
OLR Bill Analysis

SB 126 (File 8, as amended by Senate "A")*

AN ACT CONCERNING IN-PERSON HOME VISITS BY THE DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES.

SUMMARY

This bill requires the Department of Children and Families (DCF) commissioner, or her designee, to do home visits or evaluations in person, in accordance with the department's safety plan (see below). The bill makes an exception by requiring the visit or evaluation to be done using telephonic, video, or other conferencing platform if any resident of the home is subject to a Department of Public Health (DPH) order of quarantine or isolation (see below).

Under the bill, a "safety plan" is a plan DCF makes to address or mitigate parent or guardian behaviors or conditions or circumstances in a home that may make the home unsafe for children. A safety plan specifies (1) actions that have been or will be taken to address or mitigate the unsafe behaviors, conditions, or circumstances; (2) who will take them; and (3) when the department will review the actions.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2024

*Senate Amendment "A" changes the condition under which the DCF home visits and evaluations can be done remotely to situations where any resident of the home is subject to a DPH order of quarantine or isolation. The underlying bill instead required in-person visits and evaluations if a parent or guardian in the home has a substance abuse disorder.

ORDERS OF QUARANTINE AND ISOLATION

By law, if the governor has declared a public health emergency, the DPH commissioner, if authorized by the governor, may order into quarantine or isolation, as appropriate, any individual, group of

individuals, or individuals present within a geographic area whom the commissioner has reasonable grounds to believe to be (1) infected with, or exposed to, a communicable disease; (2) contaminated or exposed to contamination; or (3) at reasonable risk of having a communicable disease, being contaminated, or passing the communicable disease or contamination to other people. The DPH commissioner can order the quarantine or isolation only if she determines that the individual or individuals pose a significant threat to the public health and that quarantine or isolation is necessary and the least restrictive alternative to protect or preserve the public health.

The law establishes specific conditions and principles that the commissioner must adhere to when deciding whether to issue an order of quarantine and isolation (CGS § 19a-131b).

COMMITTEE ACTION

Committee on Children

Joint Favorable

Yea 17 Nay 0 (02/29/2024)