



Department of Children and Families

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Governor Lamont's Budget Address

Governor Lamont gave his second state-of-the-state speech on opening day of session and highlighted key components of his midterm budget adjustments. Below is a brief summary of the budget initiatives that affect DCF.

- The single largest fiscal change relates to the centralization of Human Resources and Labor Relations Staff under the Department of Administrative Services and the Office of Policy and Management as part of the Governor's initiative to streamline state government operations. This adjustment realigns funding for 39 staff now reporting to DAS and to OPM as a result of the centralization thereby reducing personnel costs at the Department by \$3.2 million.
- In 2015, DCF supplemented the SDM assessment process by adopting a child welfare predictive analytics system known as Eckerd Rapid Safety Feedback (ERSF). A team was assembled to conduct qualitative case reviews of high probability cases and to consult with Area Office Social Workers when the ERSF assessment tools suggested the need to develop a plan to ensure that safety concerns are quickly mitigated. Connecticut adopted a modified algorithm when implementing ERSF and discontinued its use on December 31, 2019 because expected outcomes were not achieved. DCF will continue to meet its responsibility to prevent serious injury to children under the Commissioner's care and custody through the use of Strategic Decision Making. The Department expects to save a little over \$500,000 by implementing this change.
- The governor's proposal includes \$328,000 in funding to implement the licensure of the Albert J. Solnit Children's Center by the Department of Public Health. The funding will pay the salaries for seven nurses and one psychologist to enhance resident care at the north campus of the Albert J. Solnit Children's Center to facilitate licensing its Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facility (PRTF) units. The hospital and PRTF units at the Solnit Center's south campus will achieve licensure within existing resources.
- An additional \$95,882 is dedicated to the salaries of two Processing Technicians to conduct checks of the state's child abuse and neglect registry on behalf of licensed youth camp staff employees age 18 and older.

BILLS OF INTEREST

[S.B. No. 16](#) SEN. LOONEY, 11th DIST.; SEN. DUFF, 25th DIST.; REP. ARESIMOWICZ, 30th DIST.; REP. RITTER, 1st DIST. 'AN ACT CONCERNING THE ADULT USE OF CANNABIS', to implement the Governor's budget recommendations

[H.B. No. 5005](#) REP. ARESIMOWICZ, 30th DIST.; REP. RITTER, 1st DIST.; SEN. LOONEY, 11th DIST.; SEN. DUFF, 25th DIST. 'AN ACT ADJUSTING THE STATE BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM ENDING JUNE 30, 2021', to implement the Governor's budget recommendations.

[H.B. No. 5012](#) REP. ARESIMOWICZ, 30th DIST.; REP. RITTER, 1st DIST.; SEN. LOONEY, 11th DIST.; SEN. DUFF, 25th DIST. 'AN ACT CONCERNING THE OPTIMIZATION OF STATE AGENCY OPERATIONS AND SERVICES', to implement the Governor's budget recommendations.

[H.B. No. 5019](#) REP. ARESIMOWICZ, 30th DIST.; REP. RITTER, 1st DIST.; SEN. LOONEY, 11th DIST.; SEN. DUFF, 25th DIST. 'AN ACT CONCERNING FAIR FUTURES FOLLOWING ERASURE OF CRIMINAL RECORDS', to implement the Governor's budget recommendations.

[H.B. No. 5020](#) REP. ARESIMOWICZ, 30th DIST.; REP. RITTER, 1st DIST.; SEN. LOONEY, 11th DIST.; SEN. DUFF, 25th DIST. 'AN ACT IMPLEMENTING THE GOVERNOR'S BUDGET RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING PUBLIC HEALTH', to implement the Governor's budget recommendations. (Sections 8 – 10 of the bill establishes DPH as the licensing entity for the Solnit Children's Center)

UPCOMING MEETINGS AND HEARINGS

Mon, Feb 10 - 10:00 AM	Judiciary Committee Meeting and Public Hearing	Room 2E
Mon, Feb 10 - 11:00 AM	Rep. Walker Press Conference Re: Raise the Age	Room 1A
Mon, Feb 10 - 1:00 PM	Improving Outcomes for Youth Task Force	Room 1D
Tues, Feb 11 - 10:30 AM	2GEN Advisory Board Meeting	Room 2B
Tues, Feb 11 - 11:00 AM	Governor's Council on Women and Girls Meeting	Room 1B
Thur, Feb 13 - 2:00 PM	Behavioral Health Partnership Oversight Council	Room 1D
Fri, Feb 14 - 10:00 AM	Judiciary Committee Meeting and Public Hearing	Room 2E

GENERAL ASSEMBLY WEBSITE

For complete legislative information, visit the Connecticut General Assembly's website at - www.cga.ct.gov

For additional information regarding legislative matters, contact Vincent Russo, DCF Legislative Program Director at 860-550-6329 or 860-461-6689.
