Department of Planning and Budget
2025 General Assembly Session
State Fiscal Impact Statement

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Bill Number: SB 818 **Patron:** Favola
Bill Title: Children in foster care; federal benefits, notice of eligibility

Bill Summary: The proposed legislation directs the Department of Social Services (DSS) to provide written notice of a child in foster care's eligibility to receive certain federal benefits, specified in the bill, to (i) the child, if the child is 13 years of age or older; (ii) the child's parent, parents or guardians, or other person responsible for the child; (iii) the guardian ad litem; (iv) the council appointed for the child; and (v) the local department of social services or child-placing agency.

Budget Amendment Necessary: No **Items Impacted:** None

Fiscal Summary: The bill is expected to have minimal fiscal impact on impacted agencies and can be absorbed within existing resources.

Fiscal Analysis: As of December 1, 2024, there were 4,605 (0-17 years old) children and 800 young adults (18+ years old) in foster care throughout the state. DSS estimates that approximately 10 percent of these youth are eligible for specified federal benefits resulting in approximately 2,164 written notices (541 youth x 4 recipients receiving written notices per youth). The cost to send certified mail and receive an electronic delivery fee is $5.80 for a total cost of $12,551 ($5.80 x 2,164) the first year for the initial notifications. Each year thereafter, notifications would be sent to the youth entering foster care for the first time. Approximately 2,400 youth enter care each year and DSS estimates that 10 percent of that number could be eligible for federal benefits. Therefore, as new youth enter care, it would cost an estimated $5,568 (2,400 x 10% x 4 written notices x $5.80) for notifications. Additionally, DSS indicates that a part-time contractor position at a cost of $30,000 ($20/hour x 1,500 hours/year) annually would be needed to obtain the information for these notices. Local departments of social services are already required to assess all youth for federal benefits when they enter foster care. As such, there is no expected impact associated with performing new eligibility determinations.

The total estimated cost of this bill is $42,551 ($31,157 general fund) in FY 2026 and $35,568 ($26,592 general fund) in subsequent years. It is assumed that DSS would be able to absorb these costs within existing resources.

Other: None