this section prohibits the Commissioner of Early Childhood from
304 requiring that a person applying for a position as a child care services
305 provider or staff member submit to comprehensive background checks
306 more than once during a five-year period.

307 (d) Any person required to submit to comprehensive background
308 checks pursuant to subsection (c) of section 19a-80, subsection (c) of
309 section 19a-87b and subsection (a) of section 17b-749k, may submit a
310 request, in writing, to the Commissioner of Early Childhood for a
311 waiver of the requirement to submit fingerprints. Such request shall
312 include such person's name and date of birth, and evidence that such
313 person is unable to satisfy such fingerprints requirement due to a

314 medical condition, including, but not limited to, a birth defect, physical
 315 deformity, skin condition or psychiatric condition. Upon the granting of
 316 a waiver to a person under this subsection, the Office of Early Childhood
 317 shall conduct a state criminal history records check of such person by
 318 using the name and date of birth that was provided in the request for a
 319 waiver by such person.

320 Sec. 7. Subsection (b) of section 19a-87a of the general statutes is
 321 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1,*
 322 *2026*):

323 (b) Any person who is licensed to conduct, operate or maintain a
 324 child care center or group child care home shall notify the commissioner
 325 of any criminal conviction or placement on the child abuse and neglect
 326 registry, established pursuant to section 17a-101k, of the owner,
 327 conductor, operator or maintainer of the center or home or of any person
 328 employed therein in a position connected with the provision of care to
 329 a child receiving child care services, immediately upon obtaining
 330 knowledge of the conviction or placement on the registry. Failure to
 331 comply with the notification requirement may result in the suspension
 332 or revocation of the license or the imposition of any action set forth in
 333 regulation, and shall subject the licensed person to a civil penalty of not
 334 more than one hundred dollars per day for each day after the person
 335 obtained knowledge of the conviction or placement on the registry.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	July 1, 2026	10-16z(a)
Sec. 2	July 1, 2026	10-506(a)
Sec. 3	July 1, 2026	19a-420(3)
Sec. 4	October 1, 2026	New section
Sec. 5	July 1, 2026	19a-87e
Sec. 6	July 1, 2026	10-530
Sec. 7	July 1, 2026	19a-87a(b)

ED 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 \$
Early Childhood, Off.	GF - Cost	See Below	See Below
Resources of the General Fund	GF - Revenue Gain	See Below	See Below

Note: GF=General Fund

Municipal Impact:

Municipalities	Effect	FY 27 \$	FY 28 \$
Local and Regional School Districts	Revenue Gain	See Below	See Below

Explanation

Section 2 results in a revenue gain to municipalities and regional boards of education (BOEs) related to increasing Smart Start grants to \$6,500 per child (or \$97,500 per 15-student classroom). The overall Smart Start appropriation within the Office of Early Childhood (OEC) remains unchanged.

For reference, under PA 25-198 (the FY 26–FY 27 biennial budget), funding for the program will increase by \$3 million in FY 27, bringing the total appropriation to \$6.3 million. Although the bill does not change the total appropriation, historical spending trends suggest that municipalities and regional boards of education will receive higher grant awards due to the increased grant allowance limits.

Section 3 of the bill results in both a cost and revenue gain to the state as a result of changing the definition of "day camp" to align more closely

with the definition of "youth camp", which will require licensure through the Office of Early Childhood (OEC). Both the total cost to OEC and the resulting revenue gain will depend on the number of new day camps seeking licensure under the bill's revised definition.

For reference, camp fees are set at \$315 annually for non-profits and \$815 for for-profit camps.

The bill makes other clarifying, technical and conforming changes that do not have a fiscal impact.

The Out Years

The annualized ongoing fiscal impact identified above would continue into the future subject to the OEC youth camp licensure fee schedule.

OLR Bill Analysis**sSB 137****AN ACT IMPLEMENTING THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE OFFICE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD.**

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Requires child care providers to notify OEC if they have knowledge that a worker at their facility is listed on the child abuse and neglect registry; makes related conforming changes

[BACKGROUND](#)

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2026, except that the provision on the

emergency notification system takes effect October 1, 2026.

§ 1 — NEW MEMBER TO EARLY CHILDHOOD CABINET

Adds a licensed pediatrician, appointed by the governor, to the Early Childhood Cabinet

By law, the Early Childhood Cabinet advises the Office of Early Childhood (OEC) commissioner and annually develops reports required under the federal Head Start program. The bill adds a licensed pediatrician, appointed by the governor, to the cabinet, which brings the cabinet membership to 33.

§ 2 — SMART START GRANT RATE INCREASE

Increases the maximum per child and per classroom grant a school board can receive under the Smart Start program

By law, OEC, in consultation with the state Department of Education, administers the Connecticut Smart Start competitive grant program to give school boards grants for capital and operating expenses to establish or expand preschool programs. Under the program, school boards may receive (1) a one-time capital expenses grant up to \$75,000 per classroom and (2) an annual operating expenses grant in an amount based on either the number of children or preschool classrooms in the program.

The bill increases the maximum annual operating expenses grant from \$5,000 to \$6,500 per child and from \$75,000 to \$97,500 per preschool classroom.

§ 3 — DAY CAMP LICENSING STANDARD

Modifies the standard for determining whether a day camp must be licensed by OEC

The bill modifies the standard for determining whether a day camp must be licensed by OEC.

Currently, a day camp must be licensed by OEC if it operates during daylight hours for at least three days a week and campers eat and sleep at home except for one meal per day.

The bill instead requires day camps to be OEC-licensed if they operate during daylight hours for:

1. at least three hours per day, for at least three days per week, with

the campers sleeping at home, or

2. more than one session per day, for at least two hours per session, if children are allowed to enroll in more than one session per day.

Under existing law, unchanged by the bill, these day camps do not include municipally run programs.

§ 4 — EMERGENCY NOTIFICATION SYSTEM AND YOUTH CAMPS

Requires youth camps to (1) give OEC the camp's contact information and (2) receive notices from an emergency notification system whenever there is an emergency situation in the area that could affect the children's safety

The bill requires every OEC-licensed youth camp (licensee) to provide, verify, and update OEC (when appropriate) with their youth camp's contact information, including its name, address, and telephone number.

The bill also requires OEC to share this contact information, in a memorandum of understanding or other agreement, with the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection for use in an emergency notification system that notifies licensees about emergency situations (such as a fire; criminal act; emergency; or act of nature, such as an earthquake or hurricane) that occur in a youth camp's vicinity or that may endanger the safety or wellbeing of the children at the camp.

§ 6 — DEFINITION EXPANSION AND BACKGROUND CHECK REQUIREMENTS FOR CHILD CARE PROVIDERS AND STAFF MEMBERS

Clarifies and adds new definitions for each person under the child care services provider or staff member definition who must undergo a background check

Child Care Services Provider or Staff Member Definition Modification and Expansion

The bill and current law apply to the three types of licensed settings: (1) child care centers, (2) group child care homes, and (3) family child care homes (see BACKGROUND). The bill makes distinctions between child care staff, program staff, assistants, and substitute staff members, who all must have background checks under the bill.

By law, a “child care services provider or staff member” is any person who is (1) a licensee, employee, volunteer, assistant, or household member of a child care facility; (2) a family child care provider; or (3) generally a person who provides child care services under the Care 4 Kids child care subsidy program. Also in current law, a “child care services provider or staff member” includes any person who is an alternate staff or substitute. The bill (1) eliminates “alternate staff,” (2) clarifies “substitute” means “substitute staff member,” and (3) adds “staff” and “program staff” to the definition.

Additionally, the bill adds statutory definitions for the subset of terms included in the expanded definition of child care services provider or staff member, as described in the table below.

Table: Child Care Services Providers’ or Staff Members’ Definitions Under the Bill

Child Care Staff Member or Household Member	Definition Under Bill
Employee	Any (1) person paid to work for a family child care provider as a substitute staff member or assistant or (2) staff or program staff in a child care center or group child care home
Volunteer	Any person (1) who is not a child care center or group child care home employee and (2) whose activities involve the direct care of, or the opportunity for unsupervised access to, children
Staff	Any person who is (1) employed by a child care center or group child care home and (2) at least age 16, but who is not directly responsible for children’s care
Program Staff	Any person who is (1) employed by a child care center or group child care home, (2) at least age 16, and (3) directly responsible for children’s care
Assistant	Any person approved by OEC to provide child care services in a family child care home
Substitute Staff Member	Any person approved by OEC to provide child care services in a family child care home
Household Member	Any person (other than the licensee) who (1) is at least age 18 and (2) resides in the family child care home

Background Check for Child Care Services Providers or Staff Members

By law, each of the following types of child care services providers or staff members must undergo a background check: (1) prospective employee at a child care center or group child care home; (2) person applying for a family child care home license; or (3) person, other than a relative, who provides child care services to a child and receives the Care 4 Kids child care subsidy.

The bill specifies that this background check must include a check of (1) national and state criminal history records as under the existing law requiring the person being checked to submit their fingerprints to the state police for the state check, and the state police submit them to the FBI for the national check; (2) national and state sex offender registries; (3) the state's child abuse or neglect registry; and (4) child abuse or neglect registries for any other state where the child care services provider or staff member lived within the last five years.

The child care services provider or staff member definition expansion and background check specifications meet related federal background check requirements (see BACKGROUND).

§§ 5 & 7 — NOTIFICATION OF EMPLOYEES ON CHILD ABUSE REGISTRY

Requires child care providers to notify OEC if they have knowledge that a worker at their facility is listed on the child abuse and neglect registry; makes related conforming changes

Child Care Center or Group Child Care Home

By law, any person who is licensed to operate a child care center or group child care home must notify OEC if the owner, conductor, operator, maintainer, or employee of the center or home is convicted of any crime. Failure to comply with this notification requirement (1) may result in license suspension or revocation and (2) subjects the licensed person at the child care facility to a civil penalty of no more than \$100 per day for each day after the person learned about the conviction.

The bill additionally requires these licensed child care centers and group homes to notify OEC if the owner, conductor, operator, maintainer, or employee is placed on the child abuse and neglect registry. Failure to disclose knowledge of registry placement is subject

to the same disciplinary measures as knowledge of criminal convictions.

Family Child Care Homes

The bill makes similar modifications to family child care homes by subjecting any person who applies or is licensed to operate a family child care home or any household member at least age 18 to the same requirements listed above. For family child care homes, the bill also:

1. adds household members to the list of child care workers that must be reported if they have a criminal conviction or are on the registry;
2. changes the age of a household member in a family child care home to someone who is at least age 18, rather than at least age 16 (related provisions already apply to those at least age 18 for household member background checks); and
3. aligns the family child care home statute with the child care center and group child care home statute by requiring OEC notification about a conviction of any crime rather than just crimes referred to under this provision.

BACKGROUND

Types of Child Care Licenses

By law, family child care homes provide child care usually offered in the provider's private home, generally serving six to nine children. Group child care homes (1) offer or provide care to between 7 and 12 children (related or unrelated) on a regular basis or (2) meet the family child care home definition, except that they do not operate in a private home. Child care centers offer or provide care to more than 12 children outside their own homes on a regular basis (CGS § 19a-77(a)).

Related Federal Background Check Requirements

Under P.L. 92-544, the FBI requires state laws requiring national criminal records checks to meet several criteria before the state may receive criminal history record information from the FBI. Among other things, statutes requiring these records check must (1) exist as a result

of a legislative enactment; (2) require applicants who are subject to a national criminal history background check to be fingerprinted; (3) explicitly include that the records be submitted to the FBI or a similar wording that implies this submission (such as “national check”); and (4) identify the specific licensee or employee categories that fall within the reporting scope.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Education Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 33 Nay 13 (03/18/2026)