



HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

FISCAL NOTE

SENATE BILL NO. 1156

PRINTERS NO. 1898

PRIME SPONSOR: Sabatina

COST / (SAVINGS)

FUND	FY 2015/16	FY 2016/17
General Fund	See Fiscal Impact	See Fiscal Impact

SUMMARY: Senate Bill 1156, Printer's Number 1898, amends Title 23 (Domestic Relations) to require health care personnel, clergy and employees of institutions of postsecondary education to obtain background checks. The bill also extends the time valid general protective services reports can be kept in the statewide database. This legislation is effective immediately.

ANALYSIS: This legislation amends the Child Protective Services Law (Chapter 63 of Title 23 (Domestic Relations)) to add two classifications to the list of employees who are required to obtain specific criminal background check clearances and a child abuse clearance pursuant to Act 15 of 2015:

- An individual 18 years of age or older who is applying for or holding a paid position as health care personnel and is a person responsible for the child's welfare or having direct contact with children,
- An individual who is a member of the clergy and is a person responsible for the child's welfare or having direct contact with children

Any hospital personnel or member of the clergy subject to the requirements whose background clearances are older than 60 months, or who has never before obtained the background clearances, is required to obtain the background check clearances by December, 31, 2016. Any hospital personnel or member of the clergy subject to the requirements must obtain recertification of the required background clearances every 5 years.

This legislation amends Section 6344.2 (Volunteers having contact with children) to specify that the section applies to an adult volunteer who is volunteering as health care personnel.

SB 1156 also removes the exemption from background clearance checks for employees of institutions of postsecondary education whose direct contact with children in the course of their employment is limited to matriculated students who are enrolled at the institution or prospective students visiting a campus operated by the institution.

In addition, SB 1156 extends the time period in which valid General Protective Services (GPS) reports (neglect rather than abuse) shall be retained in the Department of Human Services statewide database from five years to 10 years. The GPS reports must be expunged from the statewide database no later than 120 days after the expiration of the 10-year period or after the subject child turns 23 years old, whichever is sooner.

FISCAL IMPACT: The fees charged for background clearance checks will cover the cost of the increased clearances for health care and postsecondary education personnel and clergy. The background checks for health care personnel volunteers are free but should be able to be covered with existing funds in the Department of Human Services and State Police.

Enactment of this legislation could result in increased costs for state-related institutions as well as private institutions of postsecondary education that may have to cover the cost of background checks for employees who are currently exempt from this requirement. The State System of Higher Education already requires all employees to complete a background check.

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House Appropriations Committee (R)

DATE: June 8, 2016

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