



CONNECTICUT
Children & Families

Legislative Summary
2026

Department of Children and Families 2026 Legislative Summary

The following is a compilation of legislation of interest to the Department of Children and Families that passed during the 2026 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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Public Act No. 26-3 (H.B. 5044) – AN ACT ESTABLISHING CONNECTICUT VACCINE STANDARDS

The act makes various changes to state laws on immunizations.

It requires the Commissioner of Public Health (DPH) to establish a state immunization standard for adults and children.

The act also requires the Connecticut Vaccine Program (CVP) to give all children’s vaccines included under DPH’s standard of care, instead of only those recommended by the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) and allows DPH to purchase the vaccines by means other than through CDC under certain conditions.

It requires health insurance policies that cover prescription drugs to also cover immunizations for children, adolescents and adults included in DPH’s standards of care within the schedules the standards prescribe authorizes licensed pharmacists to order, prescribe, and administer vaccines listed in DPH’s immunization standards of care, instead of CDC-recommended vaccines, for adult patients and patients between ages 12 and 18 (with parental consent or proof the minor is emancipated).

Lastly, it expressly provides that the state’s Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA) does not apply to immunization requirements for (a) public and private schools, including higher education institutions and (b) childcare centers and group and family day care homes.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage, except provisions on (1) insurance coverage for vaccines takes effect January 1, 2027, and (2) RFRA take effect upon passage and apply to any civil action pending or filed after that date. Signed by the Governor on April 27, 2026.

Public Act No. 26-5 (S.B. 259) – AN ACT CONCERNING FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION

DCF has been involved in the passage of this act for a few years. The act does the following:

- Makes it a class D felony to perform female genital mutilation (FGM) on a minor
- Allows FGM victims 12 years of age or younger to provide videotaped testimony rather than testifying in open court

- Revokes immunity between a parent and child if the action is brought by the child against the parent. Allow such actions within 30 years from the victim attaining the age of 18 years

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2026

Public Act No. 26-25 (S.B. 157) - AN ACT CONCERNING MUNICIPAL CAMP SAFETY

Section 1 of the act specifies that municipal youth camp staff 21 years of age or older are mandated reporters of child abuse or neglect.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Section 1 is effective upon passage. Signed by the Governor on May 20, 2026

Public Act No. 26-26 (H.B. 5004) - AN ACT CONCERNING CHILD WELFARE ACCOUNTABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY

This act was the omnibus child welfare act drafted by the Committee on Children. DCF leadership collaborated with legislative leaders throughout the session on this piece of legislation.

Sections 1 – 3 Kinship Caregivers

The act requires DCF, when making an emergency placement, to place the child or children with kin if doing so is in the child's best interest. If no suitable kin are available, staff must document in writing the reasons for not placing with kin. Similar provisions of written rationale for not placing with kin must be provided to the court and why the placement with non-kin serves the best interest of the child.

Individuals denied foster care licenses must receive the reasons for denial in writing from DCF. The act provides individuals denied a foster care license the ability to appeal the decision to the DCF commissioner or designee. The Commissioner must make a decision on the appeal no later than 60 days from receipt.

The act establishes a grant program to provide kinship caregivers up to \$625 upon an emergency placement. The funds may be used for clothing, food, safety-related purchases and other necessities for children in their care after an emergency placement. DCF must establish guidelines for the program by January 1, 2027.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2026

Sections 4 and 5 Grant Programs

The act establishes a grant program to provide financial support to caregivers to help cover the cost of after school programs for foster children in their care. DCF currently pays for many of these services, but these additional funds will help fill any gaps that may exist.

It also provides funding for a paid social worker internship program. DCF anticipates these additional funds will go to expanding the paid internship program that already exists. There is also funding for a first-year social worker mentorship program. The program with team a first-year worker with an experienced member of DCF staff to assist the new worker and hopefully help retain first-year employees. In this program, mentors are eligible to receive stipends.

DCF must establish an application process and program guidelines by January 1, 2027.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2026

Sections 6 - 8 Mandatory Trainings

These sections require training for DCF staff on perinatal mood and anxiety disorders, human trafficking and cultural sensitivity and implicit bias.

The act requires DCF to develop, in consultation with the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS), a mandatory educational training program for DCF employees about perinatal mood and anxiety disorders and trauma-informed, non-stigmatizing practices for interacting with people suffering from these disorders. DCF staff currently have the option of attending this training that is offered by DMHAS.

Under existing law, C.G.S. section 17a-106h, DCF must develop human trafficking training. PA 26-70 amended that statute to require that DCF complete the initial training and then a refresher course every three years after that. DCF is updating the existing training that will be provided to all DCF employees.

The act also requires DCF to develop and provide a mandatory educational training program for DCF employees about implicit bias and delivering the agency's services with cultural sensitivity. This training is currently provided during pre-service to all employees, highlighting the Department's racial justice work and ways to reduce proportionality.

Sections 9 and 10 — Postsecondary Education Grant Program

Under existing policy (DCF Policy 3-2-1), DCF provides postsecondary education funding for youth adopted through the Department and youth who remain in services post majority. This section codifies the policy in statute.

These sections also require DCF to provide 2 separate reports on the program to the legislature on July 1, 2027, and January 1, 2028. The January 1, 2028 report must also be submitted to the State Auditors, who in turn must audit the program by July 1, 2028.

Sections 11 and 12 — DCF Online Data Dashboard

These sections require DCF to develop an online data dashboard on the Department's website by January 1, 2027. It also requires other items to be posted on the DCF website, most of which are already available:

- Information concerning offices, programs and services offered by DCF
- Office of Community Relations
- Housing and homelessness programs
- Text message programs
- Information concerning the identification of child abuse and neglect and how to report child abuse and neglect to the DCF Careline
- The DCF mandated reporter training

The act requires the Committee on Children to establish a working group, effective upon passage of the act, to identify information for the online dashboard. The working group must provide their recommendations by October 1, 2026.

Section 13 — DCF Procedures When a Child is out of State

This section pertains to a child who is subject of an investigation, under protective services or resides in a home with another child who meets such criteria.

If a child is planning to be out of state for more than 14 consecutive days, the act requires the parent or guardian to notify DCF at least 48 hours before the child leaves CT. If DCF is notified, no further action is needed.

If DCF is not notified, DCF must attempt to contact the parent or guardian on three consecutive days to determine where the child is located. If the location is determined, DCF must:

- Contact the child welfare agency or local law enforcement where the child is located and request a well child check
- Follow up with local authority for 3 consecutive days to ensure the check was conducted and to discuss any findings
- If the local authority refuses to conduct the check, DCF must send a staff member to visit the child in-person or conduct a virtual visit if in-person is not feasible
- All activities must be documented

DCF must notify all families involved with the Department about this new requirement. This new provision will also be added to the "Parents Right to Know" brochure.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2026

Section 14 – Prohibition Of Using Mental Health Treatment as Reason for DCF Action

This section generally prohibits DCF from using evidence that a parent or guardian has voluntarily sought or received mental health treatment as the sole reason to pursue any action or proceeding. The act does not prevent DCF from acting if the mental health needs of a parent affect their ability to properly parent the child or create harmful situations or environments. This codifies existing DCF practice.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

Section 15 – Consideration of Child’s Expressed Opinion

The act requires DCF social workers to consider a child’s expressed opinion about their situation during home visits when investigating a report of child abuse or neglect of a young child. This codifies existing DCF practice.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2026

Section 16 – Personal Emergency Communication Devices

The act requires DCF to provide personal emergency communication devices to employees who conduct visits to or evaluations of the homes of children under DCF supervision. Under the act, DCF employees are not mandated to carry such devices. DCF has been piloting a program and intends to enter into a contract with the company using funds provided in the budget.

EFFECTIVE DATE: January 1, 2027

Section 17 – Urgent Crisis Center

This section requires DCF to establish an urgent crisis center (UCC) in Stamford by July 1, 2027. DCF no longer has funding for UCC's since they are covered under Medicaid. DCF plans to collaborate with the Department of Social Services (DSS) on the funding aspects of the facility.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2026

Sec. 18 – Child Welfare Committee

This section establishes a 32-member Child Welfare Policy and Oversight Committee charged with evaluating and making recommendations about the state agencies providing services relating to child welfare.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2026

Section 19 – DCF and DESPP Study

This section requires DCF and the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection (DESPP) to study and report on improving communication between the departments and their policies and practices on removing children from home when they are at imminent risk of harm. The report is due January 1, 2027.

Section 20 – DCF and OCA Study

This section requires DCF and the Office of Child Advocate (OCA) to study and report on ways to improve department policies and practices to ensure a child's immediate removal from an out-of-home placement if they become a victim of physical or sexual assault occurring in or as a result of the placement. The report is due January 1, 2027.

Section 21 – Releasing Acknowledgment of Parentage Information

This section permits DPH to release acknowledgment of parentage information to DCF.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2026

Section 22 – Requiring a New DCF Investigator in Certain Circumstances

The act requires DCF to begin a new investigation into reports of child abuse or neglect when a third report of abuse or neglect is accepted within a 12-month period concerning a child or a combination of children who are related or living in the same home. The investigation must be done by a different DCF employee than the one (or ones) who did the previous investigations during the 12-month period.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2026

Section 23 – People Convicted of Certain Crimes Against Children

Under the act, if a person is on parole or probation for a specific crime against a child (see below), the parole or probation authority must notify DCF within one week that the person is residing in a home with a minor child.

Once notified, DCF must check to see if any child in the home is under protective supervision or receiving protective services. If so, DCF must visit the home within one week of notice and assess the safety of the child. DCF will follow existing practice of visiting the child at least once a month.

If there is no DCF involvement, DCF must notify probation or parole. Probation or parole must then check on the child every three months until the parole or probationary period is

completed. As mandated reporters, the probation or parole officer is required to make a Careline report if they suspect abuse or neglect of the child.

The crimes included in this act are as follows:

- Cruelty to persons
- Injury or risk of injury to, or impairing morals of, children; sale of children
- Abandonment of child under the age of six years
- Aggravated sexual assault of a minor
- Promoting prostitution of a person less than 18 years old in the first degree
- Enticing a minor
- Obscenity as to minors
- Employing a minor in an obscene performance
- Promoting a minor in an obscene performance
- Importing child sexual abuse material
- Possessing child sexual abuse material in the first degree, second degree and third degree
- Commercial sexual exploitation of a minor

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2026

Public Act No. 26-27 (H.B. 5039) - AN ACT REQUIRING TRANSPARENCY AND ADDITIONAL OVERSIGHT OF THE DISTRIBUTION OF CERTAIN LEGISLATIVELY DIRECTED FUNDS AND APPROPRIATIONS FOR OTHER EXPENSES

The act limits state agencies from entering written agreements to provide funds to an entity at the direction of the General Assembly, unless the General Assembly has included specific recipient information in legislation or in the Office of Fiscal Analysis' (OFA) budget sheets.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2026

Public Act No. 26-32 (H.B. 5311) - AN ACT CONCERNING THE NONISSUANCE OF A STANDING CRIMINAL PROTECTIVE ORDER IN THE CASE OF A FAMILY VIOLENCE CRIME

This act requires any Superior Court that does not issue a standing criminal protective order against someone convicted, or found not guilty due to mental disease or defect, of a family violence crime, to state its reasons for not doing so on the record.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2026

Public Act No. 26-37 (H.B. 5468) - AN ACT CONCERNING THE PROVISION OF PARENT-MANAGED LEARNING

Starting with the 2028-29 school year, this act requires parents or guardians of most school-age children to annually complete an intent to educate form indicating whether their child will enroll in a public school, attend a nonpublic school or be instructed through parent-managed learning (homeschooling). The forms must be submitted to the school district where the parent resides by October 1.

The act deems parents and guardians in compliance with this requirement if their child attends a public school or if the nonpublic school the child attends files the required annual attendance report. In those cases, the intent to educate form is not required.

Starting with the 2027-28 school year, the act requires parents and guardians who withdraw a child from public school to go, in person, to the school district's office and sign a withdrawal form. When the withdrawal form is submitted, the school district must conduct a records check with DCF to determine if any person 18 years of age or older who resides in the home with the child is on the child abuse and neglect registry or has an open investigation with DCF. This check does not constitute a report of suspected child abuse or neglect by the parent or guardian.

The school district, within two days after receiving a withdrawal form, must conduct the records check with DCF. DCF has 5 business days to respond to the check request. The act specifically allows DCF to release information from its records to school boards in order to complete this requirement.

If the check shows that any adult in the home is on the child abuse and neglect registry or has an open investigation with DCF, the child may not be withdrawn. The school district must notify the parent or guardian whether the withdrawal is effective. If it is not, the school district must tell the parent the reason the withdrawal is not effective and how he or she may challenge the records check findings, including appropriate DCF contact information.

This act also deems DCF to be a state educational authority under the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) for the records check and allows it to receive the educational records of any child for whom a withdrawal form is signed.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2027

Public Act No. 26-47 (H.B. 5375) - AN ACT CONCERNING THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE INSURANCE AND REAL ESTATE COMMITTEE WORKING GROUPS

Section 1 of the act requires the Insurance Department to study the feasibility of allowing more than one nonprofit entity to pool their liability insurance policies, establishing a captive insurance company, risk management agency or a program to insure the risk of such pool, and establishing any other insurance program that may address the needs of nonprofit entities that contract with the state.

The report will be due by November 1, 2026.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage. Signed by the Governor on May 27, 2026

Public Act No. 26-48 (S.B. 155) - AN ACT CONCERNING THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES AND THE DATA LINK CONNECTICUT SYSTEM

This public act was offered by DCF this session.

Most of the sections of the act consolidate eight separate DCF reports into one annual report on DCF's activities and makes various changes to the information the report must provide. The annual report will be due October 15th based on information and data from the preceding fiscal year, with the first report being submitted on October 15, 2027. All the other reports are repealed on July 1, 2026.

The reports being consolidated include:

- The racial justice report pursuant to C.G.S. section 17a-6e
- The sibling visitation report pursuant to C.G.S. section 17a-10a (f)
- The DCF operated facilities report pursuant to C.G.S. section 17a-32a
- The animal abuse report pursuant to C.G.S. section 17a-100c
- The Family Assessment Response report pursuant to C.G.S. section 17a-101g (g)
- The private provider outcomes report pursuant to C.G.S. section 17a-63a
- The foster care licensing practices report pursuant to C.G.S. section 17a-114g
- The mental and behavioral health treatment grant report pursuant to C.G.S. section 17a-22ii

The act also consolidates two existing reporting requirements concerning the Behavioral Health Partnership cost savings report into the existing annual report that DCF, DMHAS and DSS must provide that evaluates the Behavioral Health Partnership program and its services.

Section 3 of the act removes the requirement that DCF report any missing or abducted children in DCF custody to the FBI's National Crime Information Center (NCIC). In practice, only law enforcement authorities may access the NCIC to make these reports.

Pursuant to existing law, DCF must, within 24 hours after a child in its custody is determined to be missing or abducted, notify the law enforcement authority with jurisdiction where the child was reported missing or abducted and National Center for Missing and Exploited Children.

The last several sections of the act rename the P20 WIN program "Data Link Connecticut" (or "DataLinkCT"). The program is a state data system used to match and integrate data from state agencies, colleges and universities, and other organizations to inform policy and practice for education, workforce and supportive service efforts.

The act requires the data system executive board to report on disconnected youth every two years rather than annually, as current law requires. It makes the first biennial report due by July 1, 2027.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2026, except the name change for DataLinkCT is effective October 1, 2026

Public Act No. 26-62 (H.B. 5447) - AN ACT IMPLEMENTING RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE TRANSFORMING CHILDREN'S BEHAVIORAL HEALTH POLICY AND PLANNING COMMITTEE

Sections 1 and 2 direct the Commission on Women, Children, Seniors, Equity and Opportunity to convene two working groups. One will concern the treatment of eating disorders. The second will develop a food education roadmap and model school nutrition curriculum.

Section 3 requires DSS, in collaboration with DCF, DDS, DMHAS and the Office of the Behavioral Health Advocate, to study the feasibility of establishing an inpatient facility to provide psychiatric treatment services to children and young adults between the ages of 14 and 21 who have intellectual or developmental disabilities.

The study is due to the legislature by July 1, 2027 and shall include the appropriate size of such facility and number of persons to be served at one time; the best treatment practices for the population; the operational costs of establishing such a facility and the feasibility of operating the facility within available agency appropriations; appropriate sites for the facility; and billing options for payment of inpatient psychiatric services for the population served, including Medicaid billing options.

Section 4 requires school-based health centers to use an evidence-based screening tool for early identification of eating disorders and provide the screening to each patient in grades 6 through 12 during the patient's annual health assessment.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage. Signed by the Governor on May 19, 2026. Section 4 is effective July 1, 2026

Public Act No. 26-68 (S.B. 1) - AN ACT MAKING ADJUSTMENTS TO THE STATE BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM ENDING JUNE 30, 2027, MAKING DEFICIENCY APPROPRIATIONS FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDING JUNE 30, 2026, AUTHORIZING AND ADJUSTING BONDS OF THE STATE AND CONCERNING PROVISIONS RELATING TO REVENUE, SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION AND OTHER ITEMS TO IMPLEMENT THE STATE BUDGET

The full line-item budget for DCF can be found below. Highlights include:

- The budget provides over \$12 million more to the DCF budget for FY 2027
- Much of the additional funding is for the programs and grants established by PA 26-26
- \$1.5 million in bonding for the data dashboard
- Additional staff for background checks and training
- \$1 million for increased foster care maintenance payments
- \$14,000 for Sherman Youth Service Bureau
- \$250,000 to expand Transitional Supports for Emerging Adults (TSEA) statewide
- \$250,000 for Pawcatuck OPCC
- \$618,000 for Mid-Fairfield Child Guidance

DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES		Adjusted FY 27
Personal Services	[303,233,500]	<u>304,598,000</u>
Other Expenses	[31,137,956]	<u>34,075,956</u>
Family Support Services	1,064,233	
Differential Response System	9,367,256	
Regional Behavioral Health Consultation	1,838,167	
Community Care Coordination	8,957,944	
Health Assessment and Consultation	1,596,776	
Grants for Psychiatric Clinics for Children	[17,880,105]	<u>18,748,105</u>
Day Treatment Centers for Children	8,219,601	
Child Abuse and Neglect Intervention	9,988,016	
Community Based Prevention Programs	9,657,655	
Family Violence Outreach and Counseling	4,009,230	
Supportive Housing	[21,180,221]	<u>21,680,221</u>
No Nexus Special Education	2,452,640	
Family Preservation Services	7,242,683	
Substance Abuse Treatment	[10,073,982]	<u>11,708,982</u>
Child Welfare Support Services	2,854,163	
Board and Care for Children - Adoption	106,884,511	
Board and Care for Children - Foster	[123,521,818]	<u>125,021,818</u>
Board and Care for Children - Short-term and Residential	[65,628,396]	<u>69,628,396</u>
Individualized Family Supports	[3,871,304]	<u>4,021,304</u>
Community Kidcare	61,011,129	
Covenant to Care	185,911	

<u>Various Grants</u>		<u>575,000</u>
Juvenile Review Boards	6,043,187	
Youth Transition and Success Programs	[1,016,220]	<u>1,266,220</u>
[Love146]	[500,000]	
Youth Service Bureaus	[2,733,240]	<u>2,747,240</u>
Youth Service Bureau Enhancement	1,115,161	
AGENCY TOTAL	[823,265,005]	<u>836,559,505</u>

Section 222 requires health care providers who are employed by a state agency at a state-operated health care facility or institution, and that provide direct patient care, to receive state employee hazardous duty disability benefits if they are injured as a result of being assaulted while performing their duties and the injury is a direct result of the special hazards inherent in their duties. This statute change includes staff employed at Solnit Hospital and both psychiatric residential treatment facility campuses.

The law requires the state to pay all necessary medical and hospital expenses resulting from the injury. In addition, if the employee is totally incapacitated due to the injury, the law requires that the employee receive 100% of their salary at the time of the injury, plus normal salary increases, for up to five years. If the employee is still totally disabled after five years, the benefit drops to 50% of their salary for as long as the employee remains totally disabled.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2026. Section 222 is effective October 1, 2026

Public Act No. 26-70 (H.B. 5476) - AN ACT CONCERNING OVERSIGHT OF EFFORTS TO PREVENT HUMAN TRAFFICKING AND THE USE OF CONFIDENTIAL CRISIS HOTLINES AT CORRECTIONAL INSTITUTIONS

Sections 1 and 14 expand the Office of Policy and Management's (OPM) responsibility to coordinate human trafficking efforts.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2026

Section 2 increases the Trafficking in Persons Council's membership by adding the Secretary of the State or the Secretary's designee.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2026

Sections 3 and 4 makes the DCF-developed human trafficking training mandatory for:

- All DCF employees who have regular contact with children.
- All employees of DCF contracted providers.

All employees must complete the training by July 1, 2027 or not later than 6 months after hire and must complete a refresher training program every three years after that.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage. Signed by the Governor on May 27, 2026.

Section 5 requires the Chief Court Administrator, within available appropriations, to develop and provide training for all Judicial Branch Court Support Services Division (JB-CSSD) employees on the trafficking of minor children and adults.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2026

Section 6 requires all facilities as defined in 17a-93 to:

- Maintain policies covering its plans, program and services which shall be clearly stated in writing and reviewed for necessary updates not less than annually
- Maintain personnel policies for the training and education of employees
- Develop a plan for ongoing training which includes a written curriculum and a minimum number of hours of annual training
- Submit to the department not less than once every two years a written quality assurance plan
- Provide internal and external security measures necessary to ensure the safety of residents of the facility and
- Provide supervisory staff capable of ensuring (A) the health and safety of each child; (B) the security and well-being of each child; and (C) appropriate security of the facility while maintaining a home-like atmosphere

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2026

Section 7 specifies that the child advocate's existing responsibility for reviewing where children are placed by a state agency or department includes reviewing Specialized

Trauma-Informed Treatment Assessment and Reunification (STTAR) Enhancement Plan homes.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2026

Section 8 establishes a Human Trafficking Prevention and Response Subcommittee of the Statewide Steering Committee to implement items from "A Blueprint to Strengthen Connecticut's Response to Human Trafficking". DCF has participated in the Steering Committee and assisted in drafting the blueprint. The subcommittee will explore ways to improve human trafficking prevention and detection by suggesting changes to the state's infrastructure around trafficking, a more comprehensive training curriculum and expanding services for victims of trafficking.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2026

Section 9 requires DCF and the Office of the Chief State's Attorney to set up multidisciplinary Teams (MDT) to help abused, neglected or trafficked children. MDT's and Child Advocacy Centers exist state-wide currently.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2026

Section 10 requires DCF, within available appropriations, to assist the Police Officers Standards and Training Council (POST) with developing a human trafficking training for law enforcement. DCF currently collaborates with the state police, and others on trafficking training initiatives.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2026

Public Act No. 26-91 (S.B. 468) - AN ACT CONCERNING THE PAYMENT OF NONPROFIT HUMAN SERVICES PROVIDERS

This act requires OPM, if possible under federal law, to establish policies and procedures requiring state agencies to pay a private provider organization for any services provided under a purchase of service contract within 45 days after the receipt of a properly completed claim or receipt of services, whichever is later.

EFFECTIVE DATES: July 1, 2026

Public Act No. 26-92 (S.B. 475) – AN ACT CONCERNING JUDICIAL BRANCH OPERATIONS

This act is the annual submission from the Judicial Branch. As in past years, DCF has worked collaboratively with the Branch on a few of the provisions,

Section 5 permits the Judicial Branch to inform DCF about progress on, and compliance with, court-ordered intervention and services when there are open cases in both the Branch's family violence intervention unit and DCF. This communication sharing between the two departments will enhance the protection of children and inform employees to provide better services for the family.

The act also amends court statutes to comply with the CT Parentage Act by stipulating a person is related to a child by blood, marriage or law.

EFFECTIVE DATES: July 1, 2026

Section 16 requires the DCF Juvenile Justice Education Unit (JJEU) to inform the local board of education when a child is placed in a juvenile residential center. JJEU is responsible for maintaining a student's educational needs when transitioning from detention or incarceration back to the community.

EFFECTIVE DATES: January 1, 2027

Public Act No. 26-98 (S.B. 116) – AN ACT CONCERNING THE PREVENTION OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING

This act requires hotels, motels, inns, and similar lodging establishments to register annually with the Department of Consumer Protection beginning January 1, 2027.

It also establishes a compliance and enforcement framework to ensure lodging establishments adhere to existing anti-trafficking requirements, including employee training, awareness campaigns, guest recordkeeping and posting information about services and hotlines available to trafficking victims.

Additionally, it authorizes the Department of Consumer Protection to audit records and assess civil penalties for noncompliance with these requirements.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2026

Public Act No. 26-102 (S.B. 87) – AN ACT ESTABLISHING A NONPROFIT PROVIDER ADVISORY BOARD AND PROHIBITING AUTO INSURANCE PENALTIES ON VOLUNTEER DRIVERS PROVIDING TRANSPORTATION TO NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS

This act establishes a 23-member Nonprofit Provider Advisory Board within OPM, to advise and make recommendations on nonprofit service delivery, financial viability, and funding opportunities. The DCF Commissioner, or designee, is a member of the advisory board.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage. Signed by Governor on June 2, 2026.

Public Act No. 26-105 (S.B. 137) – AN ACT IMPLEMENTING THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE OFFICE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD

Section 5 requires a DCF background check of the state child abuse or neglect registry for every childcare services provider or staff member.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2026

Public Act No. 26-125 (H.B. 5259) – AN ACT CONCERNING THE EDUCATION OF HOMELESS CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Existing state law specifically requires boards of education to provide educational services to homeless children and youths in conformity with the federal McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act. This act maintains this requirement but specifies that these services must be provided as established in federal law as of December 23, 2022.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2026

Special Act No. 26-5 (S.B. 156) – AN ACT ESTABLISHING A TASK FORCE TO STUDY THE VOLUNTARY SURRENDER OF INFANTS

This act establishes a task force to study the voluntary surrender of infants in the state. The purpose is to review the existing Safe Haven law and determine if any recommendations should be made to update the law and the practices for the voluntary surrendering of an

infant. A report on the findings and recommendations is due to the legislature by May 1, 2027.

The DCF Commissioner, or designee, will be a member of the task force.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage. Signed by the Governor on May 14, 2026.

Special Act No. 26-11 (H.B. 5163) - AN ACT ESTABLISHING A TASK FORCE TO STUDY METHODS AND PROGRAMS FOR IMPROVING AFFORDABILITY FOR CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND YOUNG PROFESSIONALS

This act establishes a task force to study the state's affordability for children, families, and young professionals through the analysis of cash assistance, childcare, and systemic barriers with a report due to the legislature by June 1, 2028.

The DCF Commissioner, or designee, is a member.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage. Signed by Governor on June 4, 2026