
Community Safety Committee

HB 1301

Brief Description: Concerning reducing fees and expenses for services for people confined in state facilities.

Sponsors: Representatives Peterson, Fosse, Davis, Street, Simmons, Reed, Ormsby, Macri, Nance and Doglio.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires the Department of Corrections (DOC) and the Department of Children, Youth, and Families to provide specified voice communication services to persons in their custody and confined in a state facility, subject to certain conditions.
- Modifies statutory requirements related to publishing and reporting certain telecommunication and electronic media services contract information.

Hearing Date: 1/28/25

Staff: Corey Patton (786-7388).

Background:

Services for Persons in Correctional and Juvenile Rehabilitation Facilities.

The Department of Corrections (DOC) maintains policies for access to and use of various telecommunication services, including phone calls, electronic mail (e-mail), and video visitation, by incarcerated persons at state correctional facilities. The DOC contracts with Securus Technologies and JPay to provide these telecommunication services in addition to other electronic media services, such as access to tablets with music, movies, electronic books, and other forms of entertainment. Incarcerated persons who utilize telecommunication or electronic

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media services may incur fees depending on the particular service provided. Meanwhile, the Department of Children, Youth, and Families maintains policies on providing telecommunication services to youth and young adults at juvenile rehabilitation facilities. Youth and young adults may have a minimum of two regular phone call attempts per week with an approved family member or contact, with additional phone calls being a privilege which may be allotted according to the facility's behavior management system.

Telecommunication and Electronic Media Services Contracts.

Under state law, any contract to provide persons in the DOC's custody with access to telecommunication and electronic media services in state correctional facilities must be made publicly available and posted on the DOC's website. Certain contract information must be prominently displayed on the website, including:

- rates for facilitating telecommunication services including, but not limited to, phone calls, video visitation, videograms and video clips, e-mails, and accessing music and entertainment;
- fees charged for money transfers and transactions, maintenance of financial accounts, and any other fee charged to the user to facilitate the money transfer or online deposit account; and
- all fees or costs charged to the inmate or customer in exchange for use of telecommunication or electronic media services through the contract.

Contractors must report certain information annually to the DOC, including:

- a summary of services offered at each correctional facility;
- rates charged for, or associated with, providing each type of service including, but not limited to, monthly financial account maintenance fees, transaction fees associated with money transfers, per call and connection surcharges, bill statement fees, and refund fees;
- a total accounting of commissions provided to the DOC or to correctional facilities;
- a summary and accounting of services used by inmates categorized as indigent;
- one-time and ongoing costs incurred for installing and maintaining hardware;
- average customer service response time rates per facility and the average time taken to resolve an issue or provide a refund for defective services; and
- an accounting of all revenues or losses incurred by the contractor by quarter.

Summary of Bill:

Services for Persons in Correctional and Juvenile Rehabilitation Facilities.

The Department of Corrections (DOC) and the Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) must provide voice communication services to persons in their custody and confined in a state facility. Voice communication services may be supplemented with other communication services including, but not limited to, video communication and electronic mail or messaging services. The provision of any such services is subject to the following requirements and prohibitions:

- services must be free of charge to the persons initiating and receiving the communications;
- the DOC and the DCYF may not receive revenue, including any commission or fee, from

- the provision of services to any person confined in a facility;
- the DOC and the DCYF may not use the provision of services to replace the in-person visitation program or supplant in-person contact visits that persons may be eligible to receive;
- the DOC and the DCYF may not limit services beyond program participation and routine facility procedures;
- the DOC and the DCYF must maintain the same access to services in each facility as was offered on January 1, 2025;
- the DOC must maintain the same number of voice communication devices, specifically wall phones, in each housing unit as it had on January 1, 2025;
- the DOC must provide tablets to persons in its custody, at no cost; and
- if the DCYF provides tablets to persons in its custody, it must do so at no cost.

Telecommunication and Electronic Media Services Contracts.

The publishing and reporting requirements for the DOC's telecommunication and electronic media services contracts are modified. Certain contract information must be prominently displayed on the DOC's website, posted prominently in housing units, and made available on tablets, including:

- rates for all products and services covered by the contract, with a detailed breakdown that includes taxes, surcharges, fees, and any other fees;
- fees charged for money transfers and transactions, maintenance of financial accounts, and any other fee charged to the user to facilitate the money transfer or online deposit account; and
- all fees or costs charged to the incarcerated person or customer in exchange for use of electronic media services through the contract.

The information that contractors must report annually to the DOC is modified to include:

- a summary of services offered at each correctional facility;
- rates charged for, or associated with, providing each type of service including, but not limited to, monthly financial account maintenance fees, transaction fees associated with money transfers, bill statement fees, and refund fees;
- a detailed summary and accounting of services used by incarcerated individuals categorized as indigent;
- data on usage of all telecommunications and electronic media services under the contract, including monthly call and message volume;
- one-time and ongoing costs incurred for installing and maintaining hardware;
- average customer service response time rates per facility and the average time taken to resolve an issue or provide a refund for defective services; and
- an accounting of all revenues or losses incurred by the contractor by quarter.

"Telecommunications services" includes, but is not limited to, voice communication services, video communication services, videograms, and electronic mail or messaging services.

"Electronic media services" includes, but not is limited to, video clips, music, and entertainment.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 21, 2025.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect on December 1, 2025.