

2024 -- H 7824

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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2024

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A N A C T

RELATING TO STATE AFFAIRS AND GOVERNMENT -- DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN,
YOUTH AND FAMILIES

Introduced By: Representatives Noret, Casimiro, Diaz, Roberts, Chippendale, and
Kazarian

Date Introduced: March 01, 2024

Referred To: House Health & Human Services

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Chapter 42-72 of the General Laws entitled "Department of Children, Youth
2 and Families" is hereby amended by adding thereto the following section:

3 **42-72-37. Suggestion boxes.**

4 (a) The department of children, youth, and families (DCYF) shall place in each residential
5 treatment center, group home, shelter, and transitional living arrangement that accepts youths in
6 care for placement by the department a locked suggestion box into which residents may place
7 comments and/or concerns to be addressed by the child advocate or their designee.

8 (b) Only employees of the child advocate or their designee shall have access to the contents
9 of the locked suggestion boxes.

10 (c) The child advocate or their designee shall check the locked suggestion boxes at least
11 once every fourteen (14) days.

12 (d) In addition to the physical locked suggestion box, the department shall implement a
13 secure digital suggestion box, in the form of an email, by which only the child advocate or their
14 designee may access. This digital lock box shall appear on the home page of the department website
15 and the home page of the child advocate website.

16 (e) The department shall create appropriate signage, eight and one-half inches (8½") by
17 eleven inches (11"), posted in at least two (2) locations in each facility where a locked suggestion
18 box is located. The signage shall indicate the location of the locked suggestion box location within

1 the facility and identify the locked suggestion box as secure and only accessible by the child
2 advocate or their designee. The signage shall also include the uniform resource locator (URL) and
3 a quick response code (QR Code) directing access to the digital lock box or email account.

4 (f) No locked suggestion box may be monitored by any facility closed-circuit television
5 (CCTV) or surveillance system.

6 (g) The child advocate shall digitally submit a report to the general assembly each year, on
7 or before February 1, outlining the issues and concerns submitted to the locked suggestion boxes
8 and digital lock box and any action taken or the recommended solution to each issue and/or concern.

9 SECTION 2. This act shall take effect ninety (90) days after passage.

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EXPLANATION
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
OF

A N A C T

RELATING TO STATE AFFAIRS AND GOVERNMENT -- DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN,
YOUTH AND FAMILIES

1 This act would require the department of children, youth, and families (DCYF) to place a
2 locked suggestion box in its youth facilities and create a digitally secured suggestion box into which
3 residents may place comments and/or concerns to be addressed by the child advocate.

4 This act would take effect ninety (90) days after passage.

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