

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

Drafting Number: LLS 12-0303
Prime Sponsor(s): Sen. Spence
 Rep. Summers

Date: January 12, 2012
Bill Status: Senate Health and Human Services
Fiscal Analyst: Bill Zepernick (303-866-4777)

TITLE: CONCERNING THE DIFFERENTIAL RESPONSE PILOT PROGRAM FOR CHILD ABUSE OR NEGLECT CASES OF LOW OR MODERATE RISK.

Fiscal Impact Summary	FY 2012-2013	FY 2013-2014
State Revenue		
State Expenditures	See State Expenditures section.	
FTE Position Change		
Effective Date: Upon signature of the Governor, or upon becoming law without his signature.		
Appropriation Summary for FY 2012-2013: None required.		
Local Government Impact: See Local Government Impact section.		

Summary of Legislation

The bill removes the five-county limit on the Differential Response Pilot Program in the Department of Human Services (DHS).

Background

Adopted in 2010, House Bill 10-1226 allowed the DHS to implement the Differential Response Pilot Program in up to five counties in Colorado. The pilot program identifies low- and moderate-risk cases of abuse or neglect and diverts families from potentially adversarial court intervention to voluntary services. The DHS received \$1.8 million in federal grant funding to implement the pilot and evaluate its effectiveness. Arapahoe, Larimer, Jefferson, Fremont, and Garfield counties were selected as the five pilot sites.

State Expenditures

To the extent that additional counties are selected to participate in the pilot program, the following impact can be expected.

Department of Human Services. The DHS could have increased workload related to expanding the program and monitoring the additional pilot sites. However, this analysis assumes that the DHS will only approve new pilot sites if it is able to do so within existing resources. Further, given that the structure and rules for the pilot program have already been established during the initial implementation in the first five counties, it is likely that the DHS can allow some additional counties to participate using current resources and staff.

Judicial Branch. Successful diversion of families to voluntary services through the pilot program may decrease the number of dependency and neglect cases filed with the courts. However, given the limited scope of the pilot program and assuming a gradual expansion, a significant impact on overall workload for the courts is not expected.

Local Government Impact

Counties that choose to participate in the pilot program will have increased workload and costs to implement the differential response procedures. However, they may also realize future cost savings to the extent that families are successfully diverted to voluntary services and children are kept out of out-of-home care. County participation is voluntary and requires the approval of the DHS.

Departments Contacted

Human Services

Judicial