
SUBSTITUTE HOUSE BILL 1248

State of Washington

69th Legislature

2025 Regular Session

By House Early Learning & Human Services (originally sponsored by Representative Couture)

READ FIRST TIME 02/11/25.

1 AN ACT Relating to improving the effectiveness of juvenile
2 justice programs by providing ongoing evaluations and clarifying
3 juvenile diversion practices; and amending RCW 43.20C.020.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

5 **Sec. 1.** RCW 43.20C.020 and 2014 c 225 s 66 are each amended to
6 read as follows:

7 ~~((The department of social and health services shall accomplish
8 the following in consultation and collaboration with the Washington
9 state institute for public policy, the evidence-based practice
10 institute at the University of Washington, a university-based child
11 welfare partnership and research entity, other national experts in
12 the delivery of evidence-based services, and organizations
13 representing Washington practitioners:))~~

14 (1) ~~((By September 30, 2012, the Washington state institute for
15 public policy, the University of Washington evidence-based practice
16 institute, in consultation with the department shall publish
17 descriptive definitions of evidence-based, research-based, and
18 promising practices in the areas of child welfare, juvenile
19 rehabilitation, and children's mental health services.))~~

20 (a) ~~((In addition to descriptive definitions, the))~~ The
21 Washington state institute for public policy and the University of

1 Washington evidence-based practice institute must prepare an
2 inventory of evidence-based, research-based, and promising practices
3 for prevention and intervention services (~~that will be used for the~~
4 ~~purpose of completing the baseline assessment described in subsection~~
5 ~~(2) of this section~~). The inventory shall be periodically updated as
6 more practices are identified.

7 (b) In identifying evidence-based and research-based services,
8 the Washington state institute for public policy and the University
9 of Washington evidence-based practice institute must:

10 (i) Consider any available systemic evidence-based assessment of
11 a program's efficacy and cost-effectiveness; and

12 (ii) Attempt to identify assessments that use valid and reliable
13 evidence.

14 (c) Using state, federal, or private funds, the department of
15 social and health services and the department of children, youth, and
16 families shall prioritize the assessment of promising practices
17 identified in (a) of this subsection with the goal of increasing the
18 number of such practices that meet the standards for evidence-based
19 and research-based practices.

20 ~~(2) ((By June 30, 2013, the department and the health care~~
21 ~~authority shall complete a baseline assessment of utilization of~~
22 ~~evidence-based and research-based practices in the areas of child~~
23 ~~welfare, juvenile rehabilitation, and children's mental health~~
24 ~~services. The assessment must include prevention and intervention~~
25 ~~services provided through medicaid fee-for-service and healthy~~
26 ~~options managed care contracts. The assessment shall include~~
27 ~~estimates of:~~

28 ~~(a) The number of children receiving each service;~~

29 ~~(b) For juvenile rehabilitation and child welfare services, the~~
30 ~~total amount of state and federal funds expended on the service;~~

31 ~~(c) For children's mental health services, the number and~~
32 ~~percentage of encounters using these services that are provided to~~
33 ~~children served by behavioral health organizations and children~~
34 ~~receiving mental health services through medicaid fee-for-service or~~
35 ~~healthy options;~~

36 ~~(d) The relative availability of the service in the various~~
37 ~~regions of the state; and~~

38 ~~(e) To the extent possible, the unmet need for each service.~~

39 ~~(3) (a) By December 30, 2013, the department and the health care~~
40 ~~authority shall report to the governor and to the appropriate fiscal~~

1 and policy committees of the legislature on recommended strategies,
2 timelines, and costs for increasing the use of evidence-based and
3 research-based practices. The report must distinguish between a
4 reallocation of existing funding to support the recommended
5 strategies and new funding needed to increase the use of the
6 practices.

7 (b) The department shall provide updated recommendations to the
8 governor and the legislature by December 30, 2014, and by December
9 30, 2015.

10 (4) (a) The report required under subsection (3) of this section
11 must include recommendations for the reallocation of resources for
12 evidence-based and research-based practices and substantial increases
13 above the baseline assessment of the use of evidence-based and
14 research-based practices for the 2015-2017 and the 2017-2019 biennia.
15 The recommendations for increases shall be consistent with subsection
16 (2) of this section.

17 (b) If the department or health care authority anticipates that
18 it will not meet its recommended levels for an upcoming biennium as
19 set forth in its report, it must report to the legislature by
20 November 1st of the year preceding the biennium. The report shall
21 include:

- 22 (i) The identified impediments to meeting the recommended levels;
- 23 (ii) The current and anticipated performance level; and
- 24 (iii) Strategies that will be undertaken to improve performance.

25 (5) Recommendations made pursuant to subsections (3) and (4) of
26 this section must include strategies to identify programs that are
27 effective with ethnically diverse clients and to consult with tribal
28 governments, experts within ethnically diverse communities, and
29 community organizations that serve diverse communities.) The
30 Washington state institute for public policy shall conduct biennial
31 outcome evaluations of juvenile justice programs identified as
32 evidence-based and approved for funding by the block grant oversight
33 committee defined under RCW 13.40.511.

34 (a) The Washington state institute for public policy shall
35 prioritize juvenile justice programs for evaluation under this
36 section based on:

- 37 (i) The length of time since an evaluation has been conducted on
38 the program; and
- 39 (ii) The number of juveniles participating in the program.

1 (b) The outcome evaluations required under this subsection (2)
2 must focus on recidivism and include a benefit-cost analysis.

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