



Georgia Department of Human Services
Office of Legislative Affairs & Outreach

2021 General Assembly

Legislative Session Update

Jackie Tate

DHS Director of Legislative Affairs and Outreach

Kevin Harris

DFCS Director of Legislative Affairs



STRONGER FAMILIES FOR A STRONGER GEORGIA



Agenda

- Session Overview
- Proposal impacting the Department of Human Services
- Proposals impacting the Division of Family and Children Services
- Questions



Session Overview

The 2021 General Assembly convened on January 11, 2021. This year is the first term of the biennial legislative session.

In light of the pandemic, the General Assembly has implemented many safety protocols to help protect the members, employees and others that enter the Capitol.

All members and staff are tested twice each week and the chamber galleries are closed to the public to allow members to be socially distanced while conducting legislative business.



Legislative Proposals

Legislative Affairs has many subject matter experts monitoring all proposals that have potential to impact the Department. Among the proposals, DFCS has six proposals to bring the Division into compliance with federal regulations and/or help with the administration of our programs and services.



House Bill 257

Sponsor: Rep. Ed Setzler

Status: Health and Human Services

Synopsis: This bill creates *maternity supportive housing* which requires the providers to register these homes with the Department's Office of Inspector General Residential Child Care Licensing Unit.



Division of Family & Children Services Proposals

Kevin Harris
Director of Legislative Affairs



House Bill 114

Sponsor: Bert Reeves

Status: House Ways and Means Committee

Synopsis: This bill increases the tax credit for families that adopt a child from foster care from \$2,000 to \$6,000 per year for five years.



House Bill 154

Sponsor: Bert Reeves

Status: House Rules Committee

Synopsis: This proposal would update Georgia's adoption laws and provide additional guidance regarding child custody in circumstances where the child is not adopted in the allotted statutory timeframe.



Senate Bill 28

Sponsor: Bo Hatchett

Status: Senate Judiciary

Synopsis: This bill streamlines the juvenile code and ensures that all reliable information is made to the juvenile court in order to make decisions in the child's best interest.



Tuition Waivers

Synopsis: This bill will ensure that all children who were previously placed in the state's foster care system for at least 12 months be considered for in-state tuition by the University System of Georgia and the Technical College System of Georgia



Protecting DFCS Case Managers

Synopsis: This proposal would add DFCS case managers to the list of individuals where it is required for either a judge of a superior, state, or probate court to issue an arrest warrant.



Guardianship

Synopsis: The proposal would allow for the filing of a probate court guardianship for one year prior to the child turning 18 years of age.



Questions

Jacqueline Tate, DHS Director of Legislative Affairs

jackie.tate@dhs.ga.gov

404.617.8517

Kevin Harris, DFCS Director of Legislative Affairs

kevin.harris@dhs.ga.gov

404.293.8647

