

Colorado Legislative Council Staff Fiscal Note

**FINAL
FISCAL NOTE**

Drafting Number: LLS 15-0488	Date: September 1, 2015
Prime Sponsor(s): Rep. Singer Sen. Aguilar	Bill Status: Signed into Law
	Fiscal Analyst: Lauren Schreier (303-866-3523)

BILL TOPIC: LICENSED MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONALS TREAT MINORS

Fiscal Impact Summary*	FY 2015-2016	FY 2016-2017
State Revenue		
State Expenditures	Potential increase. See State Expenditures section.	
FTE Position Change		
Appropriation Required: None.		

** This summary shows changes from current law under the bill for each fiscal year.*

Summary of Legislation

Under current law, a minor 15 years of age or older who is involuntarily committed to receive mental health services may consent to receive voluntary mental health services from a professional person, with or without the consent of a parent or legal guardian. Professional persons are defined as licensed psychologists and physicians. The bill expands the definition of professional persons to include licensed mental health professionals, such as social workers, marriage and family therapists, licensed professional counselors, and addiction counselors. Under the bill, the newly defined professional persons may provide mental health services to minors in this situation, with or without the consent of the parent or legal guardian. This definition applies to circumstances where a minor is being involuntarily committed to receive mental health services and then provides consent prior to receiving treatment.

Background

According to the Department of Regulatory Agencies (DORA), there are approximately 23,914 licensed physicians and psychologists in the state. There are approximately 19,839 additional mental health professionals who would be considered professional persons under the bill.

State Expenditures

The bill will increase costs for the Department of Regulatory Agencies and the Department of Human Services as discussed below.

Department of Regulatory Agencies. The bill will increase costs for the DORA by a minimal amount. The DORA will be required to conduct outreach and education to communicate the expanded ability of licensed mental health professionals as professional persons serving minors in mental health facilities. This workload increase is anticipated to be minimal and can be absorbed within existing appropriations.

Department of Human Services. The bill may increase costs for the Department of Human Services (DHS) to monitor the care provided in licensed mental health facilities by the additional mental health professionals acting under the bill. The DHS annually inspects roughly 70 licensed facilities in the state that provide mental health services. At the writing of this fiscal note, the number of minors served at the 70 licensed facilities and the number of unique professional persons currently providing services at these facilities is unknown and any additional workload and associated costs for DHS are anticipated to be minimal.

Effective Date

The bill was signed into law by the Governor and took effect on March 20, 2015.

State and Local Government Contacts

Human Services

Regulatory Agencies

Health Care Policy and Financing