



Senate Fiscal Agency
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BILL ANALYSIS



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House Bill 5512 (Substitute H-1 as reported without amendment)
Sponsor: Representative Kenneth Kurtz
House Committee: Families, Children, and Seniors
Senate Committee: Families, Seniors and Human Services

CONTENT

The bill would amend the Social Welfare Act to require Family Independence Program (FIP) assistance benefits to be denied if a recipient failed to comply with child support requirements without good cause. The bill would take effect on January 1, 2016.

The Act requires the Department of Human Services (DHS) to establish and administer the FIP to provide temporary assistance to families who are making efforts to achieve independence.

Family Independence Program assistance benefits must be *terminated* for at least one month if a recipient fails, without good cause, to comply with applicable child support requirements, including efforts to establish paternity and assign or obtain child support. Under the bill, FIP assistance benefits also would have to be *denied* if a recipient failed to comply with child support requirements without good cause.

The bill provides that "good cause" would include an instance in which efforts to establish paternity or assign or obtain child support would harm the child or in which there was danger of physical or emotional harm to the child or the recipient.

MCL 400.57 & 400.57g

Legislative Analyst: Julie Cassidy

FISCAL IMPACT

The bill would have no fiscal impact on State or local government.

Current Department policy requires a custodial parent or caretaker to "comply with all requests for action or information needed to establish paternity and/or obtain child support on behalf of children for whom they receive assistance, unless a claim of good cause for not cooperating has been granted or is pending". The bill would codify a definition for "good cause" that is similar to language in current policy.

The bill also would require the DHS to deny applications for assistance if the applicant did not take action to establish paternity and obtain child support. Currently, the Department is required to terminate assistance payments that are already in place under these circumstances.

Date Completed: 10-21-14

Fiscal Analyst: Frances Carley