



*Colorado Legislative Council Staff Fiscal Note*  
**LOCAL**  
**FISCAL IMPACT**

**Drafting Number:** LLS 10-0784  
**Prime Sponsor(s):** Sen. Newell  
 Rep. Gagliardi

**Date:** February 11, 2010  
**Bill Status:** Senate Health and Human Services  
**Fiscal Analyst:** Bill Zepernick (303-866-4777)

**TITLE:** CONCERNING INFORMATION RELATING TO A REFERRAL OF SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE BY CERTAIN MANDATORY REPORTERS.

<b>Fiscal Impact Summary</b>	<b>FY 2010-2011</b>	<b>FY 2011-2012</b>
<b>State Revenue</b>		
<b>State Expenditures</b>		
<b>FTE Position Change</b>		
<b>Effective Date:</b> September 1, 2010, assuming no referendum petition is filed.		
<b>Appropriation Summary for FY 2010-2011:</b> None required.		
<b>Local Government Impact:</b> See Local Government Impact section.		

**Summary of Legislation**

The bill requires that county departments of human services provide follow-up information to mandatory reporters who report a case of child abuse or neglect. This information must be provided within 30 days of the report, and include the following:

- the child's name;
- the identification of persons who may pose a safety risk to the child;
- a brief description of any safety plan or treatment developed for the child;
- whether the child has been placed outside of his or her home and the type of placement;
- whether the child has been returned to his or her home;
- whether the case has been closed and no further action is being taken by the county department;
- the caseworker's name and contact information; and
- notice that the mandatory reporter may request additional information with 90 days after the report was filed.

Information provided to mandatory reporters is confidential and cannot be disclosed unless required by law. A mandatory reporter does not have the authority to participate in the decision-making process concerning a case of abuse or neglect, unless requested by the county department. A mandatory reporter may seek a review of a county department handling of a case through the existing conflict resolution procedure. The Department of Human Services must promulgate any rules necessary to implement the bill.

### **Local Government Impact**

The bill increases workload and costs to counties by requiring follow-up information be provided to mandatory reporters. County caseworkers will be required to assemble this information for all abuse reports submitted by mandatory reporters. Caseworkers may also have to handle more phone calls and contacts from mandatory reporters who are concerned about cases that they had reported. Providing follow-up information to mandatory reporters could also increase the number of cases that require conflict resolution, if mandatory reporters disagree with how county departments handle reported cases. These costs will vary by county depending on the number of abuse reports typically filed by mandatory reporters in a county.

In the long run, the bill could result in savings or cost avoidance to counties from reducing repeat reports of abuse and the number of children that re-enter the child welfare system. Many mandatory reporters, such as teachers and doctors, have a ongoing relationship with the child and their family. Providing follow-up information about an abuse report could assist mandatory reporters monitor the child's situation and provide additional support, which could reduce the recurrence of abuse and neglect.

### **Departments Contacted**

Human Services

Law