

30:4C-50 to 30:4C-65

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY CHECKLIST

N.J.S.A. 30:4C-50 to 30:4C-65 "Child Placement Review Act"

LAWS OF 1977 CHAPTER 424

Bill No. S3246

Sponsor(s) Menza and others

Date Introduced April 28, 1977

Committee: Assembly -----

Senate Institutions, Health & Welfare; Revenue, Finance & Appropriations

Amended during passage Yes No Senate Committee Substitute approved as law

Date of Passage: Assembly Oct. 17, 1977

Senate Sept. 19, 1977

Date of approval Feb. 27, 1978

Following statements are attached if available:

Sponsor statement Yes X
Committee Statement: Assembly X Senate Yes X
Fiscal Note Yes X
Veto message X No
Message on signing Yes X

Following were printed:

Reports Yes X
Hearings X No

For background see:

974.90 Claburn, W. Eugene
C536 Foster care case review in N.J.:
1977c an evaluation of its implementation
and effects. N.J. Division of Youth
and Family Services.

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9/1/78

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DEFOSITION

974.90 Clayburn, W. Eugene  
C536 Executive summary of the  
1977d final report of SRS Project No.  
18-P-90275/2-01. N.J. Division  
of Youth and Family Services, 1977.

974.90 N.J. Governor's Adult and Juvenile Justice  
C929 Advisory Committee.  
1977b Standards and goals for the N.J.  
criminal justice system - final report, 1977.  
(See pp. 359-360)

CHAPTER 424 LAWS OF N. J. 1977  
APPROVED 2-27-78

SENATE COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE FOR

**SENATE, No. 3246**

**STATE OF NEW JERSEY**

ADOPTED JUNE 20, 1977

By Senators MENZA, SCARDINO, FAY, HIRKALA  
and HAGEDORN

A SUPPLEMENT to "An act concerning the care, custody, guardianship, maintenance and supervision of dependent and neglected children, promoting home life therefor, providing for the financing thereof, and repealing certain statutes relating thereto," approved May 31, 1951 (P. L. 1951, c. 138, C. 30:4C-1 et seq.).

1 BE IT ENACTED *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State*  
2 *of New Jersey:*

1 1. This act shall be known and may be cited as the "Child  
2 Placement Review Act."

1 2. The Legislature declares that it is in the public interest  
2 to afford every child placed outside his home by the Division of  
3 Youth and Family Services with the opportunity for eventual re-  
4 turn to his home or placement in an alternative permanent home;  
5 that it is the obligation of the State to promote this end through  
6 effective planning and regular review of each child's placement;  
7 and that it is the purpose of this act to establish procedures  
8 for both administrative and judicial review of each child's place-  
9 ment in order to ensure that such placement serves the best interest  
10 of the child.

1 3. As used in this act, unless the context indicates otherwise:

2 a. "Child" means any person less than 18 years of age;

3 b. "Child placed outside his home" means a child under the  
4 care, custody or guardianship of the division who resides in a  
5 foster home, group home or residential treatment facility approved  
6 for payment by the division;

7 c. "County of supervision" means the county in which the  
8 division has established responsibility for supervision of the child;

9 d. "Division" means the Division of Youth and Family Services  
10 in the Department of Human Services;

11 e. "Relative" means a grandparent, sister, brother, aunt or  
12 uncle of the child;

13 f. "Temporary caretaker" means a foster parent as defined  
14 in section 1 of P. L. 1962, c. 136 (C. 30:4C-26.4) or a director of a  
15 group home or residential treatment facility.

1 4. Within 72 hours after the placement of a child outside his  
2 home, the division shall file notice of such placement with the  
3 juvenile and domestic relations court in the child's county of  
4 supervision. Such notice shall be in the form of a complaint and  
5 shall include the date and type of placement and the reasons for  
6 such placement. Such filing shall establish a continuing jurisdic-  
7 tion of the court over the placement of the child.

8 The division shall also file immediate notice with the court of  
9 any change in placement and of the permanent placement or return  
10 home of the child. The court jurisdiction shall cease upon receipt  
11 of such notification of the return home or alternative permanent  
12 placement of the child.

1 5. The court shall, within 15 days following receipt of the notice  
2 of the initial placement, determine whether or not the continuation  
3 of the child in his home would be contrary to the welfare of the  
4 child, and either approve the placement or order the return of the  
5 child to his home. Such determination shall be made in accordance  
6 with such procedures as shall be established by court rules.

1 6. The division shall prepare and revise, when necessary, in  
2 consultation with the child's parents or legal guardian and, when  
3 appropriate, the child, a placement plan for each child placed  
4 outside his home. The plan shall include:

5 a. A statemnt of the goal for the permanent placement or  
6 return home of the child;

7 b. The intermediate objectives relating to the attainment of  
8 the goal; and

9 c. A statement of the duties and responsibilities of the division,  
10 the parents or legal guardian and the temporary caretaker, in-  
11 cluding the services to be provided by the division to the child,  
12 the parents or legal guardian, and the temporary caretaker.

1 7. The division shall be responsible for establishing such  
2 administrative procedures as will enable it to effectively provide  
3 for the needs of children placed outside their homes and to secure  
4 such Federal funding as is available to meet these needs. Such  
5 procedures shall provide for:

6 a. Appropriate planning and regular review of each child's  
7 case by the division;

8 b. Collection and analysis of data regarding the division's  
9 caseload to facilitate the continuing evaluation of the division's

10 services, policies and procedures with regard to children placed  
11 outside their homes; and,

12 c. Provision of such information as may be required by the  
13 courts or the placement review boards.

1 8. The presiding judge of the juvenile and domestic relations  
2 court of each county shall establish as an arm of the court one  
3 or more child placement review boards. Each board shall consist  
4 of five members to be appointed by the judge from among the  
5 residents of such county. Each member shall be a person who  
6 has either training, experience or interest in issues concerning  
7 child placement or child development. Each board shall, to the  
8 maximum extent feasible, represent the various socioeconomic,  
9 racial and ethnic groups of the county in which it serves. The  
10 judge shall annually select one of the members of the board as  
11 chairperson.

12 Members shall be appointed for terms of 3 years, except that  
13 of those initially appointed, one shall be for a term of 1 year, two  
14 for terms of 2 years, and two for terms of 3 years. Members shall  
15 serve after the expiration of their terms until their respective  
16 successors shall have been appointed. Vacancies shall be filled  
17 for the duration of the unexpired terms. Members shall receive a  
18 per diem fee for their attendance at board meetings. The Supreme  
19 Court shall set the fee, which shall not be less than \$25.00. In  
20 addition, members shall be entitled to be reimbursed for all reason-  
21 able and necessary expenses incurred in the performance of their  
22 official duties.

23 Each board shall meet at such times as it shall determine.  
24 Each juvenile and domestic relations court shall provide its board  
25 with reasonable administrative and clerical support services.

1 9. It shall be the duty of each board to act on behalf of the  
2 juvenile and domestic relations court in reviewing the case of every  
3 child placed outside his home to determine whether the best  
4 interests of the child are being served by such placement. A review  
5 shall be completed within 45 days following the initial placement  
6 and at least every 12 months thereafter. Such reviews shall include,  
7 but not necessarily be limited to, the consideration and evaluation  
8 of such matters as:

9 a. The appropriateness of the goal and objectives of the place-  
10 ment plan;

11 b. The appropriateness of the services provided to the child,  
12 the parents or legal guardian and the temporary caretaker;

13 c. Whether the child has siblings who are also placed outside  
14 of their home;

15 d. Whether the wishes of the child were considered regarding  
16 placement and development of the placement plan, when ap-  
17 propriate;

18 e. Whether the division, the parents or legal guardian and the  
19 temporary caretaker are fulfilling their respective responsibilities  
20 in accordance with the placement plan;

21 f. Whether the parents or legal guardian have been afforded the  
22 opportunity and been encouraged to participate in a program of  
23 regular visitation with the child; and

24 g. Whether there are obstacles which hinder or prevent the  
25 attainment of the placement plan objectives and goal.

26 In the case of a child in placement outside of his home on the  
27 effective date of this act, the first review shall be completed as  
28 soon as possible, but not later than 12 months following such  
29 effective date.

1 10. Each board shall provide written notice of the date, time  
2 and place of each review at least 15 days in advance to the follow-  
3 ing, each of whom shall be entitled to appear before the board:

4 a. The division;

5 b. The child;

6 c. The parents or legal guardian; and

7 d. Any other person or agency whom the board determines  
8 has an interest in or information relating to the welfare of the  
9 child, which may include the temporary caretaker.

10 The board may, in its discretion, dispense with the attendance  
11 of the child at such review and may, with the consent of all notified  
12 parties, conduct a review and make recommendations based solely  
13 upon the submission of written materials.

1 11. Within 10 days after such review, the board shall submit  
2 a written report to the juvenile and domestic relations court and  
3 the division. Such report shall offer one of the following findings:

4 a. That return of the child to his parent or legal guardian is in  
5 the child's best interest;

6 b. That continued placement outside of the home is in the child's  
7 best interest and that the placement plan is appropriate for the  
8 child's needs;

9 c. That continued placement outside of the home is in the child's  
10 best interest, but that the placement plan is not appropriate for  
11 the child's needs;

12 d. That the initiation of proceedings for the termination of  
13 parental rights in order to free the child for adoption is in the  
14 child's best interest.

1 12. a. Upon review of the board's report, the juvenile and  
2 domestic relations court shall issue an order concerning the child's  
3 placement which it deems will best serve the interests of the child.

4 The court shall either:

5 (1) Order the return of the child to his parents or legal guardian;

6 (2) Order continued placement in accordance with the placement  
7 plan currently in effect;

8 (3) Order continued placement in accordance with a new place-  
9 ment plan to be developed by the division and approved by the  
10 court's placement plan; or

11 (4) Order the division to initiate proceedings to terminate  
12 parental rights in order to free the child for adoption.

13 b. In reviewing the report, the court may, either on its own  
14 motion or in response to a petition from any party with an interest  
15 in the welfare of the child, schedule a hearing. Notice of such  
16 hearing, including a statement of the dispositional alternatives of  
17 the court, shall be provided at least 30 days in advance to the  
18 following parties, each of whom shall be entitled to participate  
19 in the proceeding:

20 (1) The division;

21 (2) The chairperson of the review board;

22 (3) The child;

23 (4) The child's parents or legal guardian; and

24 (5) Such other persons or agencies which the court determines  
25 has an interest in or information relating to the welfare of the  
26 child, which may include the temporary caretaker.

27 The court may, in its discretion, dispense with the attendance  
28 of the child at such hearing and may, with the consent of all  
29 parties, dispense with the hearing and make a determination based  
30 upon papers and affidavits submitted to the court.

1 13. There is hereby established a Child Placement Advisory  
2 Council to consist of one member from each of the child place-  
3 ment review boards to be selected annually by the chairman of  
4 each review board. The Administrative Office of the Courts shall  
5 provide the council with reasonable administrative and clerical  
6 support services. It shall be the responsibility of the council to:

7 a. Advise the Supreme Court with respect to the issuance of  
8 rules governing the duties, responsibilities and practices of the  
9 review boards;

10 b. Review the policies, practices and procedures of the division  
11 with respect to the placement of children;

12 c. Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of this act in promoting  
13 the welfare of children placed outside their home;

14 d. Establish guidelines and procedures for the training of place-  
15 ment review board members;

16 e. Establish reporting procedures to be followed by the review  
17 boards for the provision of data for the evaluation of this act.

18 f. Make an annual report on the effectiveness of the implementa-  
19 tion of this act to the Supreme Court, the Governor and the Legis-  
20 lature and such other reports as it may deem proper or as may  
21 be requested from time to time by the court, the Governor or the  
22 Legislature.

1 14. The Supreme Court, in consultation with the Child Place-  
2 ment Advisory Council, shall issue such rules governing the duties,  
3 responsibilities and practices of the boards as it deems necessary  
4 to effectuate the purposes of this act.

1 15. The Institutions, Health and Welfare committees of the  
2 Senate and General Assembly, or their respective successors, are  
3 constituted a joint committee for the purposes of monitoring and  
4 evaluating the effectiveness of the implementation of this act.

5 At least 3 months prior to the date of expiration of this act, the  
6 Joint Committee shall report to the Legislature as to whether this  
7 act shall be extended, in either its present or modified form, or  
8 whether it shall be permitted to expire.

1 16. If any provision of this act or the application thereof to any  
2 person or circumstance is held to be invalid, the remainder of the  
3 act and application of such provision to other persons or circum-  
4 stances shall not be affected thereby.

1 17. There is appropriated so much of the revenues derived from  
2 the Federal funds resulting from implementation of this act as is  
3 necessary for the implementation of this act not to exceed  
4 \$250,000.00, to be allotted between the Division of Youth and Family  
5 Services and the Judiciary in such manner as shall be determined  
6 by the Division of Budget and Accounting.

1 18. This act shall take effect 120 days following enactment, but  
2 administrative actions or appointments necessary to effectuate its  
3 purposes may be taken immediately, and shall expire on June 30  
4 following the third anniversary of the effective date.



SENATE, No. 3246

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

INTRODUCED APRIL 28, 1977

By Senators MENZA, HAGEDORN, BUEHLER, GREENBERG,  
FAY and SKEVIN

Referred to Committee on Institutions, Health and Welfare

A SUPPLEMENT to "An act concerning the care, custody, guardianship, maintenance and supervision of dependent and neglected children, promoting home life therefor, providing for the financing thereof, and repealing certain statutes relating thereto," approved May 31 1951 (P. L. 1951, c. 138, C. 30:4C-1 et seq.).

1 BE IT ENACTED *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State*  
2 *of New Jersey:*

1 1. a. Any court which orders the placement of a child within  
2 the care, custody or guardianship of the Division of Youth and  
3 Family Services in the Department of Human Services for the  
4 purpose of providing such child with foster or group home care  
5 shall maintain continuing jurisdiction over the placement of such  
6 child and shall periodically review such placement in accordance  
7 with the provisions of this act.

8 b. Whenever any parent or legal guardian enters into a voluntary  
9 agreement with the division to place his child within the care,  
10 custody or guardianship of the division for the purpose of provid-  
11 ing such child with foster or group home care, the division shall  
12 immediately file notice of such agreement with the juvenile and  
13 domestic relations court in the child's county of residence. Such  
14 filing shall establish a continuing jurisdiction of such court over  
15 such placement for the purpose of periodic review as specified in  
16 subsection a. of this section.

1 2. Whenever a child is placed within the care, custody or guard-  
2 ianship of the division, the division shall, in consultation with the  
3 child's parents or legal guardian, develop, and from time to time  
4 revise as necessary, a placement plan which shall provide a state-  
5 ment of the goal for the ultimate placement of such child and the  
6 intermediate objectives relating to the attainment of such goal. The  
7 plan shall further provide a statement of the specific duties and  
8 responsibilities of the parents or legal guardian and the division,

9 including the services to be provided by the division to both the  
10 child and the parents or legal guardian.

1 3. Every County Court shall establish one or more foster care  
2 advisory review boards to serve within its county. If more than one  
3 committee is established, each shall serve separate regions within  
4 such county. Each board shall consist of five members to be  
5 appointed by the court from within the residents of the county or  
6 region served by such board. Each member shall be a person who  
7 by training, experience, occupation or interest is knowledgeable in  
8 issues concerning foster care or child development. Each board  
9 shall, to the maximum extent feasible, represent the various socio-  
10 economic, racial and ethnic groups in the county or region which it  
11 serves. The court shall annually select one of the members of the  
12 board as chairman.

13 Members shall be appointed for terms of 3 years, except that of  
14 those initially appointed, one shall be for a term of 1 year, two for  
15 terms of 2 years, and two for terms of 3 years. Members shall  
16 serve after the expiration of their terms until their respective  
17 successors shall have been appointed. Vacancies shall be filled for  
18 the duration of the unexpired terms. Members shall serve without  
19 compensation, but shall be reimbursed for all reasonable and  
20 necessary expenses incurred in the performance of their official  
21 duties.

22 Each board board shall meet at such times and places as it shall  
23 determine.

1 4. The Supreme Court shall issue such rules governing the  
2 duties, responsibilities and operations of the boards as it deter-  
3 mines are necessary to effectuate the purpose of this act.

1 5. It shall be the duty of each board, acting on behalf of the court  
2 having jurisdiction pursuant to section 1, to review the case of  
3 every child residing within the board's service are who has been  
4 placed in foster or group home care to determine whether the best  
5 interests of such child are being served by the conditions of such  
6 placement. Reviews shall be conducted within 30 days of the  
7 initial placement of such child, at 6 months intervals thereafter,  
8 and at the time of the release of such child from the care, custody  
9 or guardianship of the division. In the case of a child in foster or  
10 group home care at the time this act becomes effective, the first  
11 review shall be conducted within 6 months of enactment.

12 In conducting such review, the board shall consider and evaluate  
13 such matters as:

- 14 a. The circumstances surrounding the placement;
- 15 b. The legal authority of the division to place such child;
- 16 c. The appropriateness of the initial and continuing placement;

17 d. The appropriateness of the goal and objectives of the place-  
18 ment plan;

19 e. The appropriateness of the services provided to the child and  
20 to his parents or legal guardian;

21 f. Whether the division and the parents or legal guardian are  
22 fulfilling their respective responsibilities as stated in the placement  
23 plan;

24 g. Whether the parents or legal guardian have been afforded an  
25 opportunity and encouraged to participate in a program of regular  
26 visitation with the child;

27 h. Whether there are obstacles which hinder or prevent the  
28 attainment of the placement plan goal and objectives.

1 6. The board shall submit its findings and any recommendations  
2 for action regarding such child to the division and to the court  
3 having jurisdiction. Any such recommendations shall be directed  
4 towards promoting, in a timely manner, the attainment of a final  
5 goal for such child, which goal shall be either continued foster or  
6 group home placement, return of the child to his parent or legal  
7 guardian, or the initiation of proceedings to terminate parental  
8 rights to legally free such child for adoption.

1 7. If the court determines that the board's findings constitute  
2 probable grounds for believing that the best interests of the child  
3 are not being served by the conditions of placement, the court shall  
4 hold a hearing to review the necessity and appropriateness of such  
5 placement.

6 Notice of such hearing, including a statement of the dispositional  
7 alternatives of the court, shall be provided to the following parties,  
8 each of whom shall be entitled to participate in the proceeding, at  
9 least 30 days in advance:

10 a. The Division of Youth and Family Services;

11 b. The review board;

12 c. The foster parent or the director of the group home in whose  
13 home the child is currently residing;

14 d. The child's parents or legal guardian;

15 e. Such persons or agencies which the court may determine to  
16 have an interest in the welfare of the child.

17 The court may, in its discretion, dispense with the attendance of  
18 the child at such hearing or may, with the consent of all parties,  
19 dispense with the hearing and make a determination based upon  
20 papers and affidavits submitted to the court.

21 At the conclusion of such hearing the court shall, upon the proof  
22 adduced, make such determination concerning the conditions of  
23 placement of such child as will best serve the interests of the child.

1 8. This act shall take effect 90 days following enactment.

## STATEMENT

This bill provides for periodic court review of the status of children placed in foster or group home care under the care, custody or guardianship of the Division of Youth and Family Services in the Department of Human Services. It assigns continuing jurisdiction over every such child to the courts and it creates citizen review boards in each county to serve as an arm of the courts in reviewing each case. Since there is at present no law requiring such reviews, and since voluntary placements are not at present subject to judicial review, it is possible for a child to remain in foster care throughout his or her childhood without ever having official and impartial determination as to whether the child's best interests are being served by such placement.

SENATE INSTITUTIONS, HEALTH AND WELFARE  
COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO  
SENATE COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE FOR

**SENATE, No. 3246**

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**STATE OF NEW JERSEY**

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DATED: JUNE 20, 1977

This bill establishes a system for the periodic court review of children placed in foster homes, group homes or residential treatment facilities by the Division of Youth and Family Services in the Department of Human Services.

The bill is offered in response to concerns that children may often be a) unnecessarily removed from their homes under the terms of "voluntary" parental agreements, b) inappropriately placed and c) left in foster care status for inordinate lengths of time.

The bill provides that the Division notify the appropriate Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court within 72 hours after the removal of a child from his home. The court is required to make a determination within 15 days as to whether or not continuation of the child in his home would be contrary to the child's best interests.

If the child remains in foster care beyond this period, a Child Placement Review Board, operating as an arm of the court and composed of five citizen members appointed by the court, must review the status of the child and the child's placement plan within 45 days and annually thereafter. The board's findings are to be reviewed by the court, which shall have leave to order either continuation of the placement, modification of the placement or placement plan, return of the child to his home, or the initiation of proceedings to free the child for adoption.

The division is required to establish a plan for each child removed from his home. Each plan shall state a goal for the child's permanent placement, list the objectives leading to the goal, and outline the duties and responsibilities of the division, the parents or legal guardian and the temporary caretaker.

The bill also establishes a Child Placement Advisory Panel to consist of one member from each of the county review boards. The panel's duties include advising the Supreme Court on the issuance of rules governing the operations of the review boards and generally reviewing the implementation of the act.

It is the committee's understanding that establishment of a system of judicial determination of the necessity for the removal of a child from his home will entitle the State to additional Federal funds under the program of Aid to Families with Dependent Children. A report by Walter Wechsler, the former Director of the Division of Budget and Accounting who was appointed by the Governor to study the fiscal affairs of the Division of Youth and Family Services, indicates that the State can obtain \$1.5 million in the first year and more than \$3 million by the third year following establishment of a requirement for judicial determination of foster care placements in accordance with Federal standards. The bill contains an appropriation of funds derived from this Federal money, not to exceed \$250,000.00, to be divided between the Division of Youth and Family Services and the Judiciary.

The committee fully expects that this bill will inhibit the inappropriate removal of children from their homes and will hasten the permanent placement of children in foster care. The committee recognizes, however, that the establishment of an additional layer of government in the form of the citizen review boards is not without its administrative dangers. Uncertainties as to the cost and the efficiency of this system has led the committee to include a termination date for this bill in order to insure that its implementation will be reviewed in the future. The bill carries an expiration date of June 30 following the third anniversary of its effective date. At least 3 months prior to the bill's expiration, the Institutions, Health and Welfare Committees of both Houses are to jointly report on the effectiveness of the procedures established by the bill and to recommend either that it be extended, with or without modification, or that it be permitted to expire.

FISCAL NOTE TO  
SENATE COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE FOR  
**SENATE, No. 3246**

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**STATE OF NEW JERSEY**

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DATED: OCTOBER 3, 1977

The Senate Committee Substitute for Senate Bill No. 3246 provides for periodic court review of the status of children placed in foster or group home care under the care, custody or guardianship of the Division of Youth and Family Services in the Department of Human Services.

The Department of Human Services envisions that this legislation would be implemented on January 1, 1978 and estimates that a State expenditure of \$698,199.00 and an expenditure of \$276,646.00 by local governments would be required for the last half of fiscal 1977-78. The department further estimates that enactment would require a State expenditure of \$1,396,397.00 and an expenditure by local governments of \$553,293.00 in fiscal 1978-79. A State expenditure of \$1,522,382.00 and an expenditure by local governments of \$607,640.00 are estimated for fiscal 1979-80.

The Division of Budget and Accounting envisions that this legislation would probably not be implemented until July 1, 1978 and estimates that enactment would require an additional expenditure by local governments of \$166,430.00 in fiscal 1978-79 while \$347,520.00 in increased revenues would accrue to the State.

In fiscal 1979-80, the Division of Budget and Accounting estimates that additional State revenues in the amount of \$1,032,250.00 would accrue and revenues in the amount of \$42,010.00 would accrue to local governments.

The difference in estimates between those presented by the Department of Human Services and those presented by the Division of Budget and Accounting are attributable to different assumptions as basic ingredients of the estimates.

The Office of Fiscal Affairs believes the estimates presented by the Division of Budget and Accounting are more realistic.

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The fiscal note is based on an estimate of costs rather than actual cost information.

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In compliance with written request received, there is hereby submitted a fiscal estimate for the above bill, pursuant to P. L. 1962, c. 27.

*Release* 2-21-78

SCS for S-3246, sponsored by former Senator Alexander Menza (D-Union), which establishes a system for periodic court review of children who are placed in foster homes, group homes or residential treatment facilities by the Division of Youth and Family Services.

Under the bill, the Division of Youth and Family Services (DYFS) must notify the appropriate Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court within 72 hours after the removal of a child from his home. The court is required to determine within 15 days as to whether or not continuation of the child in the home would be contrary to the child's best interest.

If the child remains in foster care beyond this period, a Child Placement Review Board, composed of five citizen members appointed by the court and acting as an arm of the court, must review the status of the child's placement within 45 days and annually thereafter.

The Board's findings are to be reviewed by the court, which shall have leave to order wither continuation of the placement, modification of the placement plan, return of the child to his home or the initiation of proceedings to free the child for adoption.

The bill also establishes a Child Placement Advisory Panel to advise the Supreme Court on the issuance of rules governing the operation of the review boards.

The bill is effective June 27, 1978, and expires on June 30, 1981. Three months prior to its expiration, the Institutions, Health and Welfare Committees of both houses of the Legislature must jointly report on the effectiveness of the new procedures and recommend that the legislation be extended, modified, or allowed to expire.

The review system will enable DYFS to claim for reimbursement those children in foster and institutional care who are actual or potential Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) recipients under the federally funded AFDC-Foster Care Program



Existing federal law requires that a child be in placement as a result of a court order to be reviewed within six months of placement, and that at the time of placement or in the six months prior to placement the child was actually receiving AFDC or was eligible for AFDC. However, only 24% of the present caseload has been placed as a result of a court order. This bill would expand the eligible population to all AFDC children and those whom the Division can identify as potential.

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