

Senate Bill 1515 Ensuring Children are Safe

What does Senate Bill 1515 do?

Senate Bill 1515 increases DHS oversight of private child caring agencies (CCA), requires more comprehensive background checks for foster homes certified by the private CCA, gives DHS tools to enforce child safety requirements and increases leadership accountability. SB 1515 requires DHS to vigorously monitor and enforce licensing regulations and focus on child safety first and foremost. The goal is to keep children safe; ensuring DHS licensed CCAs are providing high quality care in full compliance with regulations. SB 1515 also requires DHS employees to report concerns involving a CCA to the DHS Director or designee. The bill takes effect on July 1, 2016.

What is a CCA?

A CCA is a private (non-governmental) agency, organization, or school licensed by DHS to provide care and services to children. These include schools and care agencies such as academic boarding schools, foster care agencies, adoption agencies, residential care agencies, day treatment agencies and outdoor youth programs. For more information about CCAs please visit <http://www.oregon.gov/DHS/PROVIDERS-PARTNERS/LICENSING/CCLU/Pages/index.aspx>.

How does SB 1515 increase safety for children served in a CCA?

- Doubling the number of inspections from one every two years to one per year
- Requiring notifications to external stakeholders when there is suspected child abuse or neglect in a child caring agency
- Expanding oversight to include review of finances, and requiring agencies to submit audited financial statements and tax compliance certificates
- Requiring all Department staff to notify the Director or designated staff, when a threat to the well-being of a child is suspected in a CCA.

What types of concerns do I report?

DHS employees still have a duty to report suspected abuse or neglect of children, seniors and people with disabilities by calling 1-855-503-SAFE. SB 1515 goes further and specifically demands a report to the DHS Director or designee with concerns regarding child health, safety or welfare. For example if you have reasonable cause to believe that a CCA is not operating in a manner that ensures children have a safe and healthy environment or fails to meet basic needs like food and clothing a report to the Director is required. The Director is required to take immediate and appropriate action.

How do I make a report to the Director of DHS?

Make a report to the Director, of DHS by;

Call: 1-503-945-6843 during business hours

Email: CCA.reports@dhs.ohs.state.or.us