

Fiscal Note

State of Alaska
2024 Legislative Session

Bill Version: SB 181
Fiscal Note Number:
() Publish Date:

Identifier: SB181-JUD-ACS-02-16-24
Title: CHILD PLACEMENT; DILIGENT SEARCH
Sponsor: BJORKMAN
Requester: Senate Health and Social Services
Department: Judiciary
Appropriation: Alaska Court System
Allocation: Trial Courts
OMB Component Number: 768

Expenditures/Revenues

Note: Amounts do not include inflation unless otherwise noted below.

(Thousands of Dollars)

	FY2025 Appropriation Requested	Included in Governor's FY2025 Request	Out-Year Cost Estimates				
			FY 2025	FY 2026	FY 2027	FY 2028	FY 2029
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						

Estimated SUPPLEMENTAL (FY2024) cost: 0.0 *(separate supplemental appropriation required)*

Estimated CAPITAL (FY2025) 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? n/a

If yes, by what date are the regulations to be adopted, amended or repealed?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.

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Division:

Alaska Court System

Date: 02/16/2024 10:00 PM

Approved By:

Stacey Marz, Administrative Director

Date: 02/16/24

Agency:

Alaska Court System

FISCAL NOTE ANALYSIS

STATE OF ALASKA
2024 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

BILL NO. SB 181

Analysis

Senate Bill 181 would make a number of changes to the statutes about child placement for children in Child in Need of Aid cases. Section 1 would specifically allow a foster parent to request a hearing when the Office of Children's Services proposes that the child be transferred to a different placement. The court system anticipates that this will result in an increase in the number of hearings in many CINA cases, but is unable to predict how many additional hearings would result.

Section 2 of SB 181 contemplates a court hearing to consider a child's best interests when OCS approves an adult family member for a placement, which may lead to an added hearing or a longer hearing in CINA cases that include a termination of parental rights.

Sections 3 and 4 of SB 181 require OCS to conduct a diligent search for adult family members with specific steps that the department must take, including tracking the steps and filing a report with the court about the search. This duty for OCS will not directly impact the court, but section 4 would also require the court to review the steps that OCS took in the search, and consider whether the department is excused from further searching. This may result in more discussion and questioning at hearings, but is unlikely to have a significant impact on the court's overall handling of CINA cases or its workload.

Section 5 of the bill alters placement preferences for the initial removal of a child from their home such that if the child is under six and has been in a foster home for at least a year, that foster home is on a par with an adult family member for placement decisions. The court will apply this new preference and make a best interests finding, and anticipates added litigation in those cases where the child falls into that category.

In sum, in implementing the changes in the bill, the court expects an increase in the number and length of certain hearings, particularly from the changes in sections 1, 2, and 5. This is anticipated to increase the court's workload, but the court system is unable to anticipate the actual operational or fiscal impact, and therefore submits this indeterminate fiscal note.