



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES
Office of the Commissioner

Margaret Ross Schultze
COMMISSIONER

April 28, 2017

MEMORANDUM

TO: The Honorable Terence R. McAuliffe
Governor of Virginia

The Honorable Thomas K. Norment, Jr.
Co-Chairman, Senate Finance Committee

The Honorable Emmett W. Hanger, Jr.
Co-Chairman, Senate Finance Committee

The Honorable Chris S. Jones
Chairman, House Appropriations Committee

Daniel Timberlake, Director
Department of Planning and Budget

FROM:

Margaret Ross Schultze

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Margaret Ross Schultze".

SUBJECT: Quarterly Report on Implementation of House Bill 1570/Senate Bill 1168 (2015)

I am pleased to submit the Department of Social Services' quarterly report on implementation of House Bill 1570 and Senate Bill 1168 (2015), pursuant to Item 349 (E) of the 2016 Appropriation Act. If you have questions or need additional information, please contact me.

MRS:kc

Attachment

Quarterly Report on the Implementation of Chapter 758 of the 2015 Acts of Assembly

January 1, 2017- March 31, 2017

Report Mandate

The Department of Social Services shall provide a quarterly report on the implementation of Chapter 758 of the 2015 Acts of Assembly (House Bill 1570 / Senate Bill 1168) to the Director, Department of Planning and Budget and the Chairmen of the House Appropriations and Senate Finance Committees.

Background

Chapter 758 of the 2015 Acts of Assembly was a combination omnibus bill addressing multiple issues regarding child care health and safety. There are multiple requirements with varying implementation dates. Below is a description of the Department of Social Services' (DSS) implementation efforts this quarter.

Section 63.2-100 of the Code of Virginia (Code) changed the licensing threshold for family day homes, requiring licensure when there are five children in care, effective July 1, 2016. A corresponding change was made in § 63.2-1704 of the Code, allowing a family day home provider to be voluntarily registered when caring for four or fewer children, effective July 1, 2016. DSS Division of Licensing- Children's Programs continues to recruit new licensing inspector positions because of these changes. This quarter, three positions were filled in the Fairfax licensing office, including a new licensing administrator. There are four other new positions that have been posted and not yet filled.

Section 63.2-1701.1 of the Code requires local governments to report to DSS semiannually contact information for child care business licenses for child day centers or family day homes. As of March 15, 2017, 26 localities have submitted business license reports to DSS this quarter. A total of 71 localities reported in state fiscal year 2017. A total of 106 localities have reported since July 1, 2015, of which 26 reported not issuing business licenses to child day centers or family day homes.

Sections 63.2-1720.1 and 63.2-1721.1 of the Code require national fingerprint background checks for licensed child day centers and licensed family day homes, effective July 1, 2017. The DSS Office of Background Investigations is working with the Division of Information Systems to implement needed changes to the Background Information System. The Request for Proposal (RFP) for a fingerprint vendor has received approval from the Virginia Information Technology Agency (VITA) and was released for bidding. The RFP submission period closed on February 28, 2017. The evaluation team is working with VITA review the proposals and to award a contract. Three new positions have been filled to process background checks in the Office of Background Investigation.

Revisions made to § 63.2-1725 of the Code added a requirement that child day centers and family day homes that enter into a contract with DSS to provide child care services (subsidy child care providers) comply with federal law and regulations. Numerous activities are underway to develop and implement strategies in response to the federal law, including:

- The DSS on-line pre-service health and safety training program for child care providers in Virginia is offered by Penn State’s Better Kid Care program. As of February 28, 2017, approximately 16,577 child care providers had completed the on-line training, with another 2,623 providers currently enrolled in the training.
- Modifications to information systems are in development for the Subsidy Program and the Division of Licensing Programs. These modifications are needed to conduct health and safety inspections of subsidy programs and to report the results of those inspections, which are requirements of the federal law.
- The Division of Licensing- Children’s Programs developed and distributed a brochure “Health and Safety Inspections” for subsidy providers to describe the inspection process. The brochure is geared towards unlicensed subsidy providers who are not familiar with the subsidy health and safety inspection process and will be a helpful resource to introduce the inspection process to these programs.
- The Division of Licensing- Children’s Programs has started inspecting licensed and unlicensed programs for compliance with subsidy health and safety requirements. The additional staff hired in Fairfax and one inspector position in the Eastern Region will be assisting with these inspections.
- The Child Care and Development Block Grant Act requires states to collect and disseminate consumer and provider education information that is “user-friendly” to parents, providers and the general public concerning the diverse availability of child care services. Utilization of the child care website, www.childcareva.com, continues to grow. Since February 2016, the site has had 277,000 page views by 37,000 users. There have been 91,000 page views with 13,000 users since January 1, 2017. The Public Service Announcement (PSA) radio and television campaign continues. The 30-second radio PSA aired an estimated 26,133 times this quarter throughout Virginia. The “Kids Talks” television commercial has aired approximately 2,733 times this quarter.

Enactment Clause 4 of Chapter 758 requires DSS to develop and make available training and technical assistance for child care providers on new requirements. Information sessions related to Child Care Subsidy Program requirements and procedures that are changing are underway for child care providers, workers in local departments of social services, and other organizations that partner with DSS to carry out the Program. Between July and January 2017, the Child Care Subsidy Program has held 52 information sessions across the state and seven webinars to inform Subsidy providers and other interested parties of the upcoming changes mandated by federal law.

Conclusion

DSS continues to work on implementation for Chapter 758 of the 2015 Acts of Assembly.