

SB 122 / HB 43: Child Welfare — “Jordan’s Law”

Protects our most vulnerable population.

This bill, titled “Jordan’s Law,” makes a number of changes to the laws related to the child welfare system in an attempt to address issues identified in the case of Jordan Belliveau, a two-year old boy killed by his mother in Pinellas County.

What is the purpose of SB 122 / HB 43?

- ▶ This bill requires specified child welfare professionals, guardians ad litem, and law enforcement officers to receive training developed by the Department of Health on the recognition of and response to head trauma and brain injury in children under six years old.
- ▶ This bill removes all training for the child welfare workforce from the community-based care lead agencies (CBCs) and standardizes it statewide by requiring the Department of Children and Families (DCF or department) to return to the professional development center model that worked successfully for 25 years.
- ▶ This bill requires the department in conjunction with the Florida Institute for Child Welfare (institute) to develop and implement a comprehensive uniform child welfare workforce framework based on a nationally recognized model and specifies issues to be addressed.
- ▶ The bill consolidates and eliminates requirements related to education and training which would be encompassed into or become unnecessary as a result of development of a new framework, allows credentialing entities to access certain specified records held by the department related to child abuse and neglect, and provides additional duties for third party credentialing entities.
- ▶ The bill allows a parent or legal guardian of a child who is removed as a result of a determination by a medical evaluation performed by a Child Protection Team to request a second, independent evaluation be performed by a physician in order to determine whether the child has been the victim of abuse or neglect. Requires the court to consider the evaluation when determining whether to remove a child from the home.

How would SB 122 / HB 43 work?

- ▶ The bill revises the mission of the Florida Institute for Child Welfare to one focused on education, training, and well-being and other support for the child welfare workforce.
- ▶ The bill provides direction to DCF to update its case management framework to maximize sharing of information in child welfare cases.

Vote YES on SB 122 / HB 43 190!