LEGISLATIVE FISCAL ESTIMATE

[Second Reprint]

SENATE, No. 383

STATE OF NEW JERSEY
219th LEGISLATURE

DATED: JANUARY 10, 2022

SUMMARY

Synopsis: Establishes standards for domestic violence counseling and creates "Abuse Intervention Program Advisory Committee."

Type of Impact: Annual State expenditure increase to the General Fund.

Agencies Affected: Department of Children and Families; the Judiciary.

Office of Legislative Services Estimate

Fiscal Impact	
Annual State Cost Increase	Indeterminate

- The Office of Legislative Services (OLS) estimates that this bill will result in an annual indeterminate State expenditure increase as the Department of Children and Families (DCF) would need to establish the Abuse Intervention Program Advisory Committee, and it is likely that the DCF would see increased administrative costs. Further, the DCF, subject to the availability of funds, would fund select abuse intervention programs.

- The DCF would also support the development, refinement, and maintenance of the necessary implementation infrastructure including model refinement, training, quality improvement, and evaluation; and provide periodic progress updates to the committee on the selected Batterers' Intervention Program model. The OLS does not have sufficient information to estimate this cost to the DCF.

- The Judiciary is likely to incur indeterminate annual costs to implement the compliance protocol, including a prompt and effective review by the court for noncompliance. The bill does not clarify the specific requirements for such a review. The OLS does not have sufficient information to estimate this cost to the Judiciary.

BILL DESCRIPTION

The bill specifies that any domestic violence counseling in which a defendant participates based on a court order issued in a domestic violence matter would have certain components as specified in the bill.

The bill would create within the DCF the Abuse Intervention Program Advisory Committee. In consultation with the committee, the department would select an existing evidence-based, evidence-supported or promising Batterers' Intervention Program model. Based on strategic priorities and subject to the availability of funds, the DCF would fund the selected abuse intervention programs. The department would access consultation and technical assistance from selected model developers or other field experts; support the development, refinement, and maintenance of the necessary implementation infrastructure including, but not limited to, model refinement, training, quality improvement, and evaluation; and provide periodic progress updates to the committee on the selected Batterers' Intervention Program model.

FISCAL ANALYSIS

EXECUTIVE BRANCH

None received.

OFFICE OF LEGISLATIVE SERVICES

The OLS estimates that this bill will result in an annual indeterminate State expenditure increase. The DCF would need to establish the Abuse Intervention Program Advisory Committee, and it is likely that the DCF would encumber administrative costs as a result. Further, the DCF, subject to the availability of funds, would fund select abuse intervention programs. Per the provisions of the bill, the DCF would support the development, refinement, and maintenance of the necessary implementation infrastructure including, but not limited to, model refinement, training, quality improvement, and evaluation; and provide periodic progress updates to the committee on the selected Batterers' Intervention Program model. It is unclear what the additional costs would be for adhering to these new requirements.

According to the DCF website, the department's Office of Domestic Violence Services funds 22 domestic violence programs and the New Jersey Coalition to End Domestic Violence. There is at least one DCF-funded domestic violence program in each county.

With regard to other requirements of the program, including but not limited to, instituting risk assessments to identify dynamics of domestic violence and escalating risk factors, it is unclear as to who would implement this aspect of the program. Moreover, based on the DCF offerings for domestic violence related programs, it is unclear if some of these requirements are already being met. According to the DCF website, a Batterer's Intervention Program is currently operating in Sussex, Morris, Burlington, Monmouth, and Atlantic counties. The OLS does not have sufficient information on the costs involved.

The Judiciary is likely to incur indeterminate costs to conduct a compliance protocol, including a prompt and effective review by the court for noncompliance by participants. The bill does not clarify the specific requirements for such a review, and the OLS does not have sufficient information to estimate the cost to the Judiciary.

Section: *Judiciary*

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This legislative fiscal estimate has been produced by the Office of Legislative Services due to the failure of the Executive Branch to respond to our request for a fiscal note.

This fiscal estimate has been prepared pursuant to P.L.1980, c.67 (C.52:13B-6 et seq.).