



# HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

HB 2522

DCS; intake hotline; reports

Prime Sponsor: Representative Brophy McGee, et al., LD 28

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**DPA** Committee on Children and Family Affairs

**DPA** Caucus and COW

**X** As Transmitted to the Governor

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## OVERVIEW

HB 2522 clarifies the definition of a Department of Child Safety (DCS) report.

## PROVISIONS

1. Redefines *report for investigation* as *DCS report*.
2. States that if a communication provides a reason to believe that a criminal offense has been committed and the communication does not meet the criteria for a DCS report, the hotline worker must provide the information to the appropriate law enforcement agency.
3. Removes the Office of Child Welfare Investigations (OCWI) from the notification requirement if a communication does not meet the criteria for a DCS report.
4. Requires a hotline worker to prepare a DCS report if the identity or current location of the child victim, the child's family or the person suspected of abuse or neglect is known or can be reasonably ascertained.
5. States that except for a criminal conduct allegation, DCS does not have to prepare a DCS report if the following apply:
  - a. The suspected conduct occurred more than three years before the communication to the hotline; and
  - b. There is no information or indication that a child is currently being abused or neglected.
6. Clarifies that investigations of DCS reports must be conducted pursuant to statute except for investigations containing a criminal conduct allegation which must be investigated by OCWI.
7. Permits DCS to use reports and related records from the DCS case management information system to license foster homes, certify adoptive homes or make employment decisions.
8. Defines *criminal offense*.
9. Makes technical, conforming and clarifying changes.

## CURRENT LAW

A.R.S. § 8-455 requires DCS to operate and maintain a centralized intake hotline to protect children by receiving at all times communications concerning suspected abuse or neglect. The hotline must be operated to record communications concerning suspected abuse or neglect; immediately take steps to identify and locate prior communications and DCS reports for investigation related to the current communication; quickly and efficiently provide information to a law enforcement agency or prepare a DCS report for investigation; and determine the proper

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initial priority level of investigation based on the risk assessment and direct the DCS report for investigation to the appropriate part of DCS.