



unlawful or injurious occupation. In addition, children who might be adjudicated unruly for one or more of these conditions, would likely be subject to other elements of the Revised Code definition of unruly child (e.g., a child who does not submit to the reasonable control of parents). Still, it is possible that the elimination of these three conditions of the unruly child definition as proposed in the bill will cause some minor reduction in the number of unruly cases filed annually.

### **Comprehensive Joint Service Plans**

Currently, section 121.37 of the Revised Code, concerning the Ohio Family and Children First (OFCF) initiative, establishes the outline of a locally-designed service coordination process including the participation of state and local social service agencies. In addition to the OFCF Cabinet Council, composed of state agency directors who address meta-system coordination, county councils are required to coordinate and facilitate improved service delivery at the local level. Each county must develop a county comprehensive service coordination mechanism, developed in consultation with, and approved by, a variety of county-level offices including the family and children first council, juvenile judges, children services and other social service agencies. Each county comprehensive service coordination mechanism must include procedures for assessing the needs of children (as well as of their families) in the county—including abused, neglected, dependent, unruly or delinquent children who are under the jurisdiction of the juvenile court or whose parents are voluntarily seeking services. Each county comprehensive service coordination mechanism must also include a procedure for development of a comprehensive joint service plan designating service responsibilities of the various state and local agencies that provide services to children and their families.

The bill requires that each county develop a comprehensive joint service plan and that such plans must include a service coordination process that contains methods of diverting from the juvenile court system a child who either is an alleged unruly child or appears to be an unruly child. The bill requires that the service coordination process include the following:

- Preparation of a complaint alleging the child to be an unruly child;
- A meeting with the child, the parents and interested parties to determine the appropriate diversion methods;
- A method for dealing with short-term crisis situations involving child-parental confrontation, including a method to provide for short-term respite care;
- A program to provide a mentor to the child or parents;
- A program to provide parenting education; an alternative school program for truant, disruptive, suspended or expelled children;
- Other appropriate measures.

As far as LSC can determine, no county is without some form of comprehensive service coordination mechanism or a comprehensive joint service plan. To the extent that counties do not currently have a joint service plan, some counties may need to channel existing resources—primarily staff time—in the short run to fulfill this requirement of the bill.

While implementation of a comprehensive joint services plan could be costly, the bill requires that the comprehensive joint services plan only be developed, not necessarily implemented.

### **Title IV-E Funding**

Current law permits juvenile judges and the Department of Job and Family Services (JFS) to enter into an agreement, pursuant to section 5101.11 of the Revised Code, to reimburse the court for foster care maintenance costs and associated administrative and training costs incurred on behalf of a child who is in the temporary or permanent custody of the court and who meets the eligibility requirements of the federal Title IV-E foster care assistance program. The bill extends the authority of the agreement to include reimbursement for children subject to the new unruly disposition included in the bill. Title IV-E foster care maintenance dollars are available for federally-eligible children in out-of-home placements and for related and allowable administrative and training costs, subject to JFS' random time study. This provision of the bill is intended to harmonize the sections of the Revised Code concerning delinquency dispositions and unruly dispositions, with regard to the mechanism for cooperative agreements between courts and JFS to draw on Title IV-E reimbursement funds. This provision of the bill is not likely to affect the level of Title IV-E funding, according to the JFS, because the vast majority of unruly children subject to the new disposition are likely already receiving Title IV-E eligible services through the local public children services agency serving or, as status offenders and minor misdemeanants, are not likely to warrant out-of-home placement.

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