

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## HB 2580

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As Reported by Senate Committee On:  
Human Services, Reentry & Rehabilitation, February 26, 2020

**Title:** An act relating to requiring the department of children, youth, and families to submit a report regarding independent living services.

**Brief Description:** Reporting on independent living services.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Caldier, Callan, Dent, Corry and Frame.

**Brief History:** Passed House: 2/18/20, 96-0.

**Committee Activity:** Human Services, Reentry & Rehabilitation: 2/26/20, 2/26/20 [DP].

### Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires the Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) to submit a report to the Legislature by November 1, 2020, and annually thereafter that includes certain information about independent living services.

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES, REENTRY & REHABILITATION

**Majority Report:** Do pass.

Signed by Senators Darneille, Chair; Nguyen, Vice Chair; Walsh, Ranking Member; Cleveland, O'Ban, Wilson, C. and Zeiger.

**Staff:** Alison Mendiola (786-7488)

**Background:** The Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) provides Independent Living Services (ILS) to youth, including individuals who are age 18, and have not turned 23 years of age, who are or have been in the care and custody of the DCYF or are participating in extended foster care.

Youth are eligible for ILS if they are:

- age 15 or older;
- under age 23; and

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- in foster care in an open dependency action through the DCYF or a tribal child welfare agency for at least 30 days on or after their fifteenth birthday.

DCYF caseworkers refer youth age 15 or older to ILS, and the provider must make at least three attempts to engage the youth in this voluntary program. Once a youth is eligible, they remain eligible until age 23, even if they achieve their permanent plan.

DCYF contracts with 12 local community-based agencies and 17 federally recognized tribes throughout the state to provide ILS, which includes:

- assistance in achieving basic educational requirements such as a high school equivalency certificate;
- enrollment in vocational and technical training programs offered at the community and technical colleges;
- obtaining and maintaining employment;
- accomplishing basic life skills such as money management, nutrition, preparing meals, and house cleaning; and
- funding up to \$500 is available for enrichment activities related to the youth's independent living goals.

A baseline skill level in ability to function productively and independently shall be determined at entry. Performance must be measured by demonstrating improvement from involvement in the program. Each recipient of ILS must have a plan for achieving independent living skills by the time the recipient turns age 21. This plan must be written within the first 30 days of placement and reviewed every 90 days. A recipient who does not adhere to the plan will be reassessed by the program and may be declared ineligible for ILS.

**Summary of Bill:** DCYF must submit a report to the Legislature by November 1, 2020, and annually thereafter that includes the following information about independent living services:

- a description of the services that independent living providers are contracted to provide;
- a description of the services delivered by each independent living provider;
- the number of children who were served by each independent living provider;
- the average and median per capita expenditures on independent living services;
- the number of young adults 18 to 21 years of age who received independent living services; and
- a description of the services administered to youth who transition between counties after their eighteenth birthday.

If the DCYF is unable to provide this data, the DCYF must provide a complete explanation of why the DCYF was unable to do so.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

**Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members:** No.

**Effective Date:** Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony:** PRO: Learned that ILS varies greatly between counties and there is often a great disparity between programs. Some regions raise matching dollars in addition to the federal monies they receive. DCYF does not know what services are being offered. They are focused on kids 0-5, not the teenagers. We give ILS \$250,000 a year, what are they doing with this money? A report is a great way to spotlight this issue. We should also look at the number of youth eligible to be served and data on the amount of funding providers are leveraging. Also looking at caseload size—staffing ratios—is really important.

**Persons Testifying:** PRO: Representative Michelle Caldier, Prime Sponsor; Mark Putnam, YMCA of Greater Seattle.

**Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying:** No one.