

1 STATE OF OKLAHOMA

2 1st Session of the 60th Legislature (2025)

3 HOUSE BILL 1574

By: Lawson

6 AS INTRODUCED

7 An Act relating to children; amending 10 O.S. 2021,
8 Section 601.6, which relates to the Office of
9 Juvenile System Oversight; providing reference for
10 definition; directing the Office to inspect
11 misfeasance and malfeasance; directing the Office to
12 conduct inspections annually; authorizing the Office
13 to inspect certain privately-operated facilities;
14 directing the Office to investigate complaints;
15 authorizing the Office to examine and copy records
16 and budgets; authorizing the Office to interview
17 certain individuals; authorizing the Office to
18 subpoena witnesses and hold hearings; and declaring
19 an emergency.

20 BE IT ENACTED BY THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF OKLAHOMA:

21 SECTION 1. AMENDATORY 10 O.S. 2021, Section 601.6, is
22 amended to read as follows:

23 Section 601.6. A. For purposes of this section, the term
24 "children and youth service system" shall have the same meaning as
it is defined in Section 600 of this title.

25 B. The Office of Juvenile System Oversight shall have the
26 responsibility of inspecting and investigating and reporting
27 misfeasance and malfeasance within the children and youth service

1 system, inquiring into areas of concern, investigating complaints
2 filed with the Office of Juvenile System Oversight, and performing
3 issue-specific systemic monitoring as directed by the Oklahoma
4 Commission on Children and Youth of the children and youth service
5 system to ascertain compliance with established responsibilities.

6 It shall be the duty of the

7 C. The Office of Juvenile System Oversight to shall conduct not
8 less than one but not more than two regular, periodic, unannounced
9 inspections of state-operated children's institutions and facilities
10 and to review the reports of the inspections of the State Fire
11 Marshal and the Department of Health and any agencies which accredit
12 such institutions and facilities annually. The Office is further
13 authorized to inspect privately-operated children's institutions and
14 facilities that receive state or federal funding on a periodic basis
15 or as needed.

16 D. The Office shall investigate complaints filed with the
17 Office regarding the children and youth service system.

18 B. E. The Office of Juvenile System Oversight shall have the
19 authority to:

20 1. Have the authority to examine and copy all records and
21 budgets pertaining to the children and youth service system and to
22 interview the residents of such facilities and shall have access to
23 Access all facilities within the children and youth service system

1 for the purpose of conducting ~~systemic oversight~~ inspections and
2 ~~complaint~~ investigations;

3 ~~2. Have the authority to subpoena witnesses and hold public~~
4 ~~hearings Examine and copy all records and budgets pertaining to the~~
5 ~~children and youth service system and to review inspection reports~~
6 ~~of the State Fire Marshal, State Department of Health, and any other~~
7 ~~agency that accredits such institutions and facilities;~~

8 3. Interview the residents of institutions and facilities
9 within the children and youth service system;

10 4. Subpoena witnesses and hold public hearings;

11 5. Establish, in accordance with the Dispute Resolution Act,
12 Sections 1801 through 1813 of Title 12 of the Oklahoma Statutes, a
13 voluntary program for foster parents to mediate complaints
14 concerning the rights of foster parents, as provided for in Section
15 1-9-119 of Title 10A of the Oklahoma Statutes, that relate to
16 certain actions, inactions or decisions of the Department of Human
17 Services, the Department of Juvenile Justice, or child-placing
18 agencies that may adversely affect the safety and well-being of
19 children in the custody of the state;

20 4. 6. Receive any complaint alleging that an employee of the
21 Department of Human Services or a child-placing agency has
22 threatened a foster parent with removal of a child from the foster
23 parent, harassed a foster parent, or refused to place a child in a

1 licensed or certified foster home, or disrupted a child placement as
2 retaliation or discrimination towards a foster parent who has:

- 3 a. filed a grievance pursuant to Section 1-9-120 of Title
4 10A of the Oklahoma Statutes,
- 5 b. provided information to any state official or
6 Department employee, or
- 7 c. testified, assisted, or otherwise participated in an
8 investigation, proceeding, or hearing against the
9 Department or child-placing agency.

10 The Office of Juvenile System Oversight shall forward the complaints
11 to the Office of Client Advocacy for investigation pursuant to
12 subsection D of Section 1-9-112 of Title 10A of the Oklahoma
13 Statutes. The Office of Juvenile System Oversight shall work with
14 the Office of Client Advocacy to ensure the complaints are
15 investigated and resolved in accordance with the grievance
16 procedures provided in Section 1-9-120 of Title 10A of the Oklahoma
17 Statutes. The provisions of this paragraph shall not apply to any
18 complaint by a foster parent regarding the result of a criminal,
19 administrative, or civil proceeding for a violation of any law,
20 rule, or contract provision by that foster parent, or the action
21 taken by the Department or a child-placing agency in conformity with
22 the result of any such proceeding;

23 §. 7. Issue reports to the Governor, Speaker of the House of
24 Representatives, President Pro Tempore of the Senate, Chief Justice

1 of the Supreme Court of the State of Oklahoma, any appropriate
2 prosecutorial agency, the director of the agency under
3 consideration, and other persons as necessary and appropriate; and

4 6. 8. Provide recommendations to the Oklahoma Commission on
5 Children and Youth on or before May 1 of each year.

6 E. F. The Office of Juvenile System Oversight shall not release
7 information that would identify a person who makes a complaint to
8 the Office, unless a court of competent jurisdiction orders release
9 of the information for good cause shown.

10 SECTION 2. It being immediately necessary for the preservation
11 of the public peace, health or safety, an emergency is hereby
12 declared to exist, by reason whereof this act shall take effect and
13 be in full force from and after its passage and approval.

14
15 60-1-10981 CMA 12/18/24
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24