

FLOOR AMENDMENT STATEMENT: No

LEGISLATIVE FISCAL ESTIMATE: Yes

VETO MESSAGE: No

GOVERNOR'S PRESS RELEASE ON SIGNING: Yes

FOLLOWING WERE PRINTED:

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REPORTS: No

HEARINGS: No

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RWH/JA

P.L.2017, CHAPTER 90, *approved June 9, 2017*
Senate, No. 972 (*First Reprint*)

1 **AN ACT** concerning child advocacy centers and multidisciplinary
2 teams and supplementing Title 9 of the Revised Statutes.

3
4 **BE IT ENACTED** by the Senate and General Assembly of the State
5 of New Jersey:

- 6
7 1. The Legislature finds and declares that:
- 8 a. Child advocacy centers are child-friendly centers where a
9 multidisciplinary team of law enforcement, child protective
10 services, prosecutors, mental health and medical professionals, and
11 victim witness and family advocates can provide a coordinated
12 response to the investigation, treatment, prosecution, and prevention
13 of child abuse and neglect.
- 14 b. Child advocacy centers and multidisciplinary teams are
15 designed to ease the stress experienced by survivors of child abuse
16 and neglect, and their families, throughout the investigation process
17 and improve methods of responding to acts of child abuse and
18 neglect.
- 19 c. Child advocacy centers and multidisciplinary teams reduce
20 the trauma suffered by children who have been abused or neglected
21 by employing forensic interviewers specifically trained to work
22 with survivors of child abuse and neglect.
- 23 d. The centers and teams also assist child abuse and neglect
24 survivors and their families in obtaining judicial, medical,
25 therapeutic, and victim advocacy services, and enhance the
26 effectiveness of law enforcement, prosecutors, and child protective
27 services professionals when investigating child abuse and neglect.
- 28 e. The number of child advocacy centers in the United States
29 has grown dramatically since 1986 when the first center was
30 established. According to the National Children's Alliance, the
31 national accrediting organization for child advocacy centers, there
32 are now more than 770 centers nationwide, and, as of 2009, there
33 were over 900 multidisciplinary teams throughout the United States.
- 34 f. In order to ensure the effective, efficient, and consistent
35 delivery of services to the survivors of child abuse and neglect and
36 their families, it is necessary to establish a certification program for
37 the State's child advocacy centers and multidisciplinary teams.

EXPLANATION – Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets **[thus]** in the above bill is not enacted and is intended to be omitted in the law.

Matter underlined thus is new matter.

Matter enclosed in superscript numerals has been adopted as follows:

¹Senate amendments adopted in accordance with Governor's recommendations September 15, 2016.

1 g. Therefore, it is the intent of the Legislature to ¹~~require the~~
2 create a¹ certification ¹~~of~~ program for¹ the State's child advocacy
3 centers and multidisciplinary teams through the adoption and
4 implementation of guidelines of practice consistent with the
5 accreditation standards developed by the National Children's
6 Alliance, or its successor.

7
8 2. As used in this act:

9 "Child advocacy center" means a county-based center as defined
10 in section 6 of P.L.1998, c.19 (C.9:6-8.104).

11 "Multidisciplinary team" means a county-based team as
12 established in section 6 of P.L.1998, c.19 (C.9:6-8.104).

13
14 3. a. There is established in, but not of, the Department of
15 Children and Families in the Executive Branch of State government
16 the Child Advocacy Center-Multidisciplinary Team Advisory
17 Board. For the purpose of complying with the provisions of Article
18 V, Section IV, paragraph 1 of the New Jersey Constitution, the
19 Child Advocacy Center-Multidisciplinary Team Advisory Board is
20 allocated within the Department of Children and Families, but,
21 notwithstanding this allocation, the advisory board shall be
22 independent of any supervision or control by the department or by
23 any officer or employee thereof.

24 b. The purpose of the board is to establish a certification
25 program for the State's child advocacy centers and multidisciplinary
26 teams to ensure that the ¹certified¹ centers and teams comply with
27 the accreditation standards developed by the National Children's
28 Alliance, or its successor.

29 c. The board shall consist of 14 members as follows:

30 (1) the Commissioner of Children and Families, the Attorney
31 General, the Chairperson of the New Jersey Task Force on Child
32 Abuse and Neglect, and the Chapter Coordinator of New Jersey
33 Children's Alliance or their designees, who shall serve ex officio;
34 and

35 (2) ten public members, with at least 10 years' experience,
36 background, or specialized knowledge in child welfare, child
37 advocacy centers, and multidisciplinary teams, to be appointed by
38 the Governor, including a representative of the New Jersey
39 Prosecutors' Association, a law guardian, a multidisciplinary team
40 coordinator, a pediatrician with expertise in child abuse and neglect,
41 a psychologist with expertise in child abuse and neglect, a
42 representative of a child advocacy center, a representative of a
43 victim or family advocacy group, a law enforcement officer with
44 experience in child abuse and neglect investigations, an
45 academician with experience and expertise in child abuse and
46 neglect research or a related field; and one member with general
47 expertise in child welfare and multidisciplinary teams.

1 d. Vacancies in the membership of the board shall be filled in
2 the same manner provided for the original appointments. The
3 members of the board shall serve without compensation, but may be
4 reimbursed for traveling and other miscellaneous expenses
5 necessary to perform their duties, within the limits of funds made
6 available to the board for its purposes.

7 e. The board shall organize as soon as practicable, but no later
8 than 60 days following the appointment of its members, and shall
9 select a chairperson and vice-chairperson from among the members.
10 The chairperson shall appoint a secretary who need not be a
11 member of the board.

12 f. The board may meet at the call of its chair and hold hearings
13 at the times and in the places it deems appropriate and necessary to
14 fulfill its charge. The board shall be entitled to call to its assistance
15 and avail itself of the services of the employees of any State,
16 county, or municipal department, board, bureau, commission, or
17 agency as it may require and as may be available to it for its
18 purposes.

19 g. The Department of Children and Families shall provide
20 professional and clerical staff to the board as necessary to effectuate
21 the purposes of this act.

22
23 4. The board shall:

24 a. direct the development and implementation of a certification
25 program for the State's child advocacy centers and multidisciplinary
26 teams pursuant to section 5 of this act;

27 b. develop a comprehensive plan for evaluating the
28 effectiveness of the State's child advocacy centers and
29 multidisciplinary teams; and

30 c. apply for ¹**【, accept, and disburse】** and accept¹ any grant of
31 money from the State or federal government or other sources, which
32 may be available to establish, expand, or improve child advocacy
33 centers or multidisciplinary teams pursuant to section 7 of this act.

34 ¹Any monies received by the board shall be deposited in the "Child
35 Advocacy Center-Multidisciplinary Team Fund" established
36 pursuant to section 6 of this act.¹

37
38 5. a. The board shall establish a certification program for the
39 State's child advocacy centers and multidisciplinary teams. The
40 goal of the program shall be to ensure that:

41 (1) every child advocacy center or multidisciplinary team in the
42 State applying for certification pursuant to subsection b. of this
43 section is in compliance with guidelines of practice that are
44 consistent with the accreditation standards developed by the
45 National Children's Alliance, or its successor; and

46 (2) the State's child advocacy centers and multidisciplinary
47 teams incorporate best practices and standards in providing child

1 abuse prevention, intervention, and treatment services to survivors
2 of child abuse and neglect.

3 b. Every child advocacy center and multidisciplinary team in
4 the State ¹~~shall~~ may¹ apply to the board for certification in a
5 manner and on a form prescribed by the board. In order to qualify
6 for certification with the board, a child advocacy center or
7 multidisciplinary team shall adopt and implement guidelines of
8 practice that are consistent with the accreditation standards
9 developed by the National Children's Alliance, or its successor.
10 The guidelines shall, at a minimum, provide for:

11 (1) a multidisciplinary team response in an investigation of child
12 abuse and neglect by representatives of the following core
13 disciplines: law enforcement, child protective services, mental
14 health, prosecution, victim advocacy, and medicine;

15 (2) the designation of a private, child-friendly interview and
16 family meeting room which provides an environment that is
17 physically and psychologically safe for, and provides comfort to, a
18 survivor of child abuse and neglect and the survivor's family during
19 the course of an investigation of child and neglect;

20 (3) protocols governing the forensic interview of a survivor of
21 child abuse and neglect that comply with the 2010 Guidelines of
22 Practice for Child Abuse Multidisciplinary Teams in New Jersey
23 and current best practice standards and nationally recognized
24 methods for forensic interviews, New Jersey Court Rules, relevant
25 case law, and internal or external peer review;

26 (4) an interdisciplinary case review process that describes the
27 responsibilities of each team member in an investigation of child
28 abuse and neglect and the provisions of the services to a survivor of
29 child abuse and neglect and the survivor's family;

30 (5) a uniform system to identify, track, collect, and coordinate
31 information obtained during an investigation of child abuse and
32 neglect, and to monitor the progress and outcomes of the
33 investigation;

34 (6) procedures to facilitate communication, collaboration,
35 coordination, information sharing, problem solving, and decision
36 making between team members during an investigation of child
37 abuse and neglect;

38 (7) a dispute resolution process to resolve interdisciplinary
39 conflicts that may arise between team members during the course of
40 an investigation of child abuse and neglect;

41 (8) the provision of services, supports, and other assistance in a
42 culturally competent manner to a survivor of child abuse and
43 neglect and the survivor's family during an investigation of child
44 abuse and neglect;

45 (9) on-going, specialized interdisciplinary training for team
46 members to enhance their basic skills and expertise in the
47 investigation and prevention of child abuse and neglect;

1 (10) mechanisms and processes to allow the center to self-
2 evaluate the effectiveness of its operations and its success in
3 investigating child abuse and neglect;

4 (11) the establishment of county based child advocacy center-
5 multidisciplinary team advisory boards to oversee the operations
6 and administration of the child advocacy center or multidisciplinary
7 team;

8 (12) the creation of an education and outreach program to train
9 professionals from State and local governmental and community-
10 based social services agencies in providing multidisciplinary
11 services to survivors of child abuse and neglect and their families,
12 and to educate the community on child maltreatment and child
13 abuse prevention techniques;

14 (13) procedures to apply for and accept any grant of money from
15 the State or federal government or other sources, which may be
16 available to child advocacy centers and multidisciplinary teams; and

17 (14) reporting requirements on the use of grant funds received by
18 a child advocacy center or multidisciplinary team pursuant to
19 section 7 of this act.

20 c. ¹~~Upon adoption and implementation of~~ If a child
21 advocacy center or multidisciplinary team adopts and implements¹
22 the guidelines of practice specified in subsection b. of this section,
23 the board shall certify that a child advocacy center or
24 multidisciplinary team is in compliance with the provisions of this
25 act.

26 d. The board shall conduct an annual compliance review of
27 each child advocacy center and multidisciplinary team the board
28 certifies pursuant to subsection c. of this section, and shall evaluate
29 the center or team to determine whether it continues to comply with
30 the provisions of this act.

31

32 6. ¹~~[a.]~~¹ There is established in the Department of ¹~~the~~
33 Treasury a nonlapsing, revolving Children and Families a¹ fund to
34 be known as the "Child Advocacy Center-Multidisciplinary Team
35 Fund." This fund shall be the repository for monies appropriated to
36 ¹~~the board~~ support the grant program established¹ pursuant to
37 section ¹~~[8]~~ 7¹ of this act and any other funds approved by the
38 board.

39 ¹~~[b.]~~ The State Treasurer is the custodian of the fund and all
40 disbursements from the fund shall be made by the State Treasurer
41 upon vouchers signed by chairperson of the board. The monies in
42 the fund shall be invested and reinvested by the Director of the
43 Division of Investment in the Department of the Treasury as are
44 other trust funds in the custody of the State Treasurer, in the manner
45 provided by law. Interest received on the monies in the fund shall
46 be credited to the fund.]¹

1 7. a. The monies deposited in the Child Advocacy Center-
2 Multidisciplinary Team Fund shall be distributed by the ¹**[board]**
3 Department of Children and Families¹ as grants to child advocacy
4 centers or multidisciplinary teams certified by the board pursuant to
5 subsection c. of section 5 of this act, as applicable to:

6 (1) establish or construct new centers, or renew, renovate,
7 improve, expand, or reconstruct existing centers;

8 (2) make technological improvements, including the
9 modernization of software and hardware;

10 (3) hire personnel, fund new positions, expand the
11 responsibilities of existing positions, pay for additional diagnostic
12 treatment services and other costs, and provide for continuing
13 funding that has been eliminated from a State, federal, or private
14 funding source for diagnostic mental health and medical treatment
15 services, as necessary, to establish new services or improve existing
16 services provided by the centers or teams; and

17 (4) fund any other purpose that would enhance the effective and
18 efficient operation of the centers or teams.

19 b. The ¹**[board]** Department of Children and Families¹ shall
20 accept and approve the applications of child advocacy centers or
21 multidisciplinary teams for grants from the fund, and shall award
22 the grants to new centers or teams that apply and qualify for, and
23 existing centers or teams that meet the requirements of, certification
24 in accordance with subsection b. of section 5 of this act. The
25 ¹**[board]** Department of Children and Families¹ shall maintain
26 records of all the grants made from the fund pursuant to this
27 section.
28

29 ¹**[8.** There is appropriated from the General Fund to the Child
30 Advocacy-Multidisciplinary Team Advisory Board \$10,000,000 to
31 effectuate the purposes of this act.**]**¹
32

33 ¹**[9.]** 8.¹ Pursuant to the "Administrative Procedure Act,"
34 P.L.1968, c.410 (C.52:14B-1 et seq.), the board ¹**[shall adopt]** and
35 the Department of Children and Families may adopt any¹ rules and
36 regulations¹**[,]** necessary¹ to effectuate the purposes of this act.
37

38 ¹**[10.]** 9.¹ This act shall take effect on the 90th day after the
39 date of enactment.
40
41

42 _____
43
44 Establishes Child Advocacy Center-Multidisciplinary Team
45 Advisory Board and certification program for child advocacy
46 centers and multidisciplinary teams; appropriates \$10 million.

SENATE, No. 972

STATE OF NEW JERSEY 217th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED FEBRUARY 4, 2016

Sponsored by:

Senator STEPHEN M. SWEENEY

District 3 (Cumberland, Gloucester and Salem)

Senator KEVIN J. O'TOOLE

District 40 (Bergen, Essex, Morris and Passaic)

Senator M. TERESA RUIZ

District 29 (Essex)

Assemblyman JOHN J. BURZICHELLI

District 3 (Cumberland, Gloucester and Salem)

Assemblywoman L. GRACE SPENCER

District 29 (Essex)

Assemblyman THOMAS P. GIBLIN

District 34 (Essex and Passaic)

Assemblywoman ELIANA PINTOR MARIN

District 29 (Essex)

Co-Sponsored by:

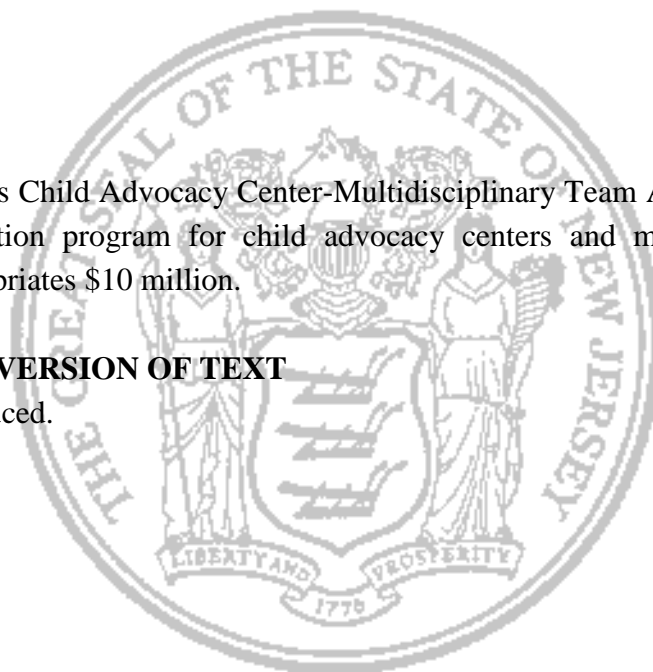
Senators Vitale, Stack, Assemblywoman Mosquera and Senator Allen

SYNOPSIS

Establishes Child Advocacy Center-Multidisciplinary Team Advisory Board and certification program for child advocacy centers and multidisciplinary teams; appropriates \$10 million.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 9/16/2016)

1 AN ACT concerning child advocacy centers and multidisciplinary
2 teams and supplementing Title 9 of the Revised Statutes.

3

4 **BE IT ENACTED** by the Senate and General Assembly of the State
5 of New Jersey:

6

7 1. The Legislature finds and declares that:

8 a. Child advocacy centers are child-friendly centers where a
9 multidisciplinary team of law enforcement, child protective
10 services, prosecutors, mental health and medical professionals, and
11 victim witness and family advocates can provide a coordinated
12 response to the investigation, treatment, prosecution, and prevention
13 of child abuse and neglect.

14 b. Child advocacy centers and multidisciplinary teams are
15 designed to ease the stress experienced by survivors of child abuse
16 and neglect, and their families, throughout the investigation process
17 and improve methods of responding to acts of child abuse and
18 neglect.

19 c. Child advocacy centers and multidisciplinary teams reduce
20 the trauma suffered by children who have been abused or neglected
21 by employing forensic interviewers specifically trained to work
22 with survivors of child abuse and neglect.

23 d. The centers and teams also assist child abuse and neglect
24 survivors and their families in obtaining judicial, medical,
25 therapeutic, and victim advocacy services, and enhance the
26 effectiveness of law enforcement, prosecutors, and child protective
27 services professionals when investigating child abuse and neglect.

28 e. The number of child advocacy centers in the United States
29 has grown dramatically since 1986 when the first center was
30 established. According to the National Children's Alliance, the
31 national accrediting organization for child advocacy centers, there
32 are now more than 770 centers nationwide, and, as of 2009, there
33 were over 900 multidisciplinary teams throughout the United States.

34 f. In order to ensure the effective, efficient, and consistent
35 delivery of services to the survivors of child abuse and neglect and
36 their families, it is necessary to establish a certification program for
37 the State's child advocacy centers and multidisciplinary teams.

38 g. Therefore, it is the intent of the Legislature to require the
39 certification of the State's child advocacy centers and
40 multidisciplinary teams through the adoption and implementation of
41 guidelines of practice consistent with the accreditation standards
42 developed by the National Children's Alliance, or its successor.

43

44 2. As used in this act:

45 "Child advocacy center" means a county-based center as defined
46 in section 6 of P.L.1998, c.19 (C.9:6-8.104).

47 "Multidisciplinary team" means a county-based team as
48 established in section 6 of P.L.1998, c.19 (C.9:6-8.104).

1 3. a. There is established in, but not of, the Department of
2 Children and Families in the Executive Branch of State government
3 the Child Advocacy Center-Multidisciplinary Team Advisory
4 Board. For the purpose of complying with the provisions of Article
5 V, Section IV, paragraph 1 of the New Jersey Constitution, the
6 Child Advocacy Center-Multidisciplinary Team Advisory Board is
7 allocated within the Department of Children and Families, but,
8 notwithstanding this allocation, the advisory board shall be
9 independent of any supervision or control by the department or by
10 any officer or employee thereof.

11 b. The purpose of the board is to establish a certification
12 program for the State's child advocacy centers and multidisciplinary
13 teams to ensure that the centers and teams comply with the
14 accreditation standards developed by the National Children's
15 Alliance, or its successor.

16 c. The board shall consist of 14 members as follows:

17 (1) the Commissioner of Children and Families, the Attorney
18 General, the Chairperson of the New Jersey Task Force on Child
19 Abuse and Neglect, and the Chapter Coordinator of New Jersey
20 Children's Alliance or their designees, who shall serve ex officio;
21 and

22 (2) ten public members, with at least 10 years' experience,
23 background, or specialized knowledge in child welfare, child
24 advocacy centers, and multidisciplinary teams, to be appointed by
25 the Governor, including a representative of the New Jersey
26 Prosecutors' Association, a law guardian, a multidisciplinary team
27 coordinator, a pediatrician with expertise in child abuse and neglect,
28 a psychologist with expertise in child abuse and neglect, a
29 representative of a child advocacy center, a representative of a
30 victim or family advocacy group, a law enforcement officer with
31 experience in child abuse and neglect investigations, an
32 academician with experience and expertise in child abuse and
33 neglect research or a related field; and one member with general
34 expertise in child welfare and multidisciplinary teams.

35 d. Vacancies in the membership of the board shall be filled in
36 the same manner provided for the original appointments. The
37 members of the board shall serve without compensation, but may be
38 reimbursed for traveling and other miscellaneous expenses
39 necessary to perform their duties, within the limits of funds made
40 available to the board for its purposes.

41 e. The board shall organize as soon as practicable, but no later
42 than 60 days following the appointment of its members, and shall
43 select a chairperson and vice-chairperson from among the members.
44 The chairperson shall appoint a secretary who need not be a
45 member of the board.

46 f. The board may meet at the call of its chair and hold hearings
47 at the times and in the places it deems appropriate and necessary to
48 fulfill its charge. The board shall be entitled to call to its assistance

1 and avail itself of the services of the employees of any State,
2 county, or municipal department, board, bureau, commission, or
3 agency as it may require and as may be available to it for its
4 purposes.

5 g. The Department of Children and Families shall provide
6 professional and clerical staff to the board as necessary to effectuate
7 the purposes of this act.

8

9 4. The board shall:

10 a. direct the development and implementation of a certification
11 program for the State's child advocacy centers and multidisciplinary
12 teams pursuant to section 5 of this act;

13 b. develop a comprehensive plan for evaluating the
14 effectiveness of the State's child advocacy centers and
15 multidisciplinary teams; and

16 c. apply for, accept, and disburse any grant of money from the
17 State or federal government or other sources, which may be
18 available to establish, expand, or improve child advocacy centers or
19 multidisciplinary teams pursuant to section 7 of this act.

20

21 5. a. The board shall establish a certification program for the
22 State's child advocacy centers and multidisciplinary teams. The
23 goal of the program shall be to ensure that:

24 (1) every child advocacy center or multidisciplinary team in the
25 State applying for certification pursuant to subsection b. of this
26 section is in compliance with guidelines of practice that are
27 consistent with the accreditation standards developed by the
28 National Children's Alliance, or its successor; and

29 (2) the State's child advocacy centers and multidisciplinary
30 teams incorporate best practices and standards in providing child
31 abuse prevention, intervention, and treatment services to survivors
32 of child abuse and neglect.

33 b. Every child advocacy center and multidisciplinary team in
34 the State shall apply to the board for certification in a manner and
35 on a form prescribed by the board. In order to qualify for
36 certification with the board, a child advocacy center or
37 multidisciplinary team shall adopt and implement guidelines of
38 practice that are consistent with the accreditation standards
39 developed by the National Children's Alliance, or its successor.
40 The guidelines shall, at a minimum, provide for:

41 (1) a multidisciplinary team response in an investigation of child
42 abuse and neglect by representatives of the following core
43 disciplines: law enforcement, child protective services, mental
44 health, prosecution, victim advocacy, and medicine;

45 (2) the designation of a private, child-friendly interview and
46 family meeting room which provides an environment that is
47 physically and psychologically safe for, and provides comfort to, a

- 1 survivor of child abuse and neglect and the survivor's family during
2 the course of an investigation of child and neglect;
- 3 (3) protocols governing the forensic interview of a survivor of
4 child abuse and neglect that comply with the 2010 Guidelines of
5 Practice for Child Abuse Multidisciplinary Teams in New Jersey
6 and current best practice standards and nationally recognized
7 methods for forensic interviews, New Jersey Court Rules, relevant
8 case law, and internal or external peer review;
- 9 (4) an interdisciplinary case review process that describes the
10 responsibilities of each team member in an investigation of child
11 abuse and neglect and the provisions of the services to a survivor of
12 child abuse and neglect and the survivor's family;
- 13 (5) a uniform system to identify, track, collect, and coordinate
14 information obtained during an investigation of child abuse and
15 neglect, and to monitor the progress and outcomes of the
16 investigation;
- 17 (6) procedures to facilitate communication, collaboration,
18 coordination, information sharing, problem solving, and decision
19 making between team members during an investigation of child
20 abuse and neglect;
- 21 (7) a dispute resolution process to resolve interdisciplinary
22 conflicts that may arise between team members during the course of
23 an investigation of child abuse and neglect;
- 24 (8) the provision of services, supports, and other assistance in a
25 culturally competent manner to a survivor of child abuse and
26 neglect and the survivor's family during an investigation of child
27 abuse and neglect;
- 28 (9) on-going, specialized interdisciplinary training for team
29 members to enhance their basic skills and expertise in the
30 investigation and prevention of child abuse and neglect;
- 31 (10) mechanisms and processes to allow the center to self-
32 evaluate the effectiveness of its operations and its success in
33 investigating child abuse and neglect;
- 34 (11) the establishment of county based child advocacy center-
35 multidisciplinary team advisory boards to oversee the operations
36 and administration of the child advocacy center or multidisciplinary
37 team;
- 38 (12) the creation of an education and outreach program to train
39 professionals from State and local governmental and community-
40 based social services agencies in providing multidisciplinary
41 services to survivors of child abuse and neglect and their families,
42 and to educate the community on child maltreatment and child
43 abuse prevention techniques;
- 44 (13) procedures to apply for and accept any grant of money from
45 the State or federal government or other sources, which may be
46 available to child advocacy centers and multidisciplinary teams; and

1 (14) reporting requirements on the use of grant funds received by
2 a child advocacy center or multidisciplinary team pursuant to
3 section 7 of this act.

4 c. Upon adoption and implementation of the guidelines of
5 practice specified in subsection b. of this section, the board shall
6 certify that a child advocacy center or multidisciplinary team is in
7 compliance with the provisions of this act.

8 d. The board shall conduct an annual compliance review of
9 each child advocacy center and multidisciplinary team the board
10 certifies pursuant to subsection c. of this section, and shall evaluate
11 the center or team to determine whether it continues to comply with
12 the provisions of this act.

13

14 6. a. There is established in the Department of the Treasury a
15 nonlapsing, revolving fund to be known as the "Child Advocacy
16 Center-Multidisciplinary Team Fund." This fund shall be the
17 repository for monies appropriated to the board pursuant to section
18 8 of this act and any other funds approved by the board.

19 b. The State Treasurer is the custodian of the fund and all
20 disbursements from the fund shall be made by the State Treasurer
21 upon vouchers signed by chairperson of the board. The monies in
22 the fund shall be invested and reinvested by the Director of the
23 Division of Investment in the Department of the Treasury as are
24 other trust funds in the custody of the State Treasurer, in the manner
25 provided by law. Interest received on the monies in the fund shall
26 be credited to the fund.

27

28 7. a. The monies deposited in the Child Advocacy Center-
29 Multidisciplinary Team Fund shall be distributed by the board as
30 grants to child advocacy centers or multidisciplinary teams certified
31 by the board pursuant to subsection c. of section 5 of this act, as
32 applicable to:

33 (1) establish or construct new centers, or renew, renovate,
34 improve, expand, or reconstruct existing centers;

35 (2) make technological improvements, including the
36 modernization of software and hardware;

37 (3) hire personnel, fund new positions, expand the
38 responsibilities of existing positions, pay for additional diagnostic
39 treatment services and other costs, and provide for continuing
40 funding that has been eliminated from a State, federal, or private
41 funding source for diagnostic mental health and medical treatment
42 services, as necessary, to establish new services or improve existing
43 services provided by the centers or teams; and

44 (4) fund any other purpose that would enhance the effective and
45 efficient operation of the centers or teams.

46 b. The board shall accept and approve the applications of child
47 advocacy centers or multidisciplinary teams for grants from the
48 fund, and shall award the grants to new centers or teams that apply

1 and qualify for, and existing centers or teams that meet the
2 requirements of, certification in accordance with subsection b. of
3 section 5 of this act. The board shall maintain records of all the
4 grants made from the fund pursuant to this section.

5

6 8. There is appropriated from the General Fund to the Child
7 Advocacy-Multidisciplinary Team Advisory Board \$10,000,000 to
8 effectuate the purposes of this act.

9

10 9. Pursuant to the "Administrative Procedure Act," P.L.1968,
11 c.410 (C.52:14B-1 et seq.), the board shall adopt rules and
12 regulations, to effectuate the purposes of this act.

13

14 10. This act shall take effect on the 90th day after the date of
15 enactment.

16

17

18

STATEMENT

19

20 This bill would establish the Child Advocacy Center-
21 Multidisciplinary Team Advisory Board, in but not of, the
22 Department of Children and Families (DCF). The board's purpose
23 would be to establish a certification program for the State's child
24 advocacy centers and multidisciplinary teams to ensure that
25 certified centers and teams comply with the accreditation standards
26 developed by the National Children's Alliance, or its successor.

27 The membership of the board would consist of: the
28 Commissioner of DCF, the Attorney General, the Chairperson of
29 the New Jersey Task Force on Child Abuse and Neglect, and the
30 Chapter Coordinator of New Jersey Children's Alliance or their
31 designees, who would serve ex officio; and ten public members,
32 with at least 10 years' experience, background, or specialized
33 knowledge in child welfare, child advocacy centers, and
34 multidisciplinary teams, to be appointed by the Governor, including
35 a representative of the New Jersey Prosecutors' Association, a law
36 guardian, a multidisciplinary team coordinator, a pediatrician with
37 expertise in child abuse and neglect, a psychologist with expertise
38 in child abuse and neglect, a representative of a child advocacy
39 center, a representative of a victim or family advocacy group, a law
40 enforcement officer with experience in child abuse and neglect
41 investigations, an academician with experience and expertise in
42 child abuse and neglect research or a related field, and a general
43 member with expertise in child welfare and multidisciplinary teams.

44 The bill requires the board to: direct the development and
45 implementation of a certification program for the State's child
46 advocacy centers and multidisciplinary teams; develop a
47 comprehensive plan for evaluating the effectiveness of the State's
48 child advocacy centers and multidisciplinary teams; and apply for,

1 accept, and disburse, any grant of money from the State or federal
2 government or other sources that would be available to establish,
3 expand, or improve child advocacy centers or multidisciplinary
4 teams.

5 Pursuant to the bill's provisions, the certification program
6 established by the board would be designed to ensure that: every
7 child advocacy center and multidisciplinary team in the State
8 complies with guidelines of practice that are consistent with the
9 accreditation standards developed by the National Children's
10 Alliance, or its successor; and the State's centers and teams
11 incorporate best practices and standards in providing child abuse
12 prevention, intervention, and treatment services to survivors of
13 child abuse and neglect.

14 Every child advocacy center and multidisciplinary team in the
15 State would be required to apply to the board for certification in a
16 manner and on a form prescribed by the board. In order to qualify
17 for certification, a child advocacy center or multidisciplinary team
18 would be required to adopt and implement guidelines of practice, as
19 specified in the bill, that are consistent with the accreditation
20 standards developed by the National Children's Alliance, or its
21 successor. Upon a center's or a team's adoption and implementation
22 of the guidelines of practice specified in the bill, the board would
23 certify that the center or team is in compliance with the
24 requirements for certification.

25 The board would also conduct an annual compliance review of
26 each child advocacy center and multidisciplinary team it certifies to
27 determine whether the center or team continues to comply with the
28 requirements for certification.

29 The bill establishes, in the Department of the Treasury, a
30 nonlapsing, revolving fund to be known as the "Child Advocacy
31 Center-Multidisciplinary Team Fund." This fund would be the
32 repository for monies appropriated to, and any other funds approved
33 by, the board. The State Treasurer would be the custodian of the
34 fund, interest received on the monies in the fund would be credited
35 to the fund, and collection and administrative costs may be
36 deducted from deposited funds.

37 The monies deposited in the fund would be distributed by the
38 board as grants to: establish or construct new child advocacy
39 centers, or renew, renovate, improve, expand, or reconstruct
40 existing centers; make technological improvements to centers or
41 teams; hire personnel, fund new positions, expand the
42 responsibilities of existing positions, pay for additional diagnostic
43 treatment services and other costs, and provide for continuing
44 funding that has been eliminated from a State, federal, or private
45 funding source for diagnostic mental health and medical treatment
46 services, as necessary, to establish new services or improve existing
47 services provided by the centers or teams; and fund any other

1 purpose that would enhance the effective and efficient operation of
2 the centers or teams.

3 The board would: accept and approve the applications of child
4 advocacy centers or multidisciplinary teams for grants from the
5 fund; award the grants to new centers or teams that apply and
6 qualify for, and existing centers or teams that meet the requirements
7 of, certification; and maintain records of all the grants made from
8 the fund pursuant to the provisions of the bill.

9 The bill appropriates \$10,000,000 from the General Fund to the
10 board to effectuate the purposes of the bill.

11 The certification of the State's child advocacy centers and
12 multidisciplinary teams will ensure that survivors of child abuse
13 and neglect and their families throughout the State will have access
14 to centers and teams that provide effective, efficient, and consistent
15 judicial, medical, therapeutic, and victim advocacy services during
16 the investigation of incidents of child abuse and neglect.

SENATE HEALTH, HUMAN SERVICES AND SENIOR
CITIZENS COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

SENATE, No. 972

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: MAY 2, 2016

The Senate Health, Human Services and Senior Citizens Committee reports favorably Senate Bill No. 972.

This bill would establish the Child Advocacy Center-Multidisciplinary Team Advisory Board, in but not of, the Department of Children and Families (DCF). The board's purpose would be to establish a certification program for the State's child advocacy centers and multidisciplinary teams to ensure that certified centers and teams comply with the accreditation standards developed by the National Children's Alliance, or its successor.

The membership of the board would consist of: the Commissioner of DCF, the Attorney General, the Chairperson of the New Jersey Task Force on Child Abuse and Neglect, and the Chapter Coordinator of New Jersey Children's Alliance or their designees, who would serve ex officio; and ten public members, with at least 10 years' experience, background, or specialized knowledge in child welfare, child advocacy centers, and multidisciplinary teams, to be appointed by the Governor, including a representative of the New Jersey Prosecutors' Association, a law guardian, a multidisciplinary team coordinator, a pediatrician with expertise in child abuse and neglect, a psychologist with expertise in child abuse and neglect, a representative of a child advocacy center, a representative of a victim or family advocacy group, a law enforcement officer with experience in child abuse and neglect investigations, an academician with experience and expertise in child abuse and neglect research or a related field, and a general member with expertise in child welfare and multidisciplinary teams.

The bill requires the board to: direct the development and implementation of a certification program for the State's child advocacy centers and multidisciplinary teams; develop a comprehensive plan for evaluating the effectiveness of the State's child advocacy centers and multidisciplinary teams; and apply for, accept, and disburse, any grant of money from the State or federal government or other sources that would be available to establish, expand, or improve child advocacy centers or multidisciplinary teams.

Pursuant to the bill's provisions, the certification program established by the board would be designed to ensure that: every child advocacy center and multidisciplinary team in the State complies with guidelines of practice that are consistent with the accreditation standards developed by the National Children's Alliance, or its successor; and the State's centers and teams incorporate best practices and standards in providing child abuse prevention, intervention, and treatment services to survivors of child abuse and neglect.

Every child advocacy center and multidisciplinary team in the State would be required to apply to the board for certification in a manner and on a form prescribed by the board. In order to qualify for certification, a child advocacy center or multidisciplinary team would be required to adopt and implement guidelines of practice, as specified in the bill, that are consistent with the accreditation standards developed by the National Children's Alliance, or its successor. Upon a center's or a team's adoption and implementation of the guidelines of practice specified in the bill, the board would certify that the center or team is in compliance with the requirements for certification.

The board would also conduct an annual compliance review of each child advocacy center and multidisciplinary team it certifies to determine whether the center or team continues to comply with the requirements for certification.

The bill establishes, in the Department of the Treasury, a nonlapsing, revolving fund to be known as the "Child Advocacy Center-Multidisciplinary Team Fund." This fund would be the repository for monies appropriated to, and any other funds approved by, the board. The State Treasurer would be the custodian of the fund, interest received on the monies in the fund would be credited to the fund, and collection and administrative costs may be deducted from deposited funds.

The monies deposited in the fund would be distributed by the board as grants to: establish or construct new child advocacy centers, or renew, renovate, improve, expand, or reconstruct existing centers; make technological improvements to centers or teams; hire personnel, fund new positions, expand the responsibilities of existing positions, pay for additional diagnostic treatment services and other costs, and provide for continuing funding that has been eliminated from a State, federal, or private funding source for diagnostic mental health and medical treatment services, as necessary, to establish new services or improve existing services provided by the centers or teams; and fund any other purpose that would enhance the effective and efficient operation of the centers or teams.

The board would: accept and approve the applications of child advocacy centers or multidisciplinary teams for grants from the

fund; award the grants to new centers or teams that apply and qualify for, and existing centers or teams that meet the requirements of, certification; and maintain records of all the grants made from the fund pursuant to the provisions of the bill.

The bill appropriates \$10,000,000 from the General Fund to the board to effectuate the purposes of the bill.

The certification of the State's child advocacy centers and multidisciplinary teams will ensure that survivors of child abuse and neglect and their families throughout the State will have access to centers and teams that provide effective, efficient, and consistent judicial, medical, therapeutic, and victim advocacy services during the investigation of incidents of child abuse and neglect.

SENATE BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

SENATE, No. 972

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: JUNE 6, 2016

The Senate Budget and Appropriations Committee reports favorably Senate Bill No. 972.

This bill establishes the Child Advocacy Center-Multidisciplinary Team Advisory Board, in but not of, the Department of Children and Families (DCF). The board will establish a certification program for the State's child advocacy centers and multidisciplinary teams to ensure that certified centers and teams comply with the accreditation standards developed by the National Children's Alliance, or its successor.

The membership of the board will consist of: the Commissioner of DCF, the Attorney General, the Chairperson of the New Jersey Task Force on Child Abuse and Neglect, and the Chapter Coordinator of New Jersey Children's Alliance or their designees, who would serve ex officio; and ten public members, with at least 10 years' experience, background, or specialized knowledge in child welfare, child advocacy centers, and multidisciplinary teams, to be appointed by the Governor, including a representative of the New Jersey Prosecutors' Association, a law guardian, a multidisciplinary team coordinator, a pediatrician with expertise in child abuse and neglect, a psychologist with expertise in child abuse and neglect, a representative of a child advocacy center, a representative of a victim or family advocacy group, a law enforcement officer with experience in child abuse and neglect investigations, an academician with experience and expertise in child abuse and neglect research or a related field, and a general member with expertise in child welfare and multidisciplinary teams.

The bill requires the board to: direct the development and implementation of a certification program for the State's child advocacy centers and multidisciplinary teams; develop a comprehensive plan for evaluating the effectiveness of the State's child advocacy centers and multidisciplinary teams; and apply for, accept, and disburse, any grant of money from the State or federal government or other sources that would be available to establish, expand, or improve child advocacy centers or multidisciplinary teams.

Every child advocacy center and multidisciplinary team in the State will be required to apply to the board for certification. To qualify for certification, a child advocacy center or multidisciplinary team will be required to adopt and implement guidelines of practice, as

specified in the bill, that are consistent with the accreditation standards developed by the National Children's Alliance, or its successor. The board will certify compliance with these requirements.

The board will also conduct an annual compliance review of each child advocacy center and multidisciplinary team it certifies to determine whether the center or team continues to comply with the requirements for certification.

The bill establishes, in the Department of the Treasury, a nonlapsing, revolving fund to be known as the "Child Advocacy Center-Multidisciplinary Team Fund." This fund will be the repository for monies appropriated to, and any other funds approved by, the board. The State Treasurer will be the custodian of the fund, interest received on the monies in the fund will be credited to the fund, and collection and administrative costs may be deducted from the fund.

The monies in the fund will be distributed by the board as grants to: establish or construct new child advocacy centers, or renew, renovate, improve, expand, or reconstruct existing centers; make technological improvements to centers or teams; hire personnel, fund new positions, expand the responsibilities of existing positions, pay for additional diagnostic treatment services and other costs, and provide for continuing funding that has been eliminated from a State, federal, or private funding source for diagnostic mental health and medical treatment services, as necessary, to establish new services or improve existing services provided by the centers or teams; and fund any other purpose that would enhance the effective and efficient operation of the centers or teams.

The board will: accept and approve the applications of child advocacy centers or multidisciplinary teams for grants from the fund; award the grants to new centers or teams that apply and qualify for, and existing centers or teams that meet the requirements of, certification; and maintain records of all the grants made from the fund pursuant to the provisions of the bill.

The bill appropriates \$10,000,000 from the General Fund to the board to effectuate the purposes of the bill.

The certification of the State's child advocacy centers and multidisciplinary teams will ensure that survivors of child abuse and neglect and their families throughout the State will have access to centers and teams that provide effective, efficient, and consistent judicial, medical, therapeutic, and victim advocacy services during the investigation of incidents of child abuse and neglect.

This bill will take effect on the 90th day after the date of enactment.

FISCAL IMPACT:

In the Legislative Fiscal Estimate prepared by the Office of Legislative Services (OLS) for this bill, the OLS reviewed an

Executive fiscal note for the bill pending in the last session that concluded that management and support of the Child Advocacy Center-Multidisciplinary Team Advisory Board will require new full-time staff. The OLS determined that two new full-time staff hires would be sufficient to provide staff support to meetings of the Board, process applications for certification, and conduct annual compliance reviews for certified child advocacy centers and multidisciplinary teams. The OLS assumed that these functions could be located within the DCF Office of Licensing, which is currently responsible for similar activities with regard to child care centers, youth residential treatment centers, children's partial care programs, adoption agencies, and resource family homes. The OLS noted that use of the Office of Licensing rather than developing a new administrative structure will minimize administrative costs. The OLS estimated the administrative costs to be in the range of \$175,000 to \$185,000 annually.

The OLS also noted that some administrative costs could be offset by charging child advocacy centers and multidisciplinary teams a certification fee, which is neither required nor prohibited under the bill. If certification fees were imposed, those costs could be charged to State grants or contracts, effectively deducting from the \$10 million General Fund appropriation for grant allocations the amount available to fund service-related activities.

The OLS further notes that the bill could result in indeterminate impacts on spending by some county prosecutor's offices. Several child advocacy centers and multidisciplinary teams in the State are operated by county prosecutors' offices, which would be obligated under the bill to expand certain aspects of their operations. These costs could be paid, at least in part, from a combination of State funding provided under the bill and federal and charitable grant funding. It is possible that some county funds may be required if these other sources are insufficient to cover the costs of compliance with the bill.

LEGISLATIVE FISCAL ESTIMATE
SENATE, No. 972
STATE OF NEW JERSEY
217th LEGISLATURE

DATED: MARCH 18, 2016

SUMMARY

- Synopsis:** Establishes Child Advocacy Center-Multidisciplinary Team Advisory Board and certification program for child advocacy centers and multidisciplinary teams; appropriates \$10 million.
- Type of Impact:** An expenditure increase from the General Fund. A possible revenue increase to the General Fund.
- Agencies Affected:** Department of Children and Families

Office of Legislative Services Estimate

Fiscal Impact	<u>Year 1</u>	<u>Year 2</u>	<u>Year 3</u>
State Cost	\$10,175,000	\$180,000	\$185,000
State Revenue	Possible indeterminate increase – See comments below.		

- The Office of Legislative Services (OLS) estimates that management and support of the Child Advocacy Center-Multidisciplinary Team Advisory Board will require additional full-time staff.
- In addition, the OLS notes that some of the administrative costs associated with the Board could be offset by charging applicants a certification fee, which is neither required nor prohibited under the bill. It is reasonable to expect that if certification fees were imposed, certified entities would pay them with grants awarded under the bill, effectively reducing the amount available to fund service-related activities.

BILL DESCRIPTION

Senate Bill No. 972 of 2016 would establish the Child Advocacy Center-Multidisciplinary Team Advisory Board, in but not of, the Department of Children and Families (DCF). The board's purpose would be to establish a certification program for the State's child advocacy centers and multidisciplinary teams to ensure that certified centers and teams comply with the accreditation standards developed by the National Children's Alliance, or its successor.

The membership of the board would consist of four ex-officio members and 10 public members with relevant experience. The bill requires the board to: direct the development

and implementation of a certification program for the State's child advocacy centers and multidisciplinary teams; develop a comprehensive plan for evaluating the effectiveness of the State's child advocacy centers and multidisciplinary teams; and apply for, accept, and disburse, any grant of money from the State or federal government or other sources that would be available to establish, expand, or improve child advocacy centers or multidisciplinary teams.

Every child advocacy center and multidisciplinary team in the State would be required to apply to the board for certification in a manner and on a form prescribed by the board. In order to qualify for certification, a child advocacy center or multidisciplinary team would be required to adopt and implement guidelines of practice, as specified in the bill, that are consistent with the accreditation standards developed by the National Children's Alliance, or its successor. Upon a center's or a team's adoption and implementation of the guidelines of practice specified in the bill, the board would certify that the center or team is in compliance with the requirements for certification. The board would also conduct an annual compliance review of each child advocacy center and multidisciplinary team it certifies to determine whether the center or team continues to comply with the requirements for certification.

The bill establishes the "Child Advocacy Center-Multidisciplinary Team Fund." This fund would be the repository for monies appropriated to, and any other funds approved by, the board. The State Treasurer would be the custodian of the fund, interest received on the monies in the fund would be credited to the fund, and collection and administrative costs may be deducted from deposited funds. The monies deposited in the fund would be distributed by the board as grants to: establish or construct new child advocacy centers, or renew, renovate, improve, expand, or reconstruct existing centers; make technological improvements to centers or teams; hire personnel, fund new positions, expand the responsibilities of existing positions, pay for additional diagnostic treatment services and other costs, and provide for continuing funding that has been eliminated from a State, federal, or private funding source for diagnostic mental health and medical treatment services, as necessary, to establish new services or improve existing services provided by the centers or teams; and fund any other purpose that would enhance the effective and efficient operation of the centers or teams. The bill appropriates \$10,000,000 from the General Fund to the Child Advocacy Center-Multidisciplinary Team Fund

FISCAL ANALYSIS

EXECUTIVE BRANCH

None received. However, a fiscal note was provided for an identical bill in the previous Legislative session, Senate Bill No. 3219 (1R) of 2014-2015. The Executive estimated that four new full-time staff would be hired to manage and provide support to the Child Advocacy Center-Multidisciplinary Team Advisory Board formed under the bill: one program support specialist, two investigators, and one principal clerk typist, at a total cost of \$385,000 in the first year, \$392,000 in the second year, and \$403,000 in the third year. This cost would be in addition to the \$10 million appropriated by the bill, as that funding would be distributed by the Board as 24 grants to child advocacy centers or multidisciplinary teams.

The Executive estimate did not assume that any additional grant funding would be made available after the first year of implementation. However, the Board would continue to function and would continue to require management and support in subsequent years.

OFFICE OF LEGISLATIVE SERVICES

The OLS agrees with the Executive fiscal note for Senate Bill No. 3219 (1R) of 2014-2015, in that management and support of the Child Advocacy Center-Multidisciplinary Team Advisory Board would require new full-time staff, the OLS disagrees on the number of new staff that would be needed. The OLS notes that the responsibilities of these staff would be limited to providing staff support to meetings of the Board, processing applications for certification from child advocacy centers and multidisciplinary teams, and conducting annual compliance reviews for certified child advocacy centers and multidisciplinary teams. The OLS estimates that two new full-time employees would be sufficient to accomplish these functions.

The OLS expects that 21 to 24 entities will seek certification. (The Executive assumed that 24 entities will be affected. In counties that currently have two separate entities, they may consolidate into a single entity for purposes of certification.) Because certification requires only that the applicant be an accredited member of the National Children's Alliance and in compliance with its guidelines, both facts that can be easily verified with the National Children's Alliance, this review process would be very simple. Similarly, annual compliance reviews by the State could depend heavily upon information already gathered by the National Children's Alliance under its accreditation program, which could be accomplished with relatively little staff time.

The OLS assumes that the Board's certification and compliance review functions could be located within the DCF Office of Licensing, which is currently responsible for similar activities with regard to child care centers, youth residential treatment centers, children's partial care programs, adoption agencies, and resource family homes. By using an existing administrative structure rather than developing a new one, the OLS believes that some administrative staff costs could be minimized.

The OLS assumes that the \$10 million in grants provided by the bill would cover costs to bring current child advocacy centers and multidisciplinary teams into compliance with accreditation requirements. If this amount proves to be insufficient, additional costs could be supported by federal funds provided by the U.S. Department of Justice via the National Children's Alliance, private donations, or State or county funds. (Most child advocacy centers and multidisciplinary teams in New Jersey are operated by county prosecutors' offices.)

The OLS notes that some of the administrative costs associated with the bill could be offset by charging child advocacy centers and multidisciplinary teams a certification fee, which is neither required nor prohibited under the bill. It is reasonable to expect that if certification fees were imposed, those costs could be charged to State grants or contracts, effectively deducting from the bill's \$10 million grant allocation the amount available to fund service-related activities.

Section: Human Services

*Analyst: David Drescher
Senior Fiscal Analyst*

*Approved: Frank W. Haines III
Legislative Budget and Finance Officer*

This legislative fiscal estimate has been produced by the Office of Legislative Services due to the failure of the Executive Branch to respond to our request for a fiscal note.

This fiscal estimate has been prepared pursuant to P.L.1980, c.67 (C.52:13B-6 et seq.).

LEGISLATIVE FISCAL ESTIMATE

[First Reprint]

SENATE, No. 972

STATE OF NEW JERSEY 217th LEGISLATURE

DATED: NOVEMBER 14, 2016

SUMMARY

- Synopsis:** Establishes Child Advocacy Center-Multidisciplinary Team Advisory Board and certification program for child advocacy centers and multidisciplinary teams
- Type of Impact:** An expenditure increase from the General Fund. A possible revenue increase to the General Fund
- Agencies Affected:** Department of Children and Families.

Office of Legislative Services Estimate

Fiscal Impact	<u>Years 1-3</u>
State Cost	Approximately \$100,000 to \$200,000 annually.
State Revenue	Possible indeterminate increase – See comments below

- The Office of Legislative Services (OLS) estimates that management and support of the Child Advocacy Center-Multidisciplinary Team Advisory Board will require one or two additional full-time-equivalent staff, at a cost of approximately \$100,000 to \$200,000 annually.
- In addition, the OLS notes that some of the administrative costs associated with the Board could be offset by charging applicants a certification fee, which is neither required nor prohibited under the bill. Such fees could offset the State cost for administering the certification and grant programs, but may effectively deduct from the State grants for service-related activities.
- This fiscal estimate does not assume that any grant funding will be made available beyond the \$4.8 million appropriated in FY 2017.

BILL DESCRIPTION

Senate Bill No. 972 (1R) of 2016 establishes the Child Advocacy Center-Multidisciplinary Team Advisory Board, in but not of, the Department of Children and Families (DCF). The board

will establish a voluntary certification program for the State's child advocacy centers and multidisciplinary teams to ensure that certified centers and teams comply with the accreditation standards developed by the National Children's Alliance, or its successor.

The membership of the board will consist of: the Commissioner of DCF, the Attorney General, the Chairperson of the New Jersey Task Force on Child Abuse and Neglect, and the Chapter Coordinator of New Jersey Children's Alliance or their designees, who would serve ex officio; and ten public members, with at least 10 years' experience, background, or specialized knowledge in child welfare, child advocacy centers, and multidisciplinary teams, to be appointed by the Governor, including a representative of the New Jersey Prosecutors' Association, a law guardian, a multidisciplinary team coordinator, a pediatrician with expertise in child abuse and neglect, a psychologist with expertise in child abuse and neglect, a representative of a child advocacy center, a representative of a victim or family advocacy group, a law enforcement officer with experience in child abuse and neglect investigations, an academician with experience and expertise in child abuse and neglect research or a related field, and a general member with expertise in child welfare and multidisciplinary teams.

The bill requires the board to: direct the development and implementation of a certification program for the State's child advocacy centers and multidisciplinary teams; develop a comprehensive plan for evaluating the effectiveness of the State's child advocacy centers and multidisciplinary teams; and apply for and accept any grant of money from the State or federal government or other sources that would be available to establish, expand, or improve child advocacy centers or multidisciplinary teams.

Every child advocacy center and multidisciplinary team in the State will be permitted to apply to the board for certification. To qualify for certification, a child advocacy center or multidisciplinary team will be required to adopt and implement guidelines of practice, as specified in the bill, that are consistent with the accreditation standards developed by the National Children's Alliance, or its successor. The board will certify compliance with these requirements.

The board will also conduct an annual compliance review of each child advocacy center and multidisciplinary team it certifies to determine whether the center or team continues to comply with the requirements for certification.

The bill establishes, in the DCF, a nonlapsing, revolving fund to be known as the "Child Advocacy Center-Multidisciplinary Team Fund." This fund will be the repository for monies appropriated to support a grant program for child advocacy centers and multidisciplinary teams. The monies in the fund will be distributed by the DCF as grants to: establish or construct new child advocacy centers, or renew, renovate, improve, expand, or reconstruct existing centers; make technological improvements to centers or teams; hire personnel, fund new positions, expand the responsibilities of existing positions, pay for additional diagnostic treatment services and other costs, and provide for continuing funding that has been eliminated from a State, federal, or private funding source for diagnostic mental health and medical treatment services, as necessary, to establish new services or improve existing services provided by the centers or teams; and fund any other purpose that would enhance the effective and efficient operation of the centers or teams. The Fiscal Year 2017 appropriations act includes \$4.8 million for this grant program.

The board will: accept and approve the applications of child advocacy centers or multidisciplinary teams for grants from the fund; award the grants to new centers or teams that apply and qualify for, and existing centers or teams that meet the requirements of, certification; and maintain records of all the grants made from the fund pursuant to the provisions of the bill.

FISCAL ANALYSIS

EXECUTIVE BRANCH

None received. However, a fiscal note was provided for a similar bill in the previous Legislative session, Senate Bill No. 3219 (1R) of 2014-2015. The Executive estimated that four new full-time staff would be hired to manage and provide support to the Child Advocacy Center-Multidisciplinary Team Advisory Board formed under that bill: one program support specialist, two investigators, and one principal clerk typist, at a total cost of \$385,000 in the first year, \$392,000 in the second year, and \$403,000 in the third year. This cost would have been in addition to the \$10 million appropriated by that bill.

The Executive estimate did not assume that any additional grant funding would be made available after the first year of implementation. However, the Board would continue to function and would continue to require management and support in subsequent years.

OFFICE OF LEGISLATIVE SERVICES

The OLS estimates that management and support of the Child Advocacy Center-Multidisciplinary Team Advisory Board would require one to two new full-time-equivalent staff, at a cost of approximately \$100,000 to \$200,000 annually. The OLS notes that the responsibilities of these staff would be limited to providing staff support to meetings of the Board, processing applications for certification from child advocacy centers and multidisciplinary teams, and conducting annual compliance reviews for certified child advocacy centers and multidisciplinary teams.

Because this version of the bill makes certification permissive rather than mandatory, the OLS expects that fewer applications will be submitted and reviewed than under the earlier versions of the bill. The OLS expects that nine entities will seek certification initially – the number of currently accredited members of the National Children’s Alliance in New Jersey. Because certification requires only that the applicant be an accredited member of the National Children’s Alliance and in compliance with its guidelines, both facts that can be easily verified this review process would be very simple. Similarly, annual compliance reviews by the State could depend heavily upon information already gathered by the National Children’s Alliance under its accreditation program, which could be accomplished with relatively little staff time.

The OLS assumes that the Board’s certification and compliance review functions could be located within the DCF Office of Licensing, which is currently responsible for similar activities with regard to child care centers, youth residential treatment centers, children’s partial care programs, adoption agencies, and resource family homes. By using an existing administrative structure rather than developing a new one, the OLS believes that administrative staff costs could be minimized.

The OLS notes that some of the administrative costs associated with the bill could be offset by charging child advocacy centers and multidisciplinary teams a certification fee, which is neither required nor prohibited under the bill. Such fees may offset the State cost for administering the certification and grant programs, but may effectively deduct from the State grants for service-related activities.

This fiscal estimate does not assume that any grant funding will be made available beyond the \$4.8 million appropriated in FY 2017.

Section: Human Services

*Analyst: David Drescher
Senior Fiscal Analyst*

*Approved: Frank W. Haines III
Legislative Budget and Finance Officer*

This legislative fiscal estimate has been produced by the Office of Legislative Services due to the failure of the Executive Branch to respond to our request for a fiscal note.

This fiscal estimate has been prepared pursuant to P.L.1980, c.67 (C.52:13B-6 et seq.).

ASSEMBLY, No. 1788

STATE OF NEW JERSEY 217th LEGISLATURE

PRE-FILED FOR INTRODUCTION IN THE 2016 SESSION

Sponsored by:

Assemblyman JOHN J. BURZICHELLI
District 3 (Cumberland, Gloucester and Salem)
Assemblywoman L. GRACE SPENCER
District 29 (Essex)
Assemblyman THOMAS P. GIBLIN
District 34 (Essex and Passaic)

SYNOPSIS

Establishes Child Advocacy Center-Multidisciplinary Team Advisory Board and certification program for child advocacy centers and multidisciplinary teams; appropriates \$10 million.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

Introduced Pending Technical Review by Legislative Counsel.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 4/5/2016)

1 AN ACT concerning child advocacy centers and multidisciplinary
2 teams and supplementing Title 9 of the Revised Statutes.

3

4 **BE IT ENACTED** by the Senate and General Assembly of the State
5 of New Jersey:

6

7 1. The Legislature finds and declares that:

8 a. Child advocacy centers are child-friendly centers where a
9 multidisciplinary team of law enforcement, child protective
10 services, prosecutors, mental health and medical professionals, and
11 victim witness and family advocates can provide a coordinated
12 response to the investigation, treatment, prosecution, and prevention
13 of child abuse and neglect.

14 b. Child advocacy centers and multidisciplinary teams are
15 designed to ease the stress experienced by survivors of child abuse
16 and neglect, and their families, throughout the investigation process
17 and improve methods of responding to acts of child abuse and
18 neglect.

19 c. Child advocacy centers and multidisciplinary teams reduce
20 the trauma suffered by children who have been abused or neglected
21 by employing forensic interviewers specifically trained to work
22 with survivors of child abuse and neglect.

23 d. The centers and teams also assist child abuse and neglect
24 survivors and their families in obtaining judicial, medical,
25 therapeutic, and victim advocacy services, and enhance the
26 effectiveness of law enforcement, prosecutors, and child protective
27 services professionals when investigating child abuse and neglect.

28 e. The number of child advocacy centers in the United States
29 has grown dramatically since 1986 when the first center was
30 established. According to the National Children's Alliance, the
31 national accrediting organization for child advocacy centers, there
32 are now more than 770 centers nationwide, and, as of 2009, there
33 were over 900 multidisciplinary teams throughout the United States.

34 f. In order to ensure the effective, efficient, and consistent
35 delivery of services to the survivors of child abuse and neglect and
36 their families, it is necessary to establish a certification program for
37 the State's child advocacy centers and multidisciplinary teams.

38 g. Therefore, it is the intent of the Legislature to require the
39 certification of the State's child advocacy centers and
40 multidisciplinary teams through the adoption and implementation of
41 guidelines of practice consistent with the accreditation standards
42 developed by the National Children's Alliance, or its successor.

43

44 2. As used in this act:

45 "Child advocacy center" means a county-based center as defined
46 in section 6 of P.L.1998, c.19 (C.9:6-8.104).

47 "Multidisciplinary team" means a county-based team as
48 established in section 6 of P.L.1998, c.19 (C.9:6-8.104).

1 3. a. There is established in, but not of, the Department of
2 Children and Families in the Executive Branch of State government
3 the Child Advocacy Center-Multidisciplinary Team Advisory
4 Board. For the purpose of complying with the provisions of Article
5 V, Section IV, paragraph 1 of the New Jersey Constitution, the
6 Child Advocacy Center-Multidisciplinary Team Advisory Board is
7 allocated within the Department of Children and Families, but,
8 notwithstanding this allocation, the advisory board shall be
9 independent of any supervision or control by the department or by
10 any officer or employee thereof.

11 b. The purpose of the board is to establish a certification
12 program for the State's child advocacy centers and multidisciplinary
13 teams to ensure that the centers and teams comply with the
14 accreditation standards developed by the National Children's
15 Alliance, or its successor.

16 c. The board shall consist of 14 members as follows:

17 (1) the Commissioner of Children and Families, the Attorney
18 General, the Chairperson of the New Jersey Task Force on Child
19 Abuse and Neglect, and the Chapter Coordinator of New Jersey
20 Children's Alliance or their designees, who shall serve ex officio;
21 and

22 (2) ten public members, with at least 10 years' experience,
23 background, or specialized knowledge in child welfare and
24 multidisciplinary teams, appointed by the Governor who shall
25 include a representative of the New Jersey Prosecutors' Association,
26 a law guardian, a multidisciplinary team coordinator, a pediatrician
27 with expertise in child abuse and neglect, a psychologist with
28 expertise in child abuse and neglect, a representative of a child
29 advocacy center, a representative of a victim or family advocacy
30 group, a law enforcement officer with experience in child abuse and
31 neglect investigations, an academician with experience and
32 expertise in child abuse and neglect research or a related field; and
33 one member with general expertise in child welfare and
34 multidisciplinary teams.

35 d. Vacancies in the membership of the board shall be filled in
36 the same manner provided for the original appointments. The
37 members of the board shall serve without compensation, but may be
38 reimbursed for traveling and other miscellaneous expenses
39 necessary to perform their duties, within the limits of funds made
40 available to the board for its purposes.

41 e. The board shall organize as soon as practicable, but no later
42 than 60 days following the appointment of its members, and shall
43 select a chairperson and vice-chairperson from among the members.
44 The chairperson shall appoint a secretary who need not be a
45 member of the board.

46 f. The board may meet at the call of its chair and hold hearings
47 at the times and in the places it deems appropriate and necessary to
48 fulfill its charge. The board shall be entitled to call to its assistance

1 and avail itself of the services of the employees of any State,
2 county, or municipal department, board, bureau, commission, or
3 agency as it may require and as may be available to it for its
4 purposes.

5 g. The Department of Children and Families shall provide
6 professional and clerical staff to the board as necessary to effectuate
7 the purposes of this act.

8

9 4. The board shall:

10 a. direct the development and implementation of a certification
11 program for the State's child advocacy centers and multidisciplinary
12 teams pursuant to section 5 of this act;

13 b. develop a comprehensive plan for evaluating the
14 effectiveness of the State's child advocacy centers and
15 multidisciplinary teams; and

16 c. apply for, accept, and disburse any grant of money from the
17 State or federal government or other sources, which may be
18 available to establish, expand, or improve child advocacy centers or
19 multidisciplinary teams pursuant to section 7 of this act.

20

21 5. a. The board shall establish a certification program for the
22 State's child advocacy centers and multidisciplinary teams. The
23 goal of the program shall be to ensure that:

24 (1) every child advocacy center or multidisciplinary team in the
25 State applying for certification pursuant to subsection b. of this
26 section is in compliance with guidelines of practice that are
27 consistent with the accreditation standards developed by the
28 National Children's Alliance, or its successor; and

29 (2) the State's child advocacy centers and multidisciplinary
30 teams incorporate best practices and standards in providing child
31 abuse prevention, intervention, and treatment services to survivors
32 of child abuse and neglect.

33 b. Every child advocacy center and multidisciplinary team in
34 the State may apply to the board for certification in a manner and
35 on a form prescribed by the board. In order to qualify for
36 certification with the board, a child advocacy center or
37 multidisciplinary team shall adopt and implement guidelines of
38 practice that are consistent with the accreditation standards
39 developed by the National Children's Alliance, or its successor.
40 The guidelines shall, at a minimum, provide for:

41 (1) a multidisciplinary team response in an investigation of child
42 abuse and neglect by representatives of the following core
43 disciplines: law enforcement, child protective services, mental
44 health, prosecution, victim advocacy, and medicine;

45 (2) the designation of a private, child-friendly interview and
46 family meeting room which provides an environment that is
47 physically and psychologically safe for, and provides comfort to, a

- 1 survivor of child abuse and neglect and the survivor's family during
2 the course of an investigation of child and neglect;
- 3 (3) protocols governing the forensic interview of a survivor of
4 child abuse and neglect that comply with the 2010 Guidelines of
5 Practice for Child Abuse Multidisciplinary Teams in New Jersey
6 and current best practice standards and nationally recognized
7 methods for forensic interviews, New Jersey Court Rules, relevant
8 case law, and internal or external peer review;
- 9 (4) an interdisciplinary case review process that describes the
10 responsibilities of each team member in an investigation of child
11 abuse and neglect and the provisions of the services to a survivor of
12 child abuse and neglect and the survivor's family;
- 13 (5) a uniform system to identify, track, collect, and coordinate
14 information obtained during an investigation of child abuse and
15 neglect, and to monitor the progress and outcomes of the
16 investigation;
- 17 (6) procedures to facilitate communication, collaboration,
18 coordination, information sharing, problem solving, and decision
19 making between team members during an investigation of child
20 abuse and neglect;
- 21 (7) a dispute resolution process to resolve interdisciplinary
22 conflicts that may arise between team members during the course of
23 an investigation of child abuse and neglect;
- 24 (8) the provision of services, supports, and other assistance in a
25 culturally competent manner to a survivor of child abuse and
26 neglect and the survivor's family during an investigation of child
27 abuse and neglect;
- 28 (9) on-going, specialized interdisciplinary training for team
29 members to enhance their basic skills and expertise in the
30 investigation and prevention of child abuse and neglect;
- 31 (10) mechanisms and processes to allow the center to self-
32 evaluate the effectiveness of its operations and its success in
33 investigating child abuse and neglect;
- 34 (11) the establishment of county based child advocacy center-
35 multidisciplinary team advisory boards to oversee the operations
36 and administration of the child advocacy center or multidisciplinary
37 team;
- 38 (12) the creation of an education and outreach program to train
39 professionals from State and local governmental and community-
40 based social services agencies in providing multidisciplinary
41 services to survivors of child abuse and neglect and their families
42 and to educate the community on child maltreatment and child
43 abuse prevention techniques;
- 44 (13) procedures to apply for and accept any grant of money from
45 the State or federal government or other sources, which may be
46 available to child advocacy centers and multidisciplinary teams; and

1 (14) reporting requirements on the use of grant funds received
2 by a child advocacy center or multidisciplinary team pursuant to
3 section 7 of this act.

4 c. If a child advocacy center or multidisciplinary team adopts
5 and implements the guidelines of practice specified in subsection b.
6 of this section, the board shall certify that the center or team is in
7 compliance with the provisions of this act.

8 d. The board shall conduct an annual compliance review of
9 each child advocacy center and multidisciplinary team the board
10 certifies pursuant to subsection c. of this section, and shall evaluate
11 the center or team to determine whether it continues to comply with
12 the provisions of this act.

13

14 6. a. There is established in the Department of the Treasury a
15 nonlapsing, revolving fund to be known as the "Child Advocacy
16 Center-Multidisciplinary Team Fund." This fund shall be the
17 repository for monies appropriated to the board pursuant to section
18 8 of this act and any other funds approved by the board.

19 b. The State Treasurer is the custodian of the fund and all
20 disbursements from the fund shall be made by the State Treasurer
21 upon vouchers signed by chairperson of the board. The monies in
22 the fund shall be invested and reinvested by the Director of the
23 Division of Investment in the Department of the Treasury as are
24 other trust funds in the custody of the State Treasurer, in the manner
25 provided by law. Interest received on the monies in the fund shall
26 be credited to the fund.

27

28 7. a. The monies deposited in the Child Advocacy Center-
29 Multidisciplinary Team Fund shall be distributed by the board as
30 grants to child advocacy centers or multidisciplinary teams certified
31 by the board pursuant to subsection c. of section 5 of this act, as
32 applicable to:

33 (1) establish or construct new, or renew, renovate, improve,
34 expand, or reconstruct existing centers;

35 (2) make technological improvements, including the
36 modernization of software and hardware;

37 (3) hire personnel, fund new positions, expand the
38 responsibilities of existing positions, pay for additional diagnostic
39 treatment services and other costs, and provide for continuing
40 funding that has been eliminated from a State, federal, or private
41 funding source for diagnostic mental health and medical treatment
42 services, as necessary, to establish new or improve existing services
43 provided by the centers or teams; and

44 (4) fund any other purpose that would enhance the effective and
45 efficient operation of the centers or teams.

46 b. The board shall accept and approve the applications of child
47 advocacy centers or multidisciplinary teams for grants from the
48 fund, and shall award the grants to new centers or teams that apply

1 and qualify for, and existing centers or teams that meet the
2 requirements of, certification in accordance with subsection b. of
3 section 5 of this act. The board shall maintain records of all the
4 grants made from the fund pursuant to this section.

5

6 8. There is appropriated from the General Fund to the Child
7 Advocacy-Multidisciplinary Team Advisory Board \$10,000,000 to
8 effectuate the purposes of this act.

9

10 9. Pursuant to the "Administrative Procedure Act," P.L.1968,
11 c.410 (C.52:14B-1 et seq.), the board shall adopt rules and
12 regulations, to effectuate the purposes of this act.

13

14 10. This act shall take effect on the 90th day after the date of
15 enactment.

16

17

18

STATEMENT

19

20 This bill establishes the Child Advocacy Center-
21 Multidisciplinary Team Advisory Board, in but not of, the
22 Department of Children and Families (DCF). The board's purpose
23 would be to establish a certification program for the State's child
24 advocacy centers and multidisciplinary teams to ensure that
25 certified centers and teams comply with the accreditation standards
26 developed by the National Children's Alliance, or its successor.

27 The membership of the board would consist of: the
28 Commissioner of DCF, the Attorney General, the Chairperson of
29 the New Jersey Task Force on Child Abuse and Neglect, and the
30 Chapter Coordinator of New Jersey Children's Alliance or their
31 designees, who would serve ex officio; and ten public members,
32 with at least 10 years' experience, background, or specialized
33 knowledge in child welfare and multidisciplinary teams, appointed
34 by the Governor including a representative of the New Jersey
35 Prosecutors' Association, a law guardian, a multidisciplinary team
36 coordinator, a pediatrician with expertise in child abuse and neglect,
37 a psychologist with expertise in child abuse and neglect, a
38 representative of a child advocacy center, a representative of a
39 victim or family advocacy group, a law enforcement officer with
40 experience in child abuse and neglect investigations, an
41 academician with experience and expertise in child abuse and
42 neglect research or a related field, and a general member with
43 expertise in child welfare and multidisciplinary teams.

44 The bill requires the board to: direct the development and
45 implementation of a certification program for the State's child
46 advocacy centers and multidisciplinary teams; develop a
47 comprehensive plan for evaluating the effectiveness of the State's
48 child advocacy centers and multidisciplinary teams; and apply for,

1 accept, and disburse, any grant of money from the State or federal
2 government or other sources that would be available to establish,
3 expand, or improve child advocacy centers or multidisciplinary
4 teams.

5 Under the provisions of the bill, the board would establish a
6 certification program for the State's child advocacy centers and
7 multidisciplinary teams. The goal of the program would be to
8 ensure that: every child advocacy center and multidisciplinary team
9 in the State that chooses to become certified comply with guidelines
10 of practice that are consistent with the accreditation standards
11 developed by the National Children's Alliance, or its successor; and
12 the State's centers and teams incorporate best practices and
13 standards in providing child abuse prevention, intervention, and
14 treatment services to survivors of child abuse and neglect.

15 Every child advocacy center and multidisciplinary team in the
16 State would be permitted to apply to the board for certification in a
17 manner and on a form prescribed by the board. In order to qualify
18 for certification, a child advocacy center or multidisciplinary team
19 would adopt and implement guidelines of practice, as specified in
20 the bill, that are consistent with the accreditation standards
21 developed by the National Children's Alliance, or its successor.

22 If a child advocacy center or multidisciplinary team adopts and
23 implements the guidelines of practice specified in the bill, the board
24 would certify that the center or team is in compliance with its
25 requirements for certification.

26 The board would also conduct an annual compliance review of
27 each child advocacy center and multidisciplinary team it certifies to
28 determine whether the center or team continues to comply with the
29 requirements for certification.

30 The bill establishes, in the Department of the Treasury, a
31 nonlapsing, revolving fund to be known as the "Child Advocacy
32 Center-Multidisciplinary Team Fund." This fund would be the
33 repository for monies appropriated to, and any other funds approved
34 by, the board. The State Treasurer would be the custodian of the
35 fund, interest received on the monies in the fund would be credited
36 to the fund, and collection and administrative costs may be
37 deducted from deposited funds.

38 The monies deposited in the fund would be distributed by the
39 board as grants to: establish or construct new, or renew, renovate,
40 improve, expand, or reconstruct existing child advocacy centers;
41 make technological improvements to centers or teams; hire
42 personnel, fund new positions, expand the responsibilities of
43 existing positions, pay for additional diagnostic treatment services
44 and other costs, and provide for continuing funding that has been
45 eliminated from a State, federal, or private funding source for
46 diagnostic mental health and medical treatment services, as
47 necessary, to establish new or improve existing services provided
48 by the centers or teams; and fund any other purpose that would

1 enhance the effective and efficient operation of the centers or
2 teams.

3 The board would: accept and approve the applications of child
4 advocacy centers or multidisciplinary teams for grants from the
5 fund; award the grants to new centers or teams that apply and
6 qualify for, and existing centers or teams that meet the requirements
7 of, certification; and maintain records of all the grants made from
8 the fund pursuant to the provisions of the bill.

9 The bill appropriates \$10,000,000 from the General Fund to the
10 board to effectuate the purposes of the bill.

11 The certification of the State's child advocacy centers and
12 multidisciplinary teams will ensure that survivors of child abuse
13 and neglect and their families throughout the State will have access
14 to centers and teams that provide effective, efficient, and consistent
15 judicial, medical, therapeutic, and victim advocacy services during
16 the investigation of incidents of child abuse and neglect.

ASSEMBLY WOMEN AND CHILDREN COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

ASSEMBLY, No. 1788

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: MAY 19, 2016

The Assembly Woman and Children Committee reports favorably Assembly Bill No.1788.

This bill establishes the Child Advocacy Center- Multidisciplinary Team Advisory Board, in but not of, the Department of Children and Families (DCF). The board's purpose would be to establish a certification program for the State's child advocacy centers and multidisciplinary teams to ensure that certified centers and teams comply with the accreditation standards developed by the National Children's Alliance, or its successor.

The membership of the board would consist of: the Commissioner of DCF, the Attorney General, the Chairperson of the New Jersey Task Force on Child Abuse and Neglect, and the Chapter Coordinator of New Jersey Children's Alliance or their designees, who would serve ex officio; and ten public members, with at least 10 years' experience, background, or specialized knowledge in child welfare and multidisciplinary teams, appointed by the Governor including a representative of the New Jersey Prosecutors' Association, a law guardian, a multidisciplinary team coordinator, a pediatrician with expertise in child abuse and neglect, a psychologist with expertise in child abuse and neglect, a representative of a child advocacy center, a representative of a victim or family advocacy group, a law enforcement officer with experience in child abuse and neglect investigations, an academician with experience and expertise in child abuse and neglect research or a related field, and a general member with expertise in child welfare and multidisciplinary teams.

The bill requires the board to: direct the development and implementation of a certification program for the State's child advocacy centers and multidisciplinary teams; develop a comprehensive plan for evaluating the effectiveness of the State's child advocacy centers and multidisciplinary teams; and apply for, accept, and disburse, any grant of money from the State or federal government or other sources that would be available to establish, expand, or improve child advocacy centers or multidisciplinary teams.

Under the provisions of the bill, the board would establish a certification program for the State's child advocacy centers and multidisciplinary teams. The goal of the program would be to ensure that: every child advocacy center and multidisciplinary team in the

State that chooses to become certified comply with guidelines of practice that are consistent with the accreditation standards developed by the National Children's Alliance, or its successor; and the State's centers and teams incorporate best practices and standards in providing child abuse prevention, intervention, and treatment services to survivors of child abuse and neglect.

Every child advocacy center and multidisciplinary team in the State would be permitted to apply to the board for certification in a manner and on a form prescribed by the board. In order to qualify for certification, a child advocacy center or multidisciplinary team would adopt and implement guidelines of practice, as specified in the bill, that are consistent with the accreditation standards developed by the National Children's Alliance, or its successor.

If a child advocacy center or multidisciplinary team adopts and implements the guidelines of practice specified in the bill, the board would certify that the center or team is in compliance with its requirements for certification.

The board would also conduct an annual compliance review of each child advocacy center and multidisciplinary team it certifies to determine whether the center or team continues to comply with the requirements for certification.

The bill establishes, in the Department of the Treasury, a nonlapsing, revolving fund to be known as the "Child Advocacy Center-Multidisciplinary Team Fund." This fund would be the repository for monies appropriated to, and any other funds approved by, the board. The State Treasurer would be the custodian of the fund, interest received on the monies in the fund would be credited to the fund, and collection and administrative costs may be deducted from deposited funds.

The monies deposited in the fund would be distributed by the board as grants to: establish or construct new, or renew, renovate, improve, expand, or reconstruct existing child advocacy centers; make technological improvements to centers or teams; hire personnel, fund new positions, expand the responsibilities of existing positions, pay for additional diagnostic treatment services and other costs, and provide for continuing funding that has been eliminated from a State, federal, or private funding source for diagnostic mental health and medical treatment services, as necessary, to establish new or improve existing services provided by the centers or teams; and fund any other purpose that would enhance the effective and efficient operation of the centers or teams.

The board would: accept and approve the applications of child advocacy centers or multidisciplinary teams for grants from the fund; award the grants to new centers or teams that apply and qualify for, and existing centers or teams that meet the requirements of, certification; and maintain records of all the grants made from the fund pursuant to the provisions of the bill.

The bill appropriates \$10,000,000 from the General Fund to the board to effectuate the purposes of the bill.

The certification of the State's child advocacy centers and multidisciplinary teams will ensure that survivors of child abuse and neglect and their families throughout the State will have access to centers and teams that provide effective, efficient, and consistent judicial, medical, therapeutic, and victim advocacy services during the investigation of incidents of child abuse and neglect.

This bill was pre-filed for introduction in the 2016-2017 session pending technical review. As reported, the bill includes the changes required by technical review, which has been performed.

ASSEMBLY APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

ASSEMBLY, No. 1788

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: JUNE 20, 2016

The Assembly Appropriations Committee reports favorably Assembly Bill No. 1788.

This bill establishes the Child Advocacy Center- Multidisciplinary Team Advisory Board, in but not of, the Department of Children and Families (DCF). The board's purpose is to establish a certification program for the State's child advocacy centers and multidisciplinary teams to ensure that certified centers and teams comply with the accreditation standards developed by the National Children's Alliance, or its successor.

The membership of the board consists of: the Commissioner of DCF, the Attorney General, the Chairperson of the New Jersey Task Force on Child Abuse and Neglect, and the Chapter Coordinator of New Jersey Children's Alliance or their designees, who would serve ex officio; and ten public members, each with at least 10 years' experience, background, or specialized knowledge in child welfare and multidisciplinary teams, appointed by the Governor including a representative of the New Jersey Prosecutors' Association, a law guardian, a multidisciplinary team coordinator, a pediatrician with expertise in child abuse and neglect, a psychologist with expertise in child abuse and neglect, a representative of a child advocacy center, a representative of a victim or family advocacy group, a law enforcement officer with experience in child abuse and neglect investigations, an academician with experience and expertise in child abuse and neglect research or a related field, and a general member with expertise in child welfare and multidisciplinary teams.

The bill requires the board to: direct the development and implementation of a certification program for the State's child advocacy centers and multidisciplinary teams; develop a comprehensive plan for evaluating the effectiveness of the State's child advocacy centers and multidisciplinary teams; and apply for, accept, and disburse, any grant of money from the State or federal government or other sources that would be available to establish, expand, or improve child advocacy centers or multidisciplinary teams.

The bill directs the board to establish a certification program for the State's child advocacy centers and multidisciplinary teams, with the goal of ensuring that: every child advocacy center and multidisciplinary team in the State that chooses to become certified

comply with guidelines of practice that are consistent with the accreditation standards developed by the National Children's Alliance, or its successor; and the State's centers and teams incorporate best practices and standards in providing child abuse prevention, intervention, and treatment services to survivors of child abuse and neglect.

The bill permits each child advocacy center and multidisciplinary team in the State to apply to the board for certification in a manner and on a form prescribed by the board. To qualify for certification, a child advocacy center or multidisciplinary team will adopt and implement guidelines of practice, as specified in the bill, that are consistent with the accreditation standards developed by the National Children's Alliance, or its successor.

If a child advocacy center or multidisciplinary team adopts and implements the guidelines of practice specified in the bill, the board will certify that the center or team is in compliance with its requirements for certification.

The board will also conduct an annual compliance review of each child advocacy center and multidisciplinary team it certifies to determine whether the center or team continues to comply with the requirements for certification.

The bill establishes, in the Department of the Treasury, a nonlapsing revolving fund to be known as the "Child Advocacy Center-Multidisciplinary Team Fund." This fund will be the repository for monies appropriated to, and any other funds approved by, the board. The State Treasurer will have custody of the fund, interest received on the monies in the fund will be credited to the fund, and collection and administrative costs may be deducted from deposited funds.

The monies deposited in the fund will be distributed by the board as grants to: establish or construct new, or renew, renovate, improve, expand, or reconstruct existing child advocacy centers; make technological improvements to centers or teams; hire personnel, fund new positions, expand the responsibilities of existing positions, pay for additional diagnostic treatment services and other costs, and provide for continuing funding that has been eliminated from a State, federal, or private funding source for diagnostic mental health and medical treatment services, as necessary, to establish new or improve existing services provided by the centers or teams; and fund any other purpose that would enhance the effective and efficient operation of the centers or teams.

The board will: accept and approve the applications of child advocacy centers or multidisciplinary teams for grants from the fund; award the grants to new centers or teams that apply and qualify for, and existing centers or teams that meet the requirements of, certification; and maintain records of all the grants made from the fund pursuant to the provisions of the bill.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The bill appropriates \$10,000,000 from the General Fund to the board to effectuate the purposes of the bill.

The Executive provided a fiscal note for an identical bill in the previous Legislative session, Senate Bill No. 3219 (1R) of 2014-2015. The Executive estimated that four new full-time staff would be hired to manage and provide support to the Child Advocacy Center-Multidisciplinary Team Advisory Board formed under the bill: one program support specialist, two investigators, and one principal clerk typist, at a total cost of \$385,000 in the first year, \$392,000 in the second year, and \$403,000 in the third year. This cost would be in addition to the \$10 million appropriated by the bill, as that funding is to be distributed by the board as 24 grants to child advocacy centers or multidisciplinary teams.

The OLS agrees with the Executive fiscal note, in that management and support of the Child Advocacy Center-Multidisciplinary Team Advisory Board will require new full-time staff, who will be responsible for providing staff support to meetings of the board, processing applications for certification from child advocacy centers and multidisciplinary teams, and conducting annual compliance reviews for certified child advocacy centers and multidisciplinary teams. The OLS estimates that two new full-time employees are sufficient to accomplish these functions.

The Executive estimate did not assume that any additional grant funding would be made available after the first year of implementation. However, the board will continue to function and continue to require management and support in subsequent years.

LEGISLATIVE FISCAL ESTIMATE
ASSEMBLY, No. 1788
STATE OF NEW JERSEY
217th LEGISLATURE

DATED: MARCH 21, 2016

SUMMARY

- Synopsis:** Establishes Child Advocacy Center-Multidisciplinary Team Advisory Board and certification program for child advocacy centers and multidisciplinary teams; appropriates \$10 million.
- Type of Impact:** An expenditure increase from the General Fund. A possible revenue increase to the General Fund.
- Agencies Affected:** Department of Children and Families

Office of Legislative Services Estimate

Fiscal Impact	<u>Year 1</u>	<u>Year 2</u>	<u>Year 3</u>
State Cost	\$10,175,000	\$180,000	\$185,000
State Revenue	Possible indeterminate increase – See comments below.		

- The Office of Legislative Services (OLS) estimates that management and support of the Child Advocacy Center-Multidisciplinary Team Advisory Board will require additional full-time staff.
- In addition, the OLS notes that some of the administrative costs associated with the Board could be offset by charging applicants a certification fee, which is neither required nor prohibited under the bill. It is reasonable to expect that if certification fees were imposed, certified entities would pay them with grants awarded under the bill, effectively reducing the amount available to fund service-related activities.

BILL DESCRIPTION

Assembly Bill No. 1788 of 2016 would establish the Child Advocacy Center-Multidisciplinary Team Advisory Board, in but not of, the Department of Children and Families (DCF). The board's purpose would be to establish a certification program for the State's child advocacy centers and multidisciplinary teams to ensure that certified centers and teams comply with the accreditation standards developed by the National Children's Alliance, or its successor.

The membership of the board would consist of four ex-officio members and 10 public members with relevant experience. The bill requires the board to: direct the development and implementation of a certification program for the State's child advocacy centers and multidisciplinary teams; develop a comprehensive plan for evaluating the effectiveness of the State's child advocacy centers and multidisciplinary teams; and apply for, accept, and disburse, any grant of money from the State or federal government or other sources that would be available to establish, expand, or improve child advocacy centers or multidisciplinary teams.

Every child advocacy center and multidisciplinary team in the State would be required to apply to the board for certification in a manner and on a form prescribed by the board. In order to qualify for certification, a child advocacy center or multidisciplinary team would be required to adopt and implement guidelines of practice, as specified in the bill, that are consistent with the accreditation standards developed by the National Children's Alliance, or its successor. Upon a center's or a team's adoption and implementation of the guidelines of practice specified in the bill, the board would certify that the center or team is in compliance with the requirements for certification. The board would also conduct an annual compliance review of each child advocacy center and multidisciplinary team it certifies to determine whether the center or team continues to comply with the requirements for certification.

The bill establishes the "Child Advocacy Center-Multidisciplinary Team Fund." This fund would be the repository for monies appropriated to, and any other funds approved by, the board. The State Treasurer would be the custodian of the fund, interest received on the monies in the fund would be credited to the fund, and collection and administrative costs may be deducted from deposited funds. The monies deposited in the fund would be distributed by the board as grants to: establish or construct new child advocacy centers, or renew, renovate, improve, expand, or reconstruct existing centers; make technological improvements to centers or teams; hire personnel, fund new positions, expand the responsibilities of existing positions, pay for additional diagnostic treatment services and other costs, and provide for continuing funding that has been eliminated from a State, federal, or private funding source for diagnostic mental health and medical treatment services, as necessary, to establish new services or improve existing services provided by the centers or teams; and fund any other purpose that would enhance the effective and efficient operation of the centers or teams. The bill appropriates \$10,000,000 from the General Fund to the Child Advocacy Center-Multidisciplinary Team Fund

FISCAL ANALYSIS

EXECUTIVE BRANCH

None received. However, a fiscal note was provided for an identical bill in the previous Legislative session, Senate Bill No. 3219 (1R) of 2014-2015. The Executive estimated that four new full-time staff would be hired to manage and provide support to the Child Advocacy Center-Multidisciplinary Team Advisory Board formed under the bill: one program support specialist, two investigators, and one principal clerk typist, at a total cost of \$385,000 in the first year, \$392,000 in the second year, and \$403,000 in the third year. This cost would be in addition to the \$10 million appropriated by the bill, as that funding would be distributed by the Board as 24 grants to child advocacy centers or multidisciplinary teams.

The Executive estimate did not assume that any additional grant funding would be made available after the first year of implementation. However, the Board would continue to function and would continue to require management and support in subsequent years

OFFICE OF LEGISLATIVE SERVICES

The OLS agrees with the Executive fiscal note for Senate Bill No. 3219 (1R) of 2014-2015, in that management and support of the Child Advocacy Center-Multidisciplinary Team Advisory Board would require new full-time staff, the OLS disagrees on the number of new staff that would be needed. The OLS notes that the responsibilities of these staff would be limited to providing staff support to meetings of the Board, processing applications for certification from child advocacy centers and multidisciplinary teams, and conducting annual compliance reviews for certified child advocacy centers and multidisciplinary teams. The OLS estimates that two new full-time employees would be sufficient to accomplish these functions.

The OLS expects that 21 to 24 entities will seek certification. (The Executive assumed that 24 entities will be affected. In counties that currently have two separate entities, they may consolidate into a single entity for purposes of certification.) Because certification requires only that the applicant be an accredited member of the National Children's Alliance and in compliance with its guidelines, both facts that can be easily verified with the National Children's Alliance, this review process would be very simple. Similarly, annual compliance reviews by the State could depend heavily upon information already gathered by the National Children's Alliance under its accreditation program, which could be accomplished with relatively little staff time.

The OLS assumes that the Board's certification and compliance review functions could be located within the DCF Office of Licensing, which is currently responsible for similar activities with regard to child care centers, youth residential treatment centers, children's partial care programs, adoption agencies, and resource family homes. By using an existing administrative structure rather than developing a new one, the OLS believes that some administrative staff costs could be minimized.

The OLS assumes that the \$10 million in grants provided by the bill would cover costs to bring current child advocacy centers and multidisciplinary teams into compliance with accreditation requirements. If this amount proves to be insufficient, additional costs could be supported by federal funds provided by the U.S. Department of Justice via the National Children's Alliance, private donations, or State or county funds. (Most child advocacy centers and multidisciplinary teams in New Jersey are operated by county prosecutors' offices.)

The OLS notes that some of the administrative costs associated with the bill could be offset by charging child advocacy centers and multidisciplinary teams a certification fee, which is neither required nor prohibited under the bill. It is reasonable to expect that if certification fees were imposed, those costs could be charged to State grants or contracts, effectively deducting from the bill's \$10 million grant allocation the amount available to fund service-related activities.

Section: Human Services

*Analyst: David Drescher
Senior Fiscal Analyst*

*Approved: Frank W. Haines III
Legislative Budget and Finance Officer*

This legislative fiscal estimate has been produced by the Office of Legislative Services due to the failure of the Executive Branch to respond to our request for a fiscal note.

This fiscal estimate has been prepared pursuant to P.L.1980, c.67 (C.52:13B-6 et seq.).

SENATE BILL NO. 972

To the Senate:

Pursuant to Article V, Section I, Paragraph 14 of the New Jersey Constitution, I am returning Senate Bill No. 972 with my recommendations for reconsideration.

Multidisciplinary teams, which often operate out of child advocacy centers, work together throughout our State to prevent and respond to cases of child abuse and neglect. This bill would establish the Child Advocacy Center-Multidisciplinary Team Advisory Board ("Advisory Board") in, but not of, the Department of Children and Families ("DCF"). The purpose of the Advisory Board would be to institute a mandatory certification process for child advocacy centers and multidisciplinary teams to adhere to the standards of the National Children's Alliance. This bill also contains a supplemental appropriation of \$10 million for a fund from which the Advisory Board would administer grants to the child advocacy centers and multidisciplinary teams.

There is no greater responsibility for government and our society than to protect children from abuse and neglect. While I support the intention of the sponsors of this bill to strengthen child advocacy centers and multidisciplinary teams in our State, I am concerned that the bill would create overly-prescriptive requirements for centers and teams that go beyond the recommendations of the National Children's Alliance. Indeed, these requirements could ultimately threaten the continued operation of multidisciplinary teams that currently operate in all 21 counties across the State. I am also concerned that the Advisory Board would add an unnecessary level of bureaucracy to the administration of the grant program. Finally, the bill seeks to appropriate money outside of the budget process, which I have consistently rejected throughout my time as Governor.

Nevertheless, I support the mission and continued growth of child advocacy centers and multidisciplinary teams, which provide necessary assistance to the vulnerable and abused children of this State. Therefore, I am recommending that the bill be modified to make the certification process permissive and to make DCF responsible for dispersing grant funds to eligible child advocacy centers and multidisciplinary teams. Finally, I am recommending the removal of the supplemental appropriation from the bill. I authorized the appropriation of \$4.8 million to the DCF to administer the grant program in the Fiscal Year 2017 Appropriations Act. This action will ensure that funding is provided consistent with the intentions of this bill, but in a way that will maintain the balance of the State budget.

Accordingly, I herewith return Senate Bill No. 972 and recommend that it be amended as follows:

<u>Page 2, Section 1, Line 38:</u>	Delete "require the" and insert "create a"
<u>Page 2, Section 1, Line 39:</u>	Delete "of" and insert "program for"
<u>Page 3, Section 3, Line 13:</u>	Before "centers" insert "certified"
<u>Page 4, Section 4, Line 16:</u>	Delete ", accept, and disburse" and insert "and accept"
<u>Page 4, Section 4, Line 19:</u>	After "act." insert "Any monies received by the board shall be deposited in the "Child Advocacy Center-Multidisciplinary Team Fund" established pursuant to section 6 of this act."
<u>Page 4, Section 5, Line 34:</u>	Delete "shall" and insert "may"
<u>Page 6, Section 5, Line 4:</u>	Delete "Upon adoption and implementation of" and insert "If a child advocacy center or multidisciplinary team adopts and implements"
<u>Page 6, Section 6, Line 14:</u>	Delete "a."
<u>Page 6, Section 6, Line 14:</u>	Delete "the Treasury" and insert "Children and Families"
<u>Page 6, Section 6, Line 15:</u>	Delete "nonlapsing, revolving"

Page 6, Section 6, Line 17: Delete "the board" and insert "support the grant program established"

Page 6, Section 6, Line 18: Delete "8" and insert "7"

Page 6, Section 6, Lines 19-26: Delete in their entirety

Page 6, Section 7, Line 29: Delete "board" and insert "Department of Children and Families"

Page 6, Section 7, Line 46: Delete "board" and insert "Department of Children and Families"

Page 7, Section 7, Line 3: Delete "board" and insert "Department of Children and Families"

Page 7, Section 8, Lines 6-8: Delete in their entirety

Page 7, Section 9, Line 10: Delete "9." and insert "8."

Page 7, Section 9, Line 11: Delete "shall adopt" insert "and the Department of Children and Families may adopt any"

Page 7, Section 9, Line 12: Delete ", " and insert "necessary"

Page 7, Section 10, Line 14: Delete "10." and insert "9."

[seal]

Respectfully,
/s/ Chris Christie
Governor

Attest:
/s/ Thomas P. Scrivo
Chief Counsel to the Governor

Governor Christie Takes Action On Pending Legislation

Friday, June 9, 2017

Tags: [Bill Action](#)



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Trenton, NJ - Governor Chris Christie today announced that he has taken action on the following pending legislation:

BILL SIGNINGS:

S-295/A-2334 (Vitale, Sarlo/Benson, Vainieri Huttle, Mazzeo, Mukherji, Downey, Wimberly) - Requires DOH to issue standing order authorizing pharmacists to dispense opioid antidotes to patients without individual prescriptions

S-651/A-4262 (Turner, Pennacchio/Muoio, Lampitt, Chiaravalloti, Mukherji, Jimenez) - Requires family day care providers and certain household members to undergo criminal history record background checks

S-972wGR/A-1788 (Sweeney, O'Toole, Ruiz/Burzichelli, Giblin, Pintor Marin) – Establishes Child Advocacy Center-Multidisciplinary Team Advisory Board and certification program for child advocacy centers and multidisciplinary teams; appropriates \$10 million

S-2564/A-4115 (Weinberg, A.R. Bucco/Johnson, Vainieri Huttle, A.M. Bucco, Quijano, Holley, Mukherji) - Provides that driver's license and identification cards expire every four years on licensee or cardholder's birthday

AJR-91/SJR-71 (Tucker, Johnson, Holley, Downey/Beach, Van Drew) - Designates June 27 of each year as "Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder Awareness Day"

BILL VETOED:

A-4352/S-2843 (Burzichelli, Taliaferro/Sweeney) – CONDITIONAL - Provides for elimination of newly formed non-operating school districts; establishes procedures for eliminating deficit that existed prior to merger; authorizes renting of school building for 10 years

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"I'm so pleased to serve once again as a Scholastic Reading Ambassador to help reinforce the important role that summer reading plays in learning," said First Lady Mary Pat Christie. "Reading is such a powerful mechanism that can inspire, motivate and encourage children to be successful in school and in life. I am excited that the students of Red Bank Primary School will have an additional opportunity to experience the joy of reading through this wonderful initiative."

The Scholastic Summer Reading Challenge is a free program that encourages children to continue to read during the summer months in order to avoid the "summer slide" — learning losses which can occur when school is not in session. Ensuring that children

have access to books during these months is critical to enhancing reading achievement.

"Summer slide" accounts for as much as 85 percent of the reading achievement gap between lower income students and their middle-and upper-income peers, according to Scholastic. Having children stick to a reading routine during the

summer break is crucial to strengthening reading proficiency. For every minute a child reads, he or she is enhancing those reading skills.



Red Bank Primary School covers students in Pre-K to Grade 3 and serves more than 600 students with nearly 100 staff members.

"We are beyond ecstatic to have been selected by our First Lady, Mary Pat Christie, to receive these special books for Summer Reading," said Luigi Laugelli, Principal of the Red Bank Primary School. "Our students, families and staff are grateful for access to quality literature, especially throughout the summer. As educators, we hope to instill the love of reading in our children and strive to ensure this love continues well beyond their time in school."

In 2016, Newell Elementary

School in Allentown logged 2,606,028 reading minutes, making them the number one school in New Jersey last year.

Nearly 250,000 children from 5,154 schools in all 50 states as well as 25 countries read and logged more than 204 million minutes during the 2016 summer campaign.

For more information about the 2017 Scholastic Summer Challenge, visit

<http://www.scholastic.com/ups/campaigns/src-2017/>

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