



ARIZONA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Fifty-sixth Legislature
Second Regular Session

HB 2479: missing; abducted; runaway children
Sponsor: Representative Parker B, LD 10
Committee on Military Affairs & Public Safety

Overview

Revises various requirements related to what must be done by the Department of Child Safety (DCS) when a child is found to be missing, abducted or runaway (disappeared).

History

Under current law, when a child is found to be disappeared, DCS must, within 24 hours of receiving a report, notify specified parties and collect specified information about the child. DCS is required to provide training for employees regarding disappeared children and to take various continuing efforts to locate disappeared children. The Legislature is permitted to convene the Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on DCS to address concerns with DCS's efforts; additionally the Legislature may request an annual independent audit of DCS's efforts and provide recommendations for improving DCS's efforts ([A.R.S. § 8-810](#)).

Provisions

1. Asserts that DCS must act immediately or within 24 hours when a report of a disappeared child is received. (Sec. 1)
2. Instructs DCS to also contact the disappeared child's school, friends, household or other persons who may have relevant information, unless such action would hinder investigation or location efforts. (Sec. 1)
3. States that the disappearance of a child must be reported to all relevant parties by both writing and telephone, instead of just one of the two methods. (Sec. 1)
4. Specifies that DCS must contact law enforcement about a disappeared child within 24 hours. (Sec. 1)
5. Instructs a law enforcement agency contacted by DCS about a disappeared child to document its response regarding amber alert or silver alert criteria. (Sec. 1)
6. Requires a law enforcement agency contacted by DCS, within 24 instead of 48 hours, to provide local media outlets specified information about the disappeared child. (Sec. 1)
7. Directs DCS to provide a law enforcement agency contacted with the necessary information to be given to local media outlets. (Sec. 1)
8. Specifies that the appropriate law enforcement agency must update social media every 14 days with updated information regarding a disappeared child. (Sec. 1)

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9. Directs the appropriate law enforcement agency to work with a specialized artist to create an age-appropriate progression image of a disappeared child if the child has been disappeared for more than two years. (Sec. 1)
10. Specifies that DCS must contact law enforcement every seven days, instead of frequently, to exchange information on a disappeared child. (Sec. 1)
11. Requires DCS to provide immediate training to newly hired and current employees who have direct oversight of children or who are direct supervisors of said employees. (Sec. 1)
12. Specifies that DCS is to carry out its recovery efforts monthly. (Sec. 1)
13. Directs DCS to request the appropriate law enforcement agency conduct welfare checks at any location where a child might be. (Sec. 1)
14. Specifies that the actions DCS must take when a child is located must be carried out within 24 hours. (Sec. 1)
15. Adds various additional actions that DCS must take after a child is found, including reviewing the case to assess contributing factors and respond to those factors in future cases. (Sec. 1)
16. Requires DCS, within 60 days of the passage of this Act, to contract with a provider to develop a checklist to complete its duties within the timelines specified by law. (Sec. 1)
17. Directs DCS to submit monthly and quarterly reports with specified information to designated members of the Legislature. (Sec. 1)
18. Permits the Legislature to convene an oversight committee to address problems and make recommendations. (Sec. 1)
19. Requires the Legislature to request an annual independent audit of DCS's compliance with fulfilling its statutory duties for disappeared children. (Sec. 1)
20. Mandates that DCS must hire a third party to oversee efforts to locate children if the audit finds that DCS is not in compliance with statute. (Sec. 1)
21. Requires the Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on DCS, if it determines that DCS has continually failed to follow the law, to contract with a third party to oversee efforts to locate children. (Sec. 1)
22. Makes conforming changes. (Sec. 1)