

Department of Planning and Budget
2026 General Assembly Session
State Fiscal Impact Statement

PUBLISHED: 1/27/2026 5:05 PM

ORIGINAL

Bill Number: HB651

Patron: Kent

Bill Title: Social Services, Department of; family assessments; face-to-face interviews with victim children.

Bill Summary: Directs the Department of Social Services to amend its regulations to require that face-to-face interviews with victim children younger than three years of age conducted as part of a family assessment occur within 24 hours of receiving the report that triggers such family assessment. Under current law, the requirement that such interview be conducted within 24 hours applies to children younger than two years of age.

Budget Amendment Necessary: No

Items Impacted: Item 333

Explanation: Although this legislation is expected to result in a fiscal impact for the Department of Social Services, general fund appropriation addressing the provisions of this bill was provided in the introduced budget. Therefore, no budget amendment is necessary.

Fiscal Summary: The proposed legislation will require new general fund expenditures on the part of the Department of Social Services (DSS). The impacts in the table below are offset by appropriation provided in the proposed budget that addresses the provisions of this bill (Item 333). See fiscal analysis for additional information.

General Fund Expenditure Impact:

Agency	FY2026	FY2027	FY2028	FY2029	FY2030	FY2031
DSS (765)	-	\$159,072	\$159,072	\$159,072	\$159,072	\$159,072
TOTAL	-	\$159,072	\$159,072	\$159,072	\$159,072	\$159,072

Fiscal Analysis: This bill directs the Department of Social Services (DSS) to amend its regulations to require that face-to-face interviews with children under three years of age conducted as part of a family assessment occur within 24 hours of receiving the report that triggers such family assessment.

Pursuant to § 63.2-1504 of the Code of Virginia, DSS utilizes a differential response system when responding to valid reports and complaints of child abuse and neglect. Under this system, valid reports and complaints are assigned to either the investigative track (for cases requiring a full investigation) or the family assessment track (for cases focused on assessing family needs and providing appropriate support services). Valid reports and complaints are also assigned a response priority level that determines how quickly face-to-face contact is made. This bill concerns valid reports or complaints of child abuse or neglect that are assigned to the family assessment track.

Department of Planning and Budget
2026 General Assembly Session
State Fiscal Impact Statement

In FY 2024, local departments of social services (LDSS) received a cumulative total of 10,591 valid referrals of alleged abuse or neglect involving a child under the age of three. This number includes all reports assigned to both the investigative and family assessment tracks. Of these, 6,378 referrals were categorized as Response Priority 1 under the differential response system, which already requires face-to-face contact to be made within 24 hours. Additionally, 4,125 valid referrals were received outside of traditional business hours. The overlap of referrals that were both Response Priority 1 and received after hours totaled 2,728. This means that as many as 1,397 referrals (4,125 referrals received after hours minus 2,728 referrals received after hours and Response Priority 1) would now necessitate a 24-hour response from LDSS, depending on the track to which they are assigned. In Virginia, it is estimated that 75 percent of valid referrals are assigned to the family assessment track, meaning that 1,048 of the 1,397 referrals received after hours would newly require a 24-hour response time.

DSS reports that the agency will need additional funding to support overtime pay for additional on-call hours worked as a result of this legislation. Each of the 1,048 new referrals is expected to require around three hours of after-hours CPS response. The average overtime compensation rate is \$47 per hour plus FICA taxes, which are estimated at nearly 1.08%. This results in an estimated general fund cost increase of \$159,072 beginning in FY 2027 and continuing each year thereafter.

DSS will also be required to modify the Comprehensive Child Welfare Information System (CCWIS) to update static text in the Structured Decision Making Intake Tool reflecting the provisions of this legislation. This tool is used by LDSS as part of the differential response process to determine how quickly the local departments must initiate the first face-to-face contact with the child alleged to be a victim. The projected cost for this system change is estimated at \$4,000 and can be absorbed within existing appropriation.

Other: n/a