

Colorado Legislative Council Staff Fiscal Note

**STATE and LOCAL
FISCAL IMPACT**

Drafting Number: LLS 15-1059	Date: April 20, 2015
Prime Sponsor(s): Rep. Singer Sen. Lundberg; Kefalas	Bill Status: House Public Health Care and Human Services
	Fiscal Analyst: Bill Zepernick (303-866-4777)

BILL TOPIC: DIFFERENTIAL RESPONSE PROGRAM ABUSE AND NEGLECT

Fiscal Impact Summary*	FY 2015-2016	FY 2016-2017
State Revenue		
State Expenditures	\$76,051	\$78,263
General Fund	53,123	53,631
Federal Funds	11,013	11,119
Centrally Appropriated Costs**	11,915	13,513
FTE Position Change	0.9 FTE	1.0 FTE
Appropriation Required: \$64,136 - Department of Human Services (FY 2015-16).		

* This summary shows changes from current law under the bill for each fiscal year.
 ** These costs are not included in the bill's appropriation. See the State Expenditures section for more information.

Summary of Legislation

The Differential Response Pilot Program, administered in selected counties and overseen by the Department of Human Services, identifies low- and moderate-risk cases of abuse or neglect and diverts families to voluntary services rather than referring them to potentially adversarial court intervention. This bill continues the Differential Response Pilot Program as a permanent program and removes the pilot program reporting requirements and repeal date.

Background

The Differential Response Pilot Program began in 2010 with five participating counties (Arapahoe, Fremont, Garfield, Jefferson, and Larimer counties). The pilot program was allowed to extend beyond five counties beginning in 2012 and an additional seven counties became pilot sites (Boulder, Chaffee, Eagle, La Plata, Lincoln, Mesa, and San Juan counties). The pilot program was initially funded through a federal grant. An evaluation of the program was conducted and submitted to the General Assembly on December 31, 2014. The pilot program is scheduled to repeal on July 1, 2015.

State Expenditures

The bill increases costs in the Department of Human Services by **\$76,051 and 0.9 FTE in FY 2015-16 and \$78,263 and 1.0 FTE in FY 2016-17 and future years**. These costs are for a staff person to oversee the permanent Differential Response Program. This staff will be

responsible for assisting additional counties to adopt the differential response model and monitoring county programs for safety and program fidelity. Costs for this staff, as well as standard operating and capital outlay expenses are shown in Table 1. Program costs will be paid using General Fund and federal funds. The fiscal note assumes new staff will begin work on July 1, 2015, and first-year costs are adjusted to account for the General Fund pay-date shift.

Table 1. Expenditures Under HB15-1358		
Cost Components	FY 2015-16	FY 2016-17
Personal Services	\$58,483	\$63,800
FTE	0.9 FTE	1.0 FTE
Operating Expenses and Capital Outlay Costs	5,653	950
Centrally Appropriated Costs*	11,915	13,513
TOTAL	\$76,051	\$78,263

* Centrally appropriated costs are not included in the bill's appropriation.

Judicial Department. Successful diversion of families to voluntary services through the use of differential response in additional counties may decrease the number of dependency and neglect cases filed with the courts. This may also reduce the number of appointments required for respondent parent counsel and guardians ad litem. Generally, these savings are assumed to be minimal and will be addressed through the annual budget process.

Centrally appropriated costs. Pursuant to a Joint Budget Committee policy, certain costs associated with this bill are addressed through the annual budget process and centrally appropriated in the Long Bill or supplemental appropriations bills, rather than in this bill. The centrally appropriated costs subject to this policy are estimated in the fiscal note for informational purposes and summarized in Table 2.

Table 2. Centrally Appropriated Costs Under HB15-1358*		
Cost Components	FY 2015-16	FY 2016-17
Employee Insurance (Health, Life, Dental, and Short-term Disability)	\$7,382	\$8,053
Supplemental Employee Retirement Payments	4,533	5,460
TOTAL	\$11,915	\$13,513

*More information is available at: <http://colorado.gov/fiscalnotes>

Local Government Impact

Counties that choose to participate in the permanent Differential Response Program will have increased workload and costs to implement the program protocols and procedures. However, these counties 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.

Effective Date

The bill takes effect upon signature of the Governor, or upon becoming law without his signature.

State Appropriations

For FY 2015-16, the bill requires an appropriation to the Department of Human Services of \$64,136, including \$53,123 General Fund and \$11,013 federal funds, and an allocation of 1.0 FTE.

State and Local Government Contacts

Human Services

Judicial Department

Counties