



Fiscal Note

Legislative Council Staff

Nonpartisan Services for Colorado's Legislature

HB 25-1200: MODS TO OFFICE OF CHILD PROTECTION OMBUDSMAN

Prime Sponsors:

Rep. Feret
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Published for: House Health & Human Services**Drafting number:** LLS 25-0806**Version:** Initial Fiscal Note**Date:** February 21, 2025**Fiscal note status:** The fiscal note reflects the introduced bill.

Summary Information

Overview. The bill reorganizes and updates statutes for the Office of the Child Protection Ombudsman to clarify responsibilities and creates new measures for certain youth facilities.

Types of impacts. The bill is projected to affect the following areas on an ongoing basis:

- Minimal State Workload

Appropriations. No appropriation is required.

Table 1
State Fiscal Impacts

| Type of Impact | Budget Year FY 2025-26 | Out Year FY 2026-27 |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| State Revenue | \$0 | \$0 |
| State Expenditures | \$0 | \$0 |
| Transferred Funds | \$0 | \$0 |
| Change in TABOR Refunds | \$0 | \$0 |
| Change in State FTE | 0.0 FTE | 0.0 FTE |

Summary of Legislation

The bill reorganizes and updates the statutes governing the Office of the Child Protection Ombudsman (CPO). It clarifies the definition of “complaint” and when the CPO may receive and conduct an investigation of complaints concerning child protection services. It also specifies that the CPO must comply with all state and federal confidentiality laws. The bill outlines their ability to request and access necessary information during investigations, access child welfare systems, and physically access residential child care facilities and other youth facilities operated by the Department of Human Services (CDHS) in response to requests received by the CPO.

Additionally, the CPO must create and distribute information about its role and complaint process, which residential child care facilities must display. The CPO must report annually on its outreach efforts to these facilities and other CDHS-operated facilities.

State Expenditures

Workload will minimally increase in the CPO to conduct outreach to youth facilities on CPO processes and report on outreach activities. This increase is expected to be minimal and can be accomplished within existing resources.

The bill is not expected to increase workload and number of cases for the CPO, as the bill does not expand the agency’s investigative role. Workload may minimally increase related to new access to some child welfare systems such as the child welfare training academy, but overall the CPO already has access to major systems and information, so any impact to CPO and the CDHS is expected to be minimal.

CDHS facilities and licensed residential child care facilities must grant the CPO physical access to meet with youth in person and display CPO materials in their facilities. While this may increase workload for CDHS to grant access and ensure compliance with these provisions, the impact is expected to be minimal. The CPO can currently meet with youth in some capacity at these facilities and the option to conduct virtual meetings is included in the bill.

Effective Date

The bill takes effect 90 days following adjournment of the General Assembly sine die, assuming no referendum petition is filed.

Departmental Difference

CDHS estimates that 0.5 FTE is required to support the additional workload from the increased scope of authority of the CPO and to monitor compliance among facilities. This includes administrative tasks related to training system access and assisting facilities in posting CPO

materials, addressing non-compliance and providing training on the bill's requirements. The fiscal note assumes additional staff is not required, as the bill does not substantially expand the CPO's investigative authority but rather clarifies existing duties. Additionally, CDHS already monitors licensed facilities and can absorb any workload related to ensuring compliance with the new requirements within existing resources.

State and Local Government Contacts

Behavioral Health Administration

Human Services

Counties

Judicial

Early Childhood

Office of the Child Protection Ombudsman