



## HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

# FISCAL NOTE

HOUSE BILL NO. 1075

PRINTERS NO. 1914

PRIME SPONSOR: Moul

### COST / (SAVINGS)

FUND	FY 2012/13	FY 2013/14
General Fund	\$0	See Fiscal Impact

**SUMMARY:** House Bill 1075, Printer's Number 1914, amends the Public Welfare Code to require family finding services. The effective date is 60 days.

**ANALYSIS:** This legislation requires county agencies to conduct family finding for children who have been accepted for services, and at least annually thereafter, until the child's involvement with the county agency is terminated or the family finding is discontinued. Family finding is defined as "ongoing efforts between a county agency, or its contracted providers, and relatives and kin to: 1) search for and identify adult maternal and paternal relatives and kin and engage them in children and youth social services planning and delivery, and 2) gain commitment from relatives and kin to support a child or parent receiving children and youth social services."

A county agency may discontinue family finding under the following circumstances: the child has been adjudicated dependent and a court has made a determination that continued family finding no longer serves the best interests of the child or is a threat to the child's safety; the child is not under the jurisdiction of a court and the county agency has determined that continued family finding is a threat to the child's safety; or the child is in a preadoptive placement and the court proceedings to adopt the child have commenced.

The county agency is permitted to resume family finding for a child if the child is under the jurisdiction of a court and the court determined that resuming family finding is best suited to the safety, protection and physical, mental and moral welfare of the child and does not pose a threat to the child's safety. Further, family finding may be resumed if resuming family finding serves the best interest of the child and does not pose a threat to the child's safety.

The Department of Public Welfare is required to promulgate regulations providing for the requirement of county agencies within one year of the effective date.

**FISCAL IMPACT:** In Act 80 of 2012, the Commonwealth adopted provisions related to relative notification per the federal Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008. County agencies are required to exercise due diligence to identify and notify all adult

relatives of a child within 30 days of the child's removal from the home. However, there is no requirement to do so on an annual basis for out-of-home placements, nor is there a requirement to provide any relative notification for all children accepted for services. According to the department, 164,842 children received in-home services and 22,443 children were in out-of-home placements in 2012. While it is assumed there will be additional administrative costs related to the new and expanded requirements for counties, it is also assumed these costs will be offset by the implementation of this family finding and preventing and reducing out-of-home placements. In addition, the Department provides counties access to Accurint®, a fast and efficient search engine that allows them to instantly locate people and authenticate their identities.

**PREPARED BY:** Janelle Lynch  
House Appropriations Committee (R)

**DATE:** June 10, 2013

*Estimates are calculated using the best information available. Actual costs and revenue impact incurred may vary from estimates.*