

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 482
By: Walle
Human Services
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Interested parties have raised concerns regarding the consequences of high caseloads and turnover rates of child protective services and adult protective services caseworkers within the Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS). H.B. 482 seeks to address these concerns by encouraging DFPS and the Health and Human Services Commission, as appropriate, to reduce caseloads and call times for such caseworkers.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE IMPACT

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly create a criminal offense, increase the punishment for an existing criminal offense or category of offenses, or change the eligibility of a person for community supervision, parole, or mandatory supervision.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

It is the committee's opinion that rulemaking authority is expressly granted to the executive commissioner of the Health and Human Services Commission in SECTION 2 of this bill.

ANALYSIS

H.B. 482 amends the Government Code to require the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) or the Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS), as appropriate and to the extent appropriated money is available for the purpose, to work toward ensuring that the average caseload for a caseworker conducting child protective services investigations; a child protective services caseworker providing family-based safety services, services through conservatorship programs, or services through foster and adoption programs; a child-care licensing inspector; a child-care licensing day-care investigator; or an adult protective services specialist does not exceed the caseload limit specified for the position by the bill.

H.B. 482 amends the Human Resources Code to require DFPS, to the extent appropriated money is available for the purpose, to work toward ensuring that the average hold time for calls to the hotline maintained by DFPS for purposes of receiving reports of child abuse or neglect and reports of abuse, neglect, or exploitation of elderly persons and persons with disabilities does not exceed five minutes and that the hotline's call abandonment rate for each state fiscal year does not exceed 25 percent. The bill requires the executive commissioner of HHSC by rule to adopt the methodology to be used to calculate the call abandonment rate.

H.B. 482 requires HHSC and DFPS, not later than December 1, 2018, to jointly submit a report to the standing committees of the senate and house of representatives having primary jurisdiction over those state agencies regarding the agencies' progress in achieving the prescribed caseload limit goals and to submit a report to those committees regarding DFPS progress in achieving the prescribed call processing goals.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2017.