

Fiscal Estimate Narratives

DCF 8/4/2009

LRB Number	09-2323/1	Introduction Number	SB-212	Estimate Type	Original
Description Requiring notice to relatives when a child is taken into custody and disclosure of information to relatives for the purpose of facilitating a relationship or placement					

Assumptions Used in Arriving at Fiscal Estimate

This bill modifies current law to require county child welfare agencies, or in the case of Milwaukee County – the Department of Children and Families, to conduct a diligent search in order to provide notice within 30 days after the temporary custody hearing of a child's removal from his or her parental home to all adult relatives of the child. The bill also requires the county department or DCF to notify any other adult relative or other individual whose home is recommended as a placement option by the parent.

In June 2009, there were 2455 children in out-of-home care in Milwaukee and 4052 in the balance of the state. Assuming a similar number of children enter and exit the system each year, the Bureau of Milwaukee Child Welfare and counties would need to provide notices for about 6,500 cases annually. In order to provide notices for all of the adult relatives for each child, the child welfare agency will need to devote staff time to finding the addresses of adult relatives for a child. While child welfare agencies currently search for fit and willing relatives, they are not required to notify every living relative. This bill requires this notification. In order to obtain addresses for some portion of the population, child welfare agencies will have to pay to use a relative specific search engine for each child removed from the home. The average number of living adult relatives for the average American is 12.5. The estimated staff time to produce the notice is fifteen minutes. The staffing cost for a program assistant to complete and send these notices is estimated at \$13.16 per hour.

Combining these assumptions, the bill is estimated to cost the Bureau of Milwaukee Child Welfare (BMCW) \$156,800 annually, including \$148,400 in salary and fringe costs for 3.69 FTE and \$8,400 in supplies and services costs. DCF would not likely be able to absorb these additional costs within base resources. It is also estimated that DCF would need to spend at least \$2,000 in one-time costs to update eWiSACWIS in order to facilitate the creation of the required notices.

For the balance of state counties, the costs are estimated to total \$254,800 annually, including \$245,000 in salary and fringe costs for a combined 6.09 FTE and \$9,800 in supplies and services costs. Spread over 71 counties, some county child welfare agencies may be able to absorb these costs, but others may have difficulty in paying for the required notices.

Long-Range Fiscal Implications

Notice to Relatives Worksheet

Cost to DCF	\$	156,800	
Cost to Counties	\$	254,800	3,600.00 per county

OHC Population

Milwaukee	2455
Balance of the State	4052

Average Living Relative reference: Community Genetics 2008 12.5

Time to create Notices 15 minutes

Milwaukee Staff Time Needed	7671.875 hours	3.68840144 FTE
Balance of State Staff Time Need	12662.5 hours	6.08774038 FTE

Program Assistant \$19.35 (benefits included)

Staff Cost

DCF	\$148,400
BOS	\$245,000

Search Cost

DCF	\$	7,400	assume 60% require searches, \$5 per search
BOS	\$	8,100	assume 40% require searches, \$5 per search

Postage Cost

DCF	\$	1,000
BOS	\$	1,700

Technical Change to eWISACWIS \$ 2,000