

WEBINAR | NOVEMBER 2025

2025 Legislative Review: Key Child Welfare Budget Allocations & Bills

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for **CHILDREN'S**
RIGHTS

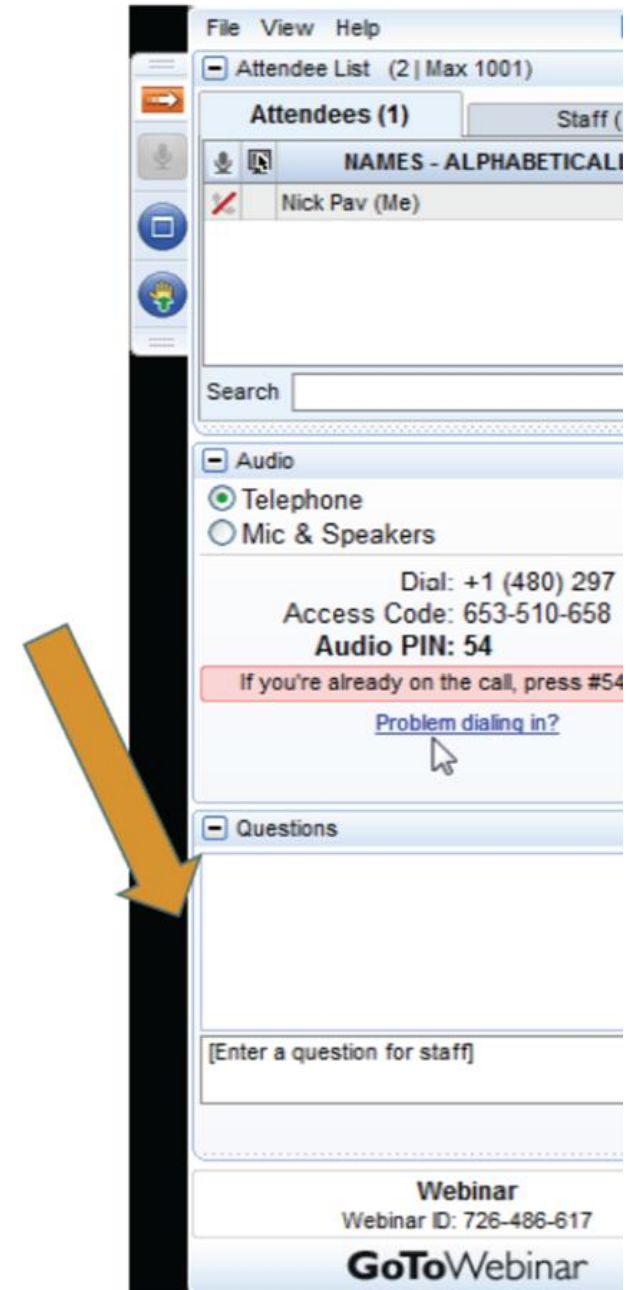


Logistics

Webinar resources, including recording and supplemental materials, will be posted at <https://allianceforchildrensrights.org/resources/>

All attendees are muted during webinar.

Please submit questions using the “Questions” function on your GoToWebinar dashboard.





Presenters

Elizabeth Oseguera, California Alliance of Child and Family Services

Kim Lewis, for California Coalition for Youth

Susanna Kniffen, Children Now

Diana Boyer, County Welfare Directors Association of California

Imelda Islas-Olivia, John Burton Advocates for Youth

Chantel Johnson, Youth Law Center

A woman with long dark hair and glasses is looking down at something, surrounded by four young children of diverse backgrounds. The children are also looking down, appearing to be engaged in a shared activity. The background is blurred, showing hints of a classroom or play area with colorful toys.

FY 2025-26 Budget

Foster Care Rates

- makes the implementation of the Foster Care Tiered Rate Structure subject to a budget appropriation
- approves the May Revision Budget Change Proposal regarding the First Phase of Foster Care Tiered Rate Structure State Operations

CDSS Foster Care Rate Reform Proposal
Bimonthly Implementation Newsletter



CFTs

- requires, beginning July 1, 2025, all county child welfare agencies to convene child and family team meetings for children and youth receiving family maintenance services, with regulations to be adopted no later than January 1, 2030



Emergency Child Care Bridge

- approves early reversion of \$30 million General Fund in 2024-25 and a reduction of \$30 million General Fund in 2025-26 and ongoing for the Emergency Child Care Bridge program

[Emergency Child Care Bridge Program for Foster Children](#)



UIS Medi-Cal

- exempts foster youth and former foster youth with Unsatisfactory Immigration Status from various service limitations in the Medi-Cal program, including the enrollment freeze and monthly premium slated to take effect in future years continuing parity with other foster youth and former foster youth



Family Urgent Response System (FURS)

- reverts \$9 million General Fund from 2023-24 and \$9 million in 2024-25, and reduces \$9 million General Fund in 2025-26 and ongoing for the Family Urgent Response System



CalKids

California Kids Investment and Development Savings Program

- AB 2508, signed into law on 9/26/24, expands eligibility to the CalKIDS program for students in foster care.
- Beginning Fall 2025, AB 2508 expands eligibility so that all foster youth in grades 1-12 receive the supplemental payment if they have not already received it, rather than just those in foster care in 1st grade. If a student did not receive the \$500 payment for low-income students, that will also be added to their account. This will total to \$1,000.
- \$6.1 million was allocated in the 2025-26 state budget to fund AB 2508
- Students can claim their accounts at calkids.org

[Fact-Sheet-Budget-Act-of-2025 CalKIDS -6.30.25-2.pdf](#)



FFA Insurance Crisis

- addresses the Foster Family Agency (FFA) insurance crisis by including \$31.5 million in bridge funding to prevent FFA closures



AAP

- restricts placement of children in out-of-state residential treatment facilities, requires data collection and reporting, and defers on other issues until after stakeholder consultation



Mandated Reporter Training

- appropriates \$7.5 million over four years for the development and use of a standardized curriculum for child welfare mandated reporters



Federal Cuts to County- Administered Safety Net Programs



Under H.R. 1, CalFresh and Medi-Cal clients must meet certain work requirements (generally, 20 hours per week) in order to remain eligible for benefits.



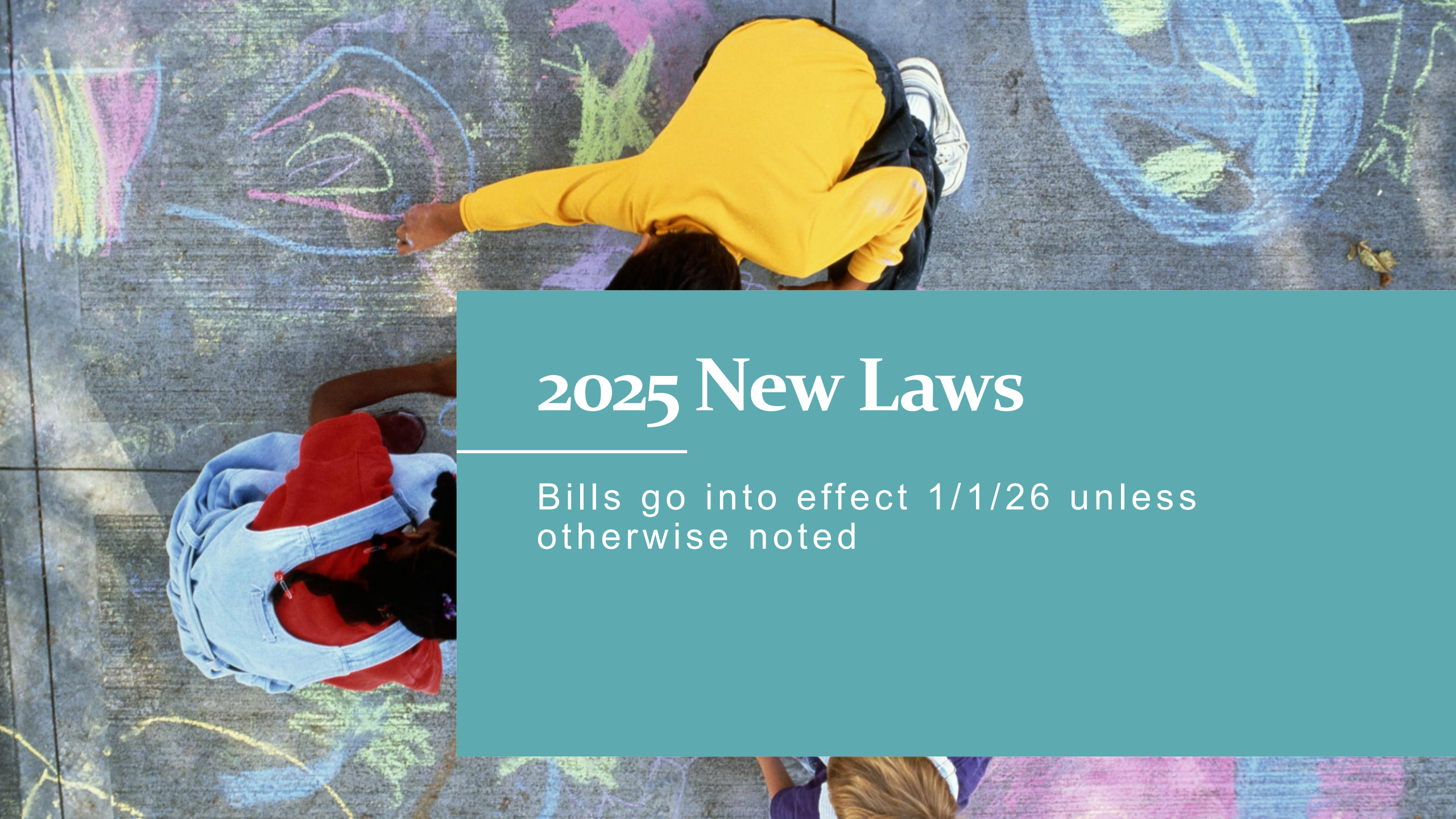
Up to 3.4 million Californians may lose Medi-Cal coverage upon full implementation in 2027.



Potentially 395,000 Californians could lose CalFresh benefits due to these work requirements. Counties are still awaiting guidance from CDSS before work requirements can be implemented.



Counties are anticipating collateral effects from the loss of concrete supports to the elderly and families in poverty, including potential increases in adult protective services and child welfare referrals.

A top-down photograph of three children sitting on a paved surface, drawing with colorful chalk. One child in a yellow shirt is in the upper left, another in a red shirt and blue overalls is in the lower left, and a third in a purple shirt is at the bottom. The pavement is covered in various colorful chalk drawings, including circles, lines, and abstract shapes in shades of blue, pink, yellow, and green.

2025 New Laws

Bills go into effect 1/1/26 unless
otherwise noted

AB 607 (C. Rodriguez)

Home Visiting Programs

- Successful home visiting programs have shown correlated decreases in child welfare referrals, criminal justice involvement, as well as better educational attainment for children whose families participate.
- **AB 607 allows the funding allocated for the CalWORKs Home Visiting Program to be used to keep families in the HVP for the full model duration if that model lasts longer than 24 months.**
- While no new funding was allocated, this clarification will allow counties to fully utilize the funding they do receive to keep families in the program longer so that they may receive the benefit of the completed program model without artificial cut off.



AB 349 (Dixon)

Infant Supplement Annual Adjustment

- requires the infant supplement to be adjusted by an amount equal to the CNI



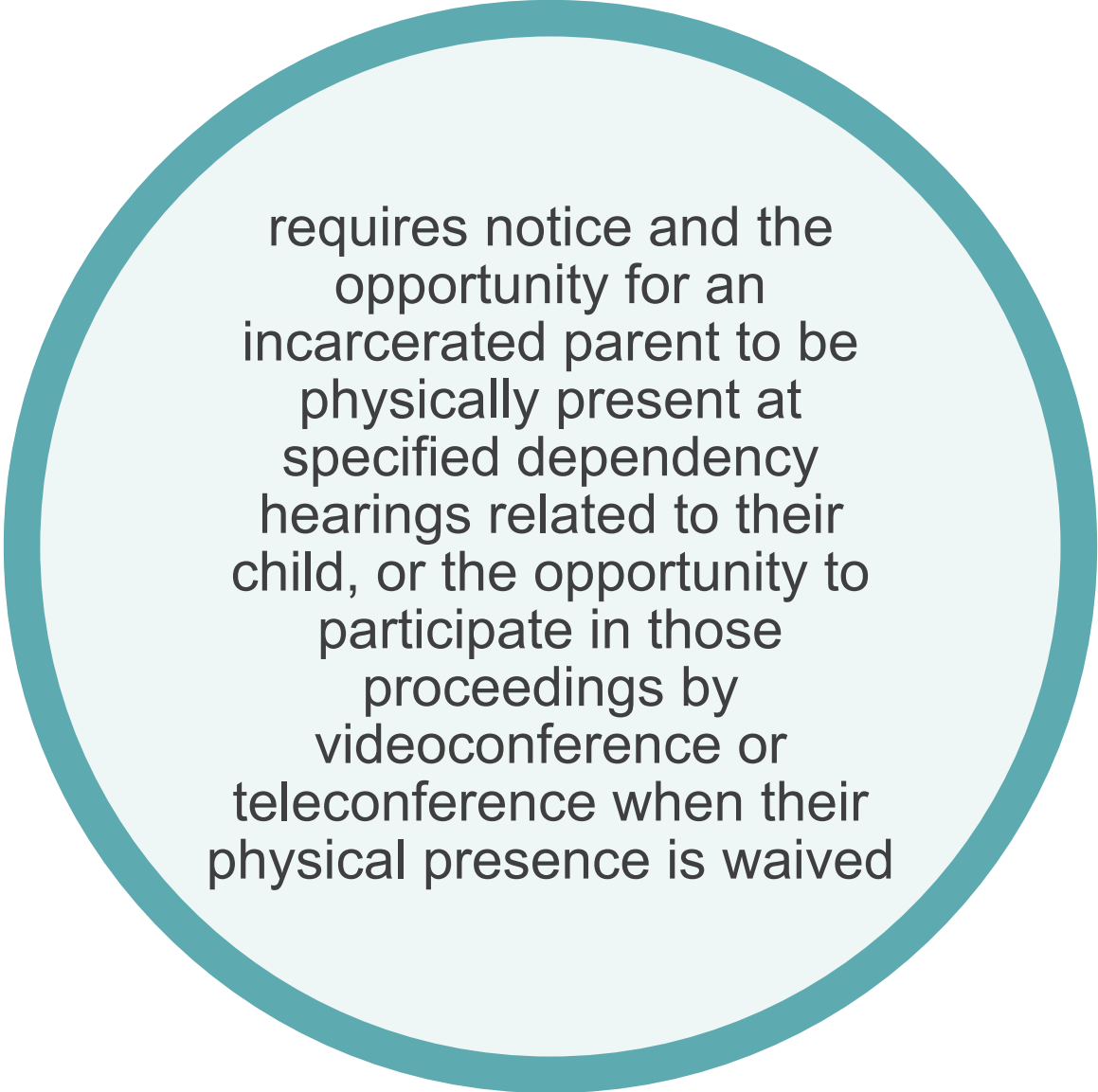


AB 562 (Solache) Justice Through Placing Foster Children with Families Act

- requires counties to review data on kinship placements annually and mandatory communication with the [Center for Excellence in Family Finding, Engagement and Support](#) if the county's average is less than the statewide average

AB 651 (Bryan)

Access To Justice



requires notice and the opportunity for an incarcerated parent to be physically present at specified dependency hearings related to their child, or the opportunity to participate in those proceedings by videoconference or teleconference when their physical presence is waived

AB 741 (Ransom)

CASA Volunteers Child Abuse Reporting

- requires the Department of Justice to monitor the Child Abuse Central Index (CACI) and notify the Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) program if a child abuse investigation record involving a CASA employee or volunteer is added to the CACI

AB 898 (Bryan)

Family Urgent Response System

- authorizes county-based mobile response systems that are not otherwise responding to calls placed through the statewide hotline to utilize staff based on local needs
- expands their usage to include those receiving family preservation or voluntary or court-ordered family maintenance services

Family Urgent Response System



AB 896 (Elhawary) Foster Youth Placement Transitions

- requires each county to adopt a placement transition planning policy and requires CDSS to issue guidance to county child welfare agencies to describe best practices and strategies for successful placement transition planning



AB 1314 (Ahrens)

THPP Flexibility

- specifies county contract requirements with a transitional housing placement provider (THPP), including:
 - prohibiting the contract from containing terms that create unreasonable barriers for a foster youth's admission into the THP program
- requires contracts to ensure that decisions about sharing bedrooms, bathroom, and units together, regardless of gender identity, are led by the program participant and agreed upon in collaboration with the provider



SB 624 (Caballero) Foster Outreach & Support for Tax Education Readiness (FOSTER) Act

- goal of SB 624 is to reduce poverty among current and former foster youth by increasing access to the California Foster Youth Tax Credit (FYTC)
- requires county child welfare agencies and juvenile probation departments to mail annual information about the FYTC and tax filing to every nonminor dependent in their care annually between **Nov 1 and Jan 31**
- requires CDSS to guidance on FYTC implementation best practices for county child welfare agencies at least bi-annually

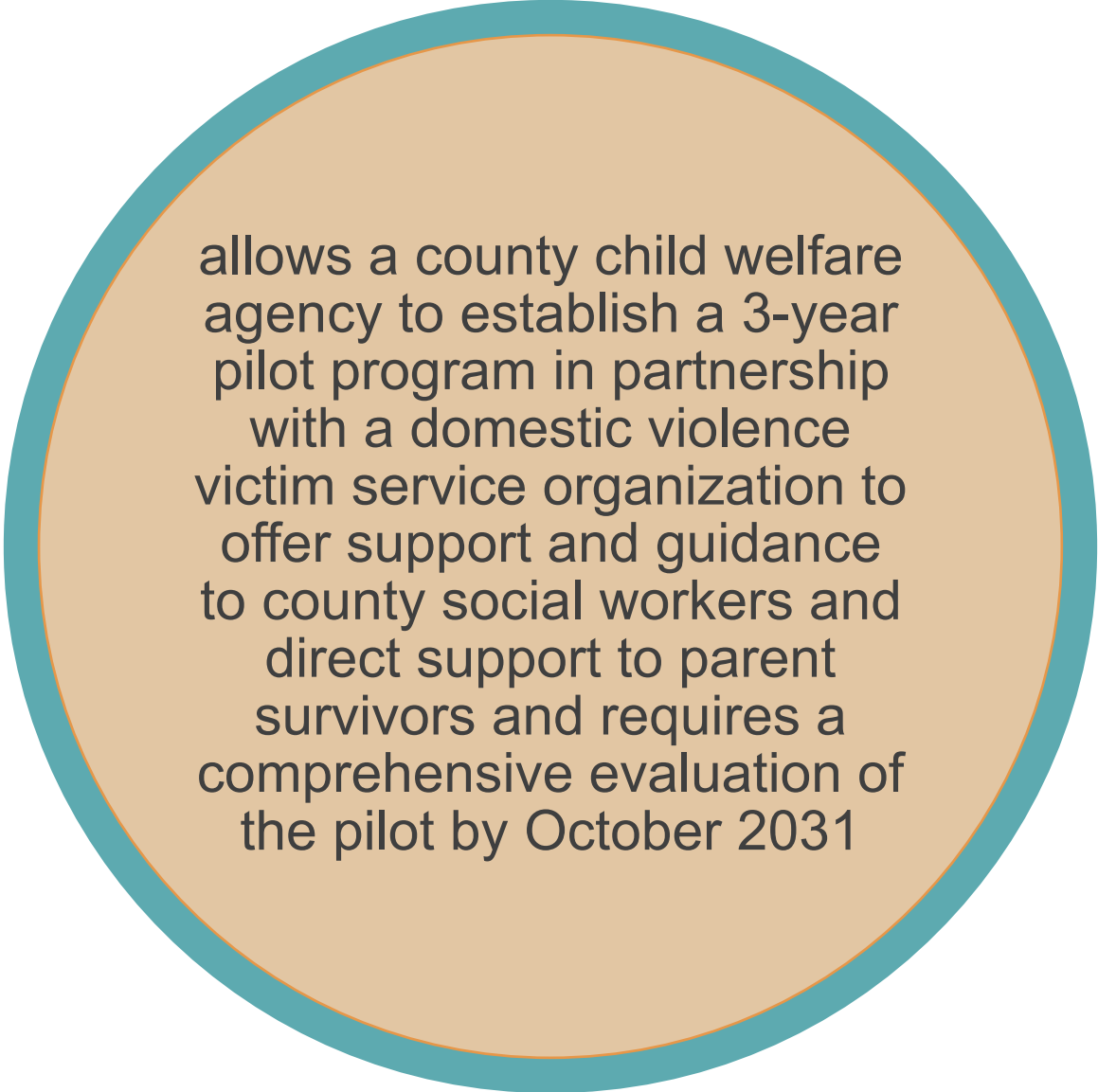
- clarifies the role of counsel by requiring that **appointed attorneys for nonminor dependents advocate for their expressed wishes** rather than substituting their judgment

AB 373 (Rubio)

Client Directed
Representation for
Nonminor
Dependents

AB 779 (Lackey)

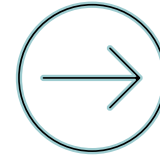
Domestic Violence Consultant Pilot Program



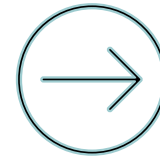
allows a county child welfare agency to establish a 3-year pilot program in partnership with a domestic violence victim service organization to offer support and guidance to county social workers and direct support to parent survivors and requires a comprehensive evaluation of the pilot by October 2031

AB 495 (C. Rodriguez)

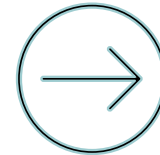
The Family Preparedness Plan Act of 2025



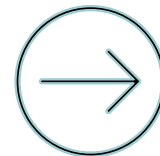
requires schools to implement the Attorney General's updated immigration-related policies to ensure family preparedness



requires the AG to publish model policies limiting assistance with requires the Attorney General to provide model policies for licensed daycare facilities and California state preschools to follow limiting immigration enforcement action



standardizes recognition of Caregiver's Authorization Affidavits so schools and agencies honor them consistently



creates a new Joint Parent/Caregiver Guardianship process in Probate Court, allowing parents facing family separations to designate a joint guardian while maintaining their parental rights

Public Counsel: [Creating a Family Plan: A workbook for immigrant parents](#)

Caregiver's Authorization Affidavit

Use of this affidavit is authorized by Part 1.5 ([commencing with](#) Section 6550) of Division 11 of the California Family Code.

Instructions: Completion of items 1–4 and the signing of the affidavit is sufficient to authorize enrollment of a minor in school and authorize school-related medical care. Completion of items 5–8 [by a relative](#) is additionally required to authorize any other medical care. Print clearly.

The minor named below lives in my home and I am 18 years of age or older.

1. Name of minor: _____
2. Minor's birth date: _____
3. My name (adult giving authorization): _____
4. My home address: _____
5. ☒ I am a relative of the child (see back of this form for a definition of "relative").
6. Check one or both (for example, if one parent was advised and the other cannot be located):
 - a. ☐ I have advised the parent(s) or other person(s) [having](#) legal custody of the minor of my intent to authorize medical [care](#), and have received no objection.
 - b. ☐ I am unable to contact the parent(s) or other person(s) having legal custody of the minor [at this time](#) to notify them of my intended authorization.
7. My date of birth: _____
8. My California driver's license or identification card [or government-issued consular card](#) number: _____

Warning to Caregiver: Do not sign this form if any of the statements above are incorrect, or you will be committing a crime punishable by a fine, imprisonment, or both.

Warning to Local Educational Agencies and Health Care Service Providers: A seal or signature from a court is not required. This form is not required to be notarized.

Dated: _____ Signed: _____

Notices:

1. This declaration does not affect the rights of the minor's parents or legal guardian regarding the care, custody, and control of the minor, and does not mean that the caregiver has legal custody of the minor.
2. A person who relies on this affidavit has no obligation to make any further inquiry or investigation.

Completing the Caregiver's Authorization Affidavit

1. Name of the minor you're completing for form for.
2. Date of birth of minor.
3. Name of the adult giving authorization. (See #5 below).
4. Home address of the adult completing the form giving authorization.
5. Check if you are related to the child by blood, adoption, or affinity within the fifth degree of kinship, including all stepparents, stepsiblings, and all relatives whose status is preceded by the words "great," "great-great," or "grand," or the spouse of any of the persons specified in this definition, even after the marriage has been terminated by death or dissolution.
6. Check if you have advised one or both parents of your intent to authorize medical care and have received no objection.
7. Your date of birth.
8. Your California driver's license or identification card [or government issued consular card](#) number.

- Date and sign the form.

Caregiver's Authorization Affidavit

Affidavit does not make any change of custody or give guardianship of the child.

Affidavit does not need to be notarized or stamped or sealed by a court.

Affidavit does not require a parent signature.

Caregivers are signing under penalty of perjury.

Caregiver is required to notify any school or health care provider to which they have given the affidavit if the child stops living with them.

School district may ask for additional reasonable evidence that the caregiver lives at the address they provided on the form.

A photograph of three children playing outdoors in a grassy area with trees in the background. In the foreground, a young boy with dark curly hair, wearing a red and grey long-sleeved shirt, is focused on playing with two yellow toy dump trucks in a pile of dark soil. In the background, a girl in a pink shirt is jumping with her arms raised, and a boy in a blue shirt is looking up and holding a white ball. A semi-transparent teal rectangle is overlaid on the right side of the image, containing the title and subtitle text.

Regulations

Impacting Youth in Foster Care



Next Up – Revised Regulations

- allowing current and former foster youth to participate if their dependency was established on or after their 13th birthday and if they first enroll in the program before age 25
- students may enroll with fewer than nine units if they have an educational plan to move toward nine units at a subsequent term
- programs may not impose any additional eligibility criteria beyond those established in law
- clarifies that colleges may not impose undue barriers that prevent students from receiving services, including ensuring that application processes are streamlined
- program funds may be used to support a student's overall success, rather than just activities tied narrowly to an education plan
- separates the program from Extended Opportunity Programs and Services (EOP&S)



Transitional Housing Placement Providers Regulations

“These proposed regulations provide the following:

- 1) they retire the Interim Licensing Standards (ILS) governing Transitional Housing Placement Providers (THPPs) serving nonminor dependents (NMD);
- 2) incorporate various statute and stakeholder feedback to modernize and streamline the licensing and oversight of THPPs; and
- 3) the regulations provide further clarity and consistency across regulations for the license type and for other license types overseen by Community Care Licensing Division (CCLD).”

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CWDA
Advancing Human Services
for the Welfare of All Californians



**Children
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JOHN BURTON
**Advocates
for Youth**

