

Fiscal Note

State of Alaska
2026 Legislative Session

Bill Version: HB 157
Fiscal Note Number: _____
() Publish Date: _____

Identifier: HB157-FCS-FLSW-3-27-26
Title: EFFECT OF ADOPTION DECREE ON SIBLINGS
Sponsor: GRAY
Requester: (H) HSS

Department: Department of Family and Community Services
Appropriation: Children's Services
Allocation: Front Line Social Workers
OMB Component Number: 3318

Expenditures/Revenues

Note: Amounts do not include inflation unless otherwise noted below. (Thousands of Dollars)

	FY2027	Included in	Out-Year Cost Estimates				
	Appropriation Requested	Governor's FY2027 Request	FY 2028	FY 2029	FY 2030	FY 2031	FY 2032
OPERATING EXPENDITURES	FY 2027	FY 2027					
Personal Services	***		***	***	***	***	***
Travel							
Services							
Commodities							
Capital Outlay							
Grants & Benefits							
Miscellaneous							
Total Operating	***	0.0	***	***	***	***	***

Fund Source (Operating Only)

None							
Total	***	0.0	***	***	***	***	***

Positions

Full-time							
Part-time							
Temporary							

Change in Revenues

None							
Total	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

Estimated SUPPLEMENTAL (FY2026) cost: 0.0 *(separate supplemental appropriation required)*

Estimated CAPITAL (FY2027) cost: 0.0 *(separate capital appropriation required)*

Does the bill create or modify a new fund or account? No
(Supplemental/Capital/New Fund - discuss reasons and fund source(s) in analysis section)

ASSOCIATED REGULATIONS

Does the bill direct, or will the bill result in, regulation changes adopted by your agency? No
If yes, by what date are the regulations to be adopted, amended or repealed?

Why this fiscal note differs from previous version/comments:

Initial version

Prepared By:	Bruce Downes, Community Relations Manager	Phone:	(907)465-3548
Division:	Children's Services	Date:	03/27/2026 12:00 AM
Approved By:	Kyle Scherrer, Division Operations Manager	Date:	03/27/26
Agency:	Department of Family and Community Services		

FISCAL NOTE ANALYSIS

STATE OF ALASKA
2026 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

BILL NO. HB 157

Analysis

HB 157 allows siblings adopted into separate families to maintain court-ordered contact when it is determined to be in their best interests. The bill expands the responsibilities of the Office of Children’s Services (OCS) and the Alaska Court System by formally incorporating preservation of sibling relationships into permanency planning and adoption proceedings.

The legislation also defines adoptive parents as “adult family members” under AS 47.14.100(e). As a result, adoptive parents would receive notice when a child enters state custody, be informed of the process for requesting placement, and be entitled to a hearing if a placement request is denied—rights currently afforded to extended relatives.

While these requirements would have minimal operational impact when adoptive parents are relatives, they may increase workload and litigation risk when adoptive parents are not related to the child and contest placement decisions. The bill would also require consideration of qualified experts to assess children’s best interests regarding permanency and ongoing sibling contact.

OCS anticipates the need for additional funding due to potential delays in permanency and increased litigation associated with placement-denial hearings. Recent data shows OCS finalized 257 adoptions and 70 guardianships in FY2024, and 225 adoptions with 75 guardianships in FY2025. More than 50 percent of children in the Department’s custody achieve permanency through relative placements.

Due to the broad definition of “siblings” in this legislation, OCS cannot determine the number of hearings that would result; however, it offers the following figures as potential outcomes.

Contested placement review hearings consist of noticing placements of the right to request placement, preparing discovery if a placement is denied, preparation for the hearing, and participating in the hearing itself. OCS estimates the Department of Law would bill OCS at approximately 8 hours at \$170.53 an hour.

If 10% of non relative placements contest placements this cost would total approximately \$21,827.84 per year (16 cases x 8 hours for representation (\$1,364.24).

If 20% of non relative placements contest placements this cost would total approximately \$43,655.68 per year (32 cases x 8 hours for representation (\$1,364.24).

If 30% of non relative placements contest placements this cost would total approximately \$65,483.52 per year (48 cases x 8 hours for representation (\$1,364.24).

If 40% of non relative placements contest placements this cost would total approximately \$87,311.36 per year (64 cases x 8 hours for representation (\$1,364.24).

The division will continue to monitor the impacts of this bill and determine at what level additional resources will be needed to implement this legislation should it become law.