



General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

Joint State Government Commission

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Released: April 14, 2022

Development and Implementation of a New Integrated Child Welfare
Case Management System in Pennsylvania: Progress Report
directed by the House Resolution No. 119 of 2021

A Short Summary

House Resolution No. 119 of 2021 directs the Joint State Government Commission “to conduct a study and make recommendations concerning the development and implementation of an integrated child welfare information system for child welfare programs overseen by the Department of Human Services and administered by county children and youth agencies.”¹

The innovative Comprehensive Child Welfare Information System (CCWIS) has a potential to vastly improve data collection and provide integrated service delivery to achieve improved decision-making and deeper data analysis. It is expected to create opportunities for better case management, with the most significant impact in the areas of child abuse and foster care. It is intended to bring improved access to data and utilization of data between counties and across state agencies. This may be particularly important in Pennsylvania, where child welfare services are state-supervised but county-administered.

The Commonwealth embarked on the Child Welfare Case Management (CW CM) project in 2019 and has been continuously working on it since then. The CW CM Solution is a vast project. The project activities, proceeding in several phases, include a variety of operations in several realms. All these tasks amount to a complicated, multi-faceted, and labor-intensive process.

As directed by the resolution, this report presents a description of the new child welfare information system, its main features, its goals and objectives, its current status and progress, and a summary of expenditures associated with its development as well as projected timeline and costs.

The report also contains a brief overview of the CCWIS implementation in two other states whose administrative framework of child welfare services is similar to Pennsylvania’s: Colorado and Ohio.

The development and implementation of a CCWIS-compliant system in Pennsylvania requires a significant time investment on the part of both the DHS and the counties. It is important to realize that all the agencies involved are working on this project in addition to their regular demanding responsibilities.

For the CCWIS to fulfill many promises that are associated with it, the system needs to be developed and installed in a deliberate, meticulous way. The transitional period requires special attention to avoid creating any disruptions in the ongoing child welfare services or jeopardizing secure data transfer. If designed and installed carefully and thoughtfully, the new statewide integrated child welfare system can be expected to bring significant improvements in safety and well-being of the Commonwealth children who depend on it.

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¹ HR No. 119 of 2021.