



SPONSOR: Sen. Gay & Sen. Hansen & Rep. Longhurst
Sens. Ennis, Lopez; Reps. Briggs King, Lambert,
Morrison, K. Williams

DELAWARE STATE SENATE
151st GENERAL ASSEMBLY

SENATE BILL NO. 197

AN ACT TO AMEND TITLE 29 OF THE DELAWARE CODE RELATING TO CHILD PROTECTION TREATMENT CASELOADS OF THE DIVISION OF FAMILY SERVICES.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF DELAWARE:

Section 1. Amend § 9015, Title 29 of the Delaware Code by making deletions as shown by strike through and insertions as shown by underline as follows:

(b) Each fiscal year, pursuant to established methodology, the Secretary and the Office of Management and Budget shall review projections on the number of child abuse and neglect cases and the number of child care facilities to be licensed and monitored for the next fiscal year. Based on these projections, the General Assembly shall fund, subject to a specific appropriation, funds and positions for the next fiscal year, beginning each July 1, to the Division of Family Services and the Department of Education to provide:

(1) An adequate number of child protection investigation workers so that regional caseloads do not exceed 11 cases per fully functioning worker;

(2) An adequate number of child protection treatment workers so that regional caseloads do not exceed ~~18~~ 12 cases per fully functioning worker;

(3) An adequate number of Family Service supervisors so that there is 1 supervisor for every 5 workers;

(4) An adequate number of training positions, but not less than 15, to ensure that fully trained staff are always available to fill vacancies;

(5) An adequate number of licensing specialists for child care centers and family child care homes so that caseloads do not exceed 150 per specialist;

(6) An adequate number of licensing specialists for 24-hour residential child care facilities so that caseloads do not exceed 30 per specialist; and

(7) An adequate number of licensing supervisors so that there is 1 supervisor for every 5 workers.

In the event that regional caseloads exceed the above set standards during any fiscal year, the Office of Management and Budget shall, to the extent moneys are available, authorize the use of casual seasonal positions as a temporary mechanism to ensure that caseloads remain within Delaware standards. Fully functioning workers are workers

23 that are employed and working full-time, and do not include workers on extended medical leave, trainees who have not
24 completed training or workers with restricted caseloads.

25 Section 2. This Act shall be phased in over two fiscal years beginning on July 1, 2022 and take full effect by July
26 1, 2024.

SYNOPSIS

This bill adopts a key recommendation of the Child Protection Accountability Commission Caseloads and Workloads final report approved on November 20, 2019 that child protection treatment caseload standards be reduced from 18 to 12 families per worker. This report concluded that child protection treatment worker caseload standards within the Division of Family Services present significant safety risks to children and families. Due to the volume of work generated by a caseload of 18 families, workers are significantly restricted in the time workers can spend on critical case activities, such as family engagement, assessment of safety, and face-to-face contact with children and families. Section 2 states that funding will be phased in over two fiscal years beginning in FY23.

Author: Senator Gay