



CONNECTICUT
Children & Families

2026 Legislative Summary
Behavioral Health Partnership
Oversight Council

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Significant Public Acts

- PA 26–26 An Act Concerning Child Welfare Accountability and Transparency
- PA 26–48 An Act Concerning the Recommendations of the Department of Children and Families and the Data Link Connecticut System
- PA 26–62 An Act Implementing Recommendations of the Transforming Children's Behavioral Health Policy and Planning Committee
- PA 26–68 State Budget
- PA 26–70 An Act Concerning Oversight of Efforts to Prevent Human Trafficking and the Use of Confidential Crisis Hotlines at Correctional Institutions

Other Public Acts

- PA 26–27 An Act Requiring Transparency and Additional Oversight of the Distribution of Certain Legislatively Directed Funds and Appropriations for Other Expenses
- PA 26–47 An Act Concerning the Recommendations of the Insurance and Real Estate Committee Working Groups
- PA 26–102 An Act Establishing a Nonprofit Provider Advisory Board and Prohibiting Auto Insurance Penalties on Volunteer Drivers Providing Transportation to Nonprofit Organizations

PA 26-26 An Act Concerning Child Welfare Accountability and Transparency

- House priority focused on providing supports and transparency for child welfare
- Originally House Bill 5004
- DCF leadership was involved in negotiations throughout the evolution of the proposal
- Contains 23 sections

PA 26-26 An Act Concerning Child Welfare Accountability and Transparency

- Sections 4 and 5 Other Grant Programs
 - After school programs
 - Childcare services
 - Paid social worker internship program
 - First-year social worker mentorship program
 - Mentors will be eligible for stipends
- The Department must establish applications and eligibility criteria for these programs by January 1, 2027

PA 26-26 An Act Concerning Child Welfare Accountability and Transparency

- Sections 6 – 8 Mandatory Trainings (January 1, 2028)
 - Perinatal Mood and Anxiety Disorder
 - Collaborate with DMHAS on developing the training
 - Human Trafficking
 - Training exists but mandates all DCF staff to attend
 - Cultural Sensitivity and Implicit Bias
 - Training exists under the mandatory pre-service racial justice training
- Staff must complete trainings by December 31, 2028

PA 26-26 An Act Concerning Child Welfare Accountability and Transparency

- Sections 11 and 12 Online Data Dashboard (January 1, 2027)
 - Requires an online dashboard that includes data that is determined by working group that must issue its recommendations by October 1, 2026
 - Requires additional information to be posted on the DCF website (much of it is currently posted)
 - Ex. Office of Community Relations, how to make a report to the Careline
 - Mandated Reporter training

PA 26-26 An Act Concerning Child Welfare Accountability and Transparency

- Section 14 Mental Health Treatment
 - Prohibits DCF from using evidence of a person seeking mental health treatment as the sole reason to pursue any action (From passage)
- Section 17 Urgent Crisis Center (UCC)
 - Requires DCF to establish a UCC in Stamford by July 1, 2027

PA 26-48 An Act Concerning the Recommendations of DCF and the Data Link Connecticut System

- Consolidates several statutory reports into an annual report due October 15, 2027 and annually thereafter. The other reports are repealed as of July 1, 2026
- Combines 2 reports by the Behavioral Health Partnership submitted by DCF, DMHAS and DSS concerning the services and fiscal savings of the partnership
- Repeals the requirement that DCF report any missing or abducted child in DCF custody to the FBI's National Crime Information Center (NCIC)
- Rename P20WIN to Data Link Connecticut

PA 26-62 An Act Implementing Recommendations of the Transforming Children's Behavioral Health Policy and Planning Committee

- Most of the act concerns eating disorders and establishing programs to identify and treat them
- DSS in collaboration with DCF, DDS, DMHAS, and the Office of the Behavioral Health Advocate, will study the feasibility of establishing an inpatient facility to provide psychiatric treatment services to children and young adults between the ages of 14 and 21, inclusive, who have intellectual or developmental disabilities. Report is due July 1, 2027

PA 26-68 State Budget

- The budget provides over \$12 million more to the DCF budget for FY 2027
- Much of the additional funding is for the programs and grants established by PA 26-26
- \$1.5 million in bonding for the data dashboard
- Additional staff for background checks and training
- \$1 million for increased foster care maintenance payments
- \$14,000 for Sherman Youth Service Bureau
- \$250,000 to expand Transitional Supports for Emerging Adults (TSEA) statewide
- \$250,000 for Pawcatuck OPCC
- \$618,000 for Mid-Fairfield Child Guidance

PA 26-68 State Budget

- The budget includes funding to cost or living adjustments (COLAS) for non-profit providers
- It also includes funding for colas and step increases for state employees
- Per state law, state managers receive the same increases as unionized personnel

PA 26-68 State Budget

- Section 222 requires health care providers who are employed by a state agency at a state-operated health care facility or institution, and that provide direct patient care, to receive state employee hazardous duty disability benefits if (1) they are injured as a result of being assaulted while performing their duties and (2) the injury is a direct result of the special hazards inherent in their duties.
- Requires the state to pay all necessary medical and hospital expenses resulting from the injury. In addition, if the employee is totally incapacitated due to the injury, the law requires that he or she receive 100% of their salary at the time of the injury, plus normal salary increases, for up to five years. If the employee is still totally disabled after five years, the benefit generally drops to 50% of their salary for as long as the employee remains totally disabled

PA 26-70 An Act Concerning Oversight of Efforts to Prevent Human Trafficking

- Expands OPM's responsibility to coordinate human trafficking efforts
- Amends 17a-106h to require mandatory human trafficking training for:
 - All DCF employees who have regular contact with children
 - All employees of DCF contracted providers
 - Trainings of all employees must be complete by July 1, 2027 or not later than 6 months after hire
- DCF shall establish MDT's within available appropriations
- Requires DCF, within available appropriations, to assist POST with developing a human trafficking training for law enforcement
- Establishes a Human Trafficking Prevention and Response Subcommittee of the Statewide Steering Committee to implement items from "A Blueprint to Strengthen Connecticut's Response to Human Trafficking"

PA 26-70 An Act Concerning Oversight of Efforts to Prevent Human Trafficking

- Requires all facilities as defined in 17a-93 to:
 - (1) Maintain policies covering its plans, program and services which shall be clearly stated in writing and reviewed for necessary updates not less than annually
 - (2) Maintain personnel policies for the training and education of employees
 - (3) Develop a plan for ongoing training which includes a written curriculum and a minimum number of hours of annual training
 - (4) Submit to the department not less than once every two years a written quality assurance plan
 - (5) Provide internal and external security measures necessary to ensure the safety of residents of the facility and
 - (6) Provide supervisory staff capable of ensuring (A) the health and safety of each child; (B) the security and well-being of each child; and (C) appropriate security of the facility while maintaining a home-like atmosphere

PA 26–27 An Act Requiring Transparency and Additional Oversight of the Distribution of Certain Legislatively Directed Funds and Appropriations for Other Expenses

- Establishes stricter guidelines for legislatively directed funds or earmarks
- Requires OPM to adopt policies for agencies to administer the funds
- Key provisions:
 - Requires the legislature to identify the use of the funds and identifying information of the organization receiving the funds
 - Funds up to \$150,000 may be distributed at once. Those over \$150,000 may received an initial payment for stat up costs with the remainder distributed according to a written agreement
 - Administrative policies may not create a burden on recipients, and all payments must be made within 45 days after the recipient’s expense claim is submitted
 - Subrecipients must be identified and may only be paid after the recipient received written approval from the agency and OPM
 - OPM must hold an annual pre-award conference by August 1st with each recipient and stat agency representative to describe the funding process

PA 26-47 An Act Concerning the Recommendations of the Insurance and Real Estate Committee Working Groups

- Requires the Insurance Department to study the feasibility of creating a captive insurance plan to cover liability insurance for non-profit private providers

PA 26-102 An Act Establishing a Nonprofit Provider Advisory Board and Prohibiting Auto Insurance Penalties on Volunteer Drivers Providing Transportation to Nonprofit Organizations

- Establishes within OPM a Nonprofit Provider Advisory Board for the purpose of advising the Governor and OPM on the matters concerning the non-profit private providers



Any Questions

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