



CONNECTICUT

Children & Families

Legislative Summary

2025

Department of Children and Families 2025 Legislative Summary

The following is a compilation of legislation of interest to the Department of Children and Families that passed during the 2025 Regular Session of the General Assembly. These summaries are based largely upon the bill analyses prepared by the General Assembly's Office of Legislative Research. Click on the Public Act Number below to review the statutory language of the Public Act. Please contact Vincent Russo (VINCENT.RUSSO@ct.gov) or Michael Carone (MICHAEL.CARONE@ct.gov) with any questions.

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Special Act No. 25-6 (HB 7043) – AN ACT CONCERNING FOSTER CARE MAINTENANCE PAYMENTS

The act requires the Department of Children and Families (DCF) to submit a report concerning foster care maintenance payments provided by the Department to foster parents in the state.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage. Signed by the Governor on June 9, 2025

Special Act 25-7 (HB 7214) – AN ACT CONCERNING MATERNAL HEALTH

This act requires the Department of Public Health (DPH) to convene an advisory committee to conduct a study and make recommendations regarding the improvement of perinatal mental health care services in the state and benefits and challenges of making hospitals more doula friendly.

The Commissioner of DCF, or the Commissioner's designee, is a member of this advisory committee.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage. Signed by the Governor on June 10, 2025

Special Act 25-18 (SB 1368) – AN ACT CONCERNING THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE OFFICE OF THE CHILD ADVOCATE

The act establishes a working group to study statutes, policies and procedures relating to Probate Court guardianship proceedings, and make recommendations for improvement of such statutes, policies and procedures. The Commissioner of DCF, or the Commissioner's designee, is a member of this working group. A report on the group's findings and recommendations must be submitted to the legislature not later than January 1, 2026.

Such study shall include a review of the report of the Office of the Child Advocate submitted pursuant to PA 24-118. That report referenced the Barriault Case from the Bristol Probate Court.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage. Signed by the Governor on July 8, 2025

Special Act 25-19 (HB 7285) – AN ACT CONVEYING A PARCEL OF STATE LAND TO THE TOWN OF HAMDEN AND REPEALING A PRIOR CONVEYANCE

The act reauthorizes the transfer of the former High Meadows property from DCF, via the Department of Administrative Services, to the town of Hamden for \$1.5 million, plus the administrative costs of making such conveyance. This originally passed in 2019, but Hamden has not purchased the property nor paid for the maintenance costs of the property.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage. Signed by the Governor on July 1, 2025

Public Act 25-28 (HB 7213) – AN ACT CONCERNING ACCESS TO REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH CARE

This act allows minors to give consent for services, examination or treatment related to pregnancy and pregnancy prevention without the consent or notification of their parents or guardian. These services specifically include contraceptive counseling and services, prenatal care, and appropriate care and pain management during labor and delivery (e.g., epidural administration), but not sterilization.

The act prohibits health care providers from sharing any information about these services or a related consultation with the minor's parent or guardian without the minor's express consent.

Under the act:

- These provisions do not affect a provider's obligation to make a report to DCF or DPH that may be required under state law. As an examples, medical professionals must still notify DCF if they treat a child under the age of 12 who is pregnant.
- A parent or guardian who was not informed of these services is not liable to pay for them.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage. Signed by the Governor on June 9, 2025

Public Act 25-38 (HB 7102) – AN ACT CONCERNING MATERNAL AND INFANT HEALTH CARE

This act requires the Commissioner of Health Strategy (OHS), in consultation with the Commissioners of Social Services (DSS) and DPH to develop a strategic plan to increase the number of birth centers and birthing hospitals located in areas of the state with a high

percentage of Medicaid recipients and limited access to birth centers and birthing hospitals.

It also adds "expanding the role of fathers in supporting maternal health" to the objectives of the Connecticut Fatherhood Initiative, which DCF is a member of.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2025. Signed by the Governor on June 10, 2025

Public Act 25-52 (HB 6894) – AN ACT ESTABLISHING AN INTERAGENCY COUNCIL ON HOMELESSNESS

This act establishes an interagency council on homelessness to advise and assist the Commissioner of Housing to improve homelessness prevention and response efforts in the state. The act requires the council to convene by October 1, 2025, and to meet at the request of the DOH commissioner or a majority of the regular members. The act also requires the council, starting July 1, 2026, to annually report its recommendations to the governor and the Appropriations, Housing, and Human Services committees.

The Commissioner of DCF, or the Commissioner's designee, is a member of this council.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage. Signed by the Governor on June 10, 2025

Public Act 25-70 (HB 6883) – AN ACT PROTECTING THE LOCATION OF HOUSING FOR DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND SEXUAL ASSAULT VICTIMS

Under current law, state agencies are prohibited from disclosing any information that indicates the location of a victim of domestic violence. This act expands the current exemption to include sexual assault victims.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2025. Signed by the Governor on June 23, 2025

Public Act 25-89 (HB 7108) – AN ACT CONCERNING AUTISM AND INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY SERVICES AND ABUSE AND NEGLECT INVESTIGATIONS

This act predominantly focusses on the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) and requires DDS to submit various reports to the legislature.

Section 5 requires the Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management (OPM), in consultation with the Governor's Kids Cabinet, to establish a working group to examine the feasibility of an interagency complex case team for young adults ages seventeen to twenty-two with intellectual or developmental disabilities, including autism spectrum disorder, who may have co-occurring mental or behavioral health needs, are in urgent need of community placement or agency services and qualify for support from more than one state agency. DCF has been requesting this approach and will be involved in the working group.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage. Signed by the Governor on June 23, 2025

Public Act 25-91 (HB 7255) – AN ACT CONCERNING JUDICIAL BRANCH OPERATIONS AND PROCEDURES AND THE DUTIES OF JUDICIAL BRANCH PERSONNEL

This act is the Judicial Branch's (JB) annual legislation, often referred to as the Court Ops bill. DCF worked collaboratively with the Branch to include several sections in this act to amend statutes that obstructed the ability to share information about children and parents being served in both agencies.

Section 2: Removes the limitations on the purposes for which DCF may disclose information on a child, youth or any other person to Judicial Branch – Court Support Services Division (JB-CSSD).

Sec. 6: Makes similar changes for JB-CSSD to release records to DCF

Sec. 7: Allows disclosure of records from JB-CSSD to DCF if a child is receiving services from DCF

Sec. 10: Grants DCF access to JB protective order registry

Sec. 19: Allows DCF access to JB probation information on any person whose child is in DCF's custody if the person's conditions of release require cooperating with the DCF

Sec. 20: Grants access to DCF of all information related to a youthful offender

DCF and JB will work together to develop methods to share such information.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2025. Signed by the Governor on June 24, 2025

Public Act 25-96 (HB 6978) – AN ACT CONCERNING THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH'S RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING VARIOUS REVISIONS TO THE PUBLIC HEALTH STATUTES

This act was sponsored by DPH and includes several sections affecting the operations of that department.

Section 15 of the act would require, on and after October 1, 2025, that each chief medical officer and chief nursing officer employed by a hospital licensed pursuant to chapter 368v of the general statutes shall be licensed pursuant to chapters 370 and 378 of the general statutes. Solnit Hospital is licensed by DPH under those statutes and therefor will fall under this requirement.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage. Signed by the Governor on June 24, 2025

Public Act 25-97 – H.B. 7157 – AN ACT CONCERNING VARIOUS REVISIONS TO THE PUBLIC HEALTH STATUTES

This act also predominantly affects DPH operations. However, **Section 22** explicitly states that a hospital licensed by DPH is not required to obtain a license from DCF to provide inpatient or outpatient mental health services to patients of any age.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage. Signed by the Governor on June 24, 2025

Public Act 25-116 (SB 1311) – AN ACT CONCERNING THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

This act is the DCF agency proposal.

Section 1 – Emergency Placements: DCF worked with the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection (DESPP) to maintain our access to FBI criminal background information by explicitly referencing the phrase "emergency placement" in the statute pertaining to background checks for relative and fictive kin. Without such language, DCF would lose access to FBI criminal background information.

Section 2 – Services Post Majority Youth: Existing law permits youth to stay in the care of DCF on a voluntary basis up to age 21 under Services Post Majority (SPM) status, so that they may receive additional support as they transition into young adulthood. Federal policy requires a court order in order for a child welfare agency to claim Title IV-E reimbursement

for SPM youth. This section establishes a court process for those young adults who return to DCF care who left DCF care at the age of 18 but seek to return to DCF care not later than 60 days prior to their 21st birthday. DCF must file a motion in the Juvenile Court to determine if re-entry into the SPM program is in the young adult's best interest. Existing law already requires DCF to follow a similar process when a youth stays in care under SPM status. By establishing this process, the state can claim Title IV-E reimbursement for those returning youths. It is expected that the state could recover about \$1 million based on past averages.

Section 3 – Record Disclosure: This section permits DCF to disclose records without a release from the affected party to DDS in order to cooperate with an investigation of abuse or neglect of an individual with intellectual disability. The section also permits DCF to disclose relevant records to OPM so the Office of Labor Relations to conduct a labor relations investigation.

Section 4 – DCF Licensed Facilities: This section amends DCF license definitions to allow an individual placed at a DCF- licensed facility who requires special education to remain in placement at the facility until that person turns twenty-two without a waiver. This is in accordance with the state education statutes which were amended in 2023, in conformity with a federal court decision, to require boards of education to provide special education until an eligible student graduates high school or until the end of the school year when the student reaches age 22. This does not change any other existing statutory age thresholds that exist.

Sections 5 – Foster Parent Bill of Rights: The DCF Foster Care Division has been working with our caretaker advisory groups over the past two years to develop this legislation. The resulting language directs DCF, in collaboration with our caregivers, to clarify the rights of foster parents and licensed caregivers and specify that these rights are afforded to the extent feasible and consistent with state and federal law. The bill of rights has been finalized and will be incorporated into DCF policy.

Section 6 – Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children: The existing Interstate Compact for the Placement of Children (ICPC) that has been in place for over sixty years and needs revision to catch up with existing child welfare practices.

Key components of the revised ICPC include:

- Clarification on the applicability of ICPC to non-custodial parents.
- Increases timely placements in other states.

- Establishes a mediation process when states disagree on the placement of a child and ensures states honor the rules and tenets of the compact.
- Opportunity/availability of an administrative review of denials in the receiving state.
- Flexibility for the rules to be changed more frequently and easily, so the ICPC can remain current.

This section takes an important step towards adopting the revised compact by repealing the existing ICPC language in state law and replacing it with the revised language. The new compact will take effect when 35 states adopt the new language. Being among the first states to adopt the revisions will afford Connecticut an opportunity to be a part of the rulemaking process once the new ICPC takes effect. Currently, 18 states have adopted the revised ICPC, including Vermont, New Hampshire and Maine. Florida, which receives a significant number of Connecticut's interstate placements, has likewise adopted the revised compact.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage. Signed by the Governor on July 1, 2025

Public Act 25-139 (HB 7236) - AN ACT CONCERNING HUMAN TRAFFICKING AND SEXUAL ASSAULT VICTIMS

This act is the annual Trafficking in Persons Council legislation. DCF is an active member of the council.

Section 1 of the act adds DOT to TIP Council and another public member.

Sections 2 – 15 adds victims of sexual assault and victims of trafficking to the anti-discrimination statutes.

Section 16 establishes an affirmative defense that a defendant in a delinquency proceeding for a misdemeanor offense was under 18 years old and committed the offense due to being a victim of trafficking.

Section 17 prohibits human trafficking trainings provided to professionals be videos but permits online instruction.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage. Sec. 2-15 October 1, 2025. Signed by the Governor on July 8, 2025

Public Act 25-151 (SB 1358) – AN ACT CONCERNING INFLATIONARY RATE INCREASES FOR STATE-CONTRACTED NONPROFIT PROVIDERS

Beginning July 1, 2027, the act requires any state agency contracting with a nonprofit human services provider to annually increase rates for recurring contracts by the percentage increase in the consumer price index (CPI) for all urban consumers in the northeast region in the previous calendar year. The requirement applies to contracts with any state board, authority, commission, department, office, institution, council or other agency of the state, including higher education institutions. The act prohibits the agencies from decreasing rates if the CPI decreases.

The act similarly requires DSS to annually adjust Medicaid rates for nonprofit human services providers contracting with DSS. The percentage increase follows the same criteria as provider contracts described above. DSS must make the adjustment unless federal Medicaid laws do not allow it.

Lastly, the act requires OPM to submit a report every three years, starting by January 1, 2026, to the Appropriations, Human Services, and Public Health committees on state agency contracts with nonprofit human services providers. The report must include any appropriations needed to ensure that rates for the contracts in future fiscal years include any increase in the CPI inflation measure described above.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage. Signed by the Governor on July 8, 2025

Public Act 25-156 (SB 1468) – AN ACT CONCERNING GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY REGARDING AGENCY PURCHASE CARD USE

This act establishes new statutory guidelines for state agency purchasing card (P-card) use. Any agency P-card procedures established on or after October 1, 2025, to at least do the following:

- Prescribe which employees may use the card and limitations on its use;
- Specify the types of transactions that may be charged on the card;
- Limit authorized charges for travel, meals, and entertainment;
- Specify timing for submitting receipts or other reports about using the card;
- Require the receipts or reports to be digitized in CORE-CT (the state's payroll and financial tracking system) or another applicable system;
- Specify the agency approval process for reports about card uses; and

- Include specific remedies for noncompliance.

Agencies may adopt more stringent procedures.

It also requires each state agency to appoint an employee as its P-card coordinator, with certain responsibilities, such as issuing P-cards to authorized employees and reviewing receipts and other documentation related to their use.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2025. Signed by the Governor on July 8, 2025

Public Act 25-167 (HB 7192) – AN ACT IMPLEMENTING RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE BIPARTISAN DRUG TASK FORCE

This act amends several statutes concerning pharmaceuticals and drug coverage. The following sections directly impact DCF.

Sections 19: Defines DCF, and other specific agencies, as a "drug purchasing agency." However, it maintains existing practice of DAS procuring pharmaceuticals for the Department. It allows for bulk drug purchases to reduce the cost of medications.

Section 20: Allows a "drug purchasing agency" to enter into a compact with officials in other states to increase the state's purchasing power in negotiations with pharmaceutical companies.

Section 21: Establishes an Advisory Council on Pharmaceutical Procurement to advise DAS and drug purchasing agencies on prescription drug negotiations.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Sections 19–20: July 1, 2025. Section 21: October 1, 2025. Signed by the Governor on July 8, 2025

Public Act 25-168 (HB 7287) – AN ACT CONCERNING THE STATE BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM ENDING JUNE 30, 2027, AND MAKING APPROPRIATIONS THEREFOR, AND PROVISIONS RELATED TO REVENUE AND OTHER ITEMS IMPLEMENTING THE STATE BUDGET

This act is the state biennial budget for fiscal years 2026 and 2027. The act includes the appropriations for each agency, the tax package and other legislation required to effectuate the budget.

DCF budget lines are:

DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES	2025-2026	2026-2027
Personal Services	303,233,500	303,233,500
Other Expenses	31,137,956	31,137,956
Family Support Services	1,064,233	1,064,233
Differential Response System	9,367,256	9,367,256
Regional Behavioral Health Consultation	1,838,167	1,838,167
Community Care Coordination	8,957,944	8,957,944
Health Assessment and Consultation	1,596,776	1,596,776
Grants for Psychiatric Clinics for Children	17,880,105	17,880,105
Day Treatment Centers for Children	8,219,601	8,219,601
Child Abuse and Neglect Intervention	9,988,016	9,988,016
Community Based Prevention Programs	9,657,655	9,657,655
Family Violence Outreach and Counseling	4,009,230	4,009,230
Supportive Housing	21,180,221	21,180,221
No Nexus Special Education	2,452,640	2,452,640
Family Preservation Services	7,242,683	7,242,683
Substance Abuse Treatment	9,929,982	10,073,982
Child Welfare Support Services	2,854,163	2,854,163
Board and Care for Children - Adoption	106,884,511	106,884,511
Board and Care for Children - Foster	123,521,818	123,521,818
Board and Care for Children - Short-term and Residential	65,628,396	65,628,396
Individualized Family Supports	3,871,304	3,871,304
Community Kidcare	52,411,129	61,011,129
Covenant to Care	185,911	185,911
Juvenile Review Boards	3,897,957	6,043,187
Youth Transition and Success Programs	1,016,220	1,016,220
Love146	500,000	500,000
Youth Service Bureaus	2,733,240	2,733,240
Youth Service Bureau Enhancement	1,115,161	1,115,161
AGENCY TOTAL	812,375,775	823,265,005

Section 243: Identical language regarding emergency placements in section 1 of the DCF agency act (see PA 25-116 above)

Section 248: Requires municipalities that operate Juvenile Review Boards (JRB) or other youth diversion programs, to report information on outcomes and programs to the Judiciary and Children Committees and Chief State's Attorney not later than January 15th annually. DCF, in its administrative capacity over youth diversion programs, may require municipalities to report on other data or information.

Section 250: Requires DCF to report to the Juvenile Justice Policy and Oversight Committee on the implementation of the Specialized Trauma-Informed Treatment Assessment and Reunification Enhancement Plan on July 1st annually.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2025. Signed by the Governor on June 30, 2025

Public Act 25-174 – H.B. 7288 – AN ACT AUTHORIZING AND ADJUSTING BONDS OF THE STATE AND CONCERNING GRANT PROGRAMS, STATE GRANT COMMITMENTS FOR SCHOOL BUILDING PROJECTS, REVISIONS TO THE SCHOOL BUILDING PROJECTS STATUTES AND VARIOUS PROVISIONS REVISING AND IMPLEMENTING THE BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM ENDING JUNE 30, 2027

Section 2 contains \$5 million in bond funds in FY 26 for DCF for alterations, renovations and improvements to existing state-owned buildings

Section 21 contains \$5 million in bond funds in FY 27 for DCF for alterations, renovations and improvements to existing state-owned buildings

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2025. Signed by the Governor on June 30, 2025

