



# House of Representatives

General Assembly

**File No. 49**

January Session, 2023

Substitute House Bill No. 6640

*House of Representatives, March 13, 2023*

The Committee on Children reported through REP. LINEHAN of the 103rd Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the House, that the substitute bill ought to pass.

***AN ACT CONCERNING HOME VISITS AND EVALUATIONS BY THE COMMISSIONER OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES.***

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

- 1 Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2023*) When the Commissioner of
- 2 Children and Families, or the commissioner's designee, conducts a
- 3 mandatory visit to or evaluation of a home where a child in the care and
- 4 custody of the commissioner has been or may be placed, the
- 5 commissioner, or the commissioner's designee, shall not conduct such
- 6 visit or evaluation by telephonic, video or other conferencing platform
- 7 if (1) such child is under six years of age, (2) such child is six years of age
- 8 or older and not enrolled in a public school or nonpublic school, (3) such
- 9 visit is conducted pursuant to section 17a-101g of the general statutes,
- 10 (4) such child's case has been referred to the Department of Children
- 11 and Families' ongoing services unit and such case has been deemed
- 12 moderate or high risk or the department has identified a safety factor
- 13 and instituted a safety plan after conducting a risk assessment, (5) the
- 14 department has approved a family arrangement in such child's case, (6)

15 such child has been placed in foster care, a group home or a residential  
 16 treatment program, (7) such child is nonverbal or cannot communicate  
 17 adequately due to a disability, or (8) the immediately preceding visit to  
 18 or evaluation of such home by the commissioner, or the commissioner's  
 19 designee, was conducted by telephonic, video or other conferencing  
 20 platform.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	July 1, 2023	New section

**Statement of Legislative Commissioners:**

In Section 1, "is required to visit or evaluate" was changed to "conducts a mandatory visit to or evaluation of", and "such visit or evaluation shall not be conducted" was changed to "the commissioner, or the commissioner's designee, shall not conduct such visit or evaluation" for consistency with standard drafting conventions.

**KID**      *Joint Favorable Subst.*

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*The following Fiscal Impact Statement and Bill Analysis are prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose. In general, fiscal impacts are based upon a variety of informational sources, including the analyst's professional knowledge. Whenever applicable, agency data is consulted as part of the analysis, however final products do not necessarily reflect an assessment from any specific department.*

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**OFA Fiscal Note**

**State Impact:** None

**Municipal Impact:** None

**Explanation**

The bill, which prohibits home visits and evaluations by the Department of Children and Families by telephonic, video, or other conferencing platform in various circumstances, does not result in a fiscal impact to the State or municipalities. It codifies certain post-pandemic policies of DCF.

**The Out Years**

**State Impact:** None

**Municipal Impact:** None

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**OLR Bill Analysis**

**sHB 6640**

***AN ACT CONCERNING HOME VISITS AND EVALUATIONS BY THE COMMISSIONER OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES.***

**SUMMARY**

Under certain circumstances, this bill explicitly prohibits the Department of Children and Families (DCF) commissioner, or the commissioner's designee, from using telephonic, video, or other conferencing platforms when the department is required to visit or evaluate a home where a child in the department's care has been, or may be, placed.

The prohibition applies to visits or evaluations conducted to investigate a report of child abuse or neglect or to cases that involve a child who is (1) younger than age six; (2) age six or older and not enrolled in school (public or nonpublic); (3) nonverbal or cannot communicate adequately due to a disability; or (4) in foster care, a group home, or a residential treatment program.

The prohibition also applies after a case has been (1) referred to DCF's ongoing services unit and (2) deemed moderate or high risk or the department has identified a safety factor and instituted a safety plan after conducting a risk assessment.

The bill also prohibits the department from using these technologies to conduct visits or evaluations (1) after it has approved a family arrangement in the child's case or (2) if it conducted the immediately preceding visit or evaluation by telephonic, video, or other conferencing platform.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2023

**COMMITTEE ACTION**

Committee on Children

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 17 Nay 2 (02/28/2023)