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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2015

A N A C T

RELATING TO HEALTH AND SAFETY - MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH SERVICES
FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL HEALTH CARE NEEDS

Introduced By: Representatives Naughton, Jacquard, Tanzi, Handy, and Canario

Date Introduced: February 26, 2015

Referred To: House Health, Education & Welfare

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Chapter 23-13 of the General Laws entitled "Maternal and Child Health
2 Services for Children with Special Health Care Needs" is hereby amended by adding thereto the
3 following section:
4 **23-13-27. Assessment for deaf and hard-of-hearing's language development. -- (a)**
5 The Rhode Island department of human services with the assistance of the department of
6 education shall develop language assessments to monitor deaf and hard-of-hearing children's
7 developmental language benchmarks in American Sign Language (ASL) and English literacy (if
8 applicable, spoken English, visual supplements). Language benchmarks must include data and
9 tracking that provide information as to the individual child's receptive and expressive language
10 comparative to the child's age and cognitive abilities using ASL and English in order to be
11 kindergarten-ready. When the language assessment/benchmarks indicate the child does not have
12 age-appropriate expressive and receptive language skills, the individual family service plan
13 (IFSP) must include as much detail as possible as to why this is the case and specific
14 recommendations as to what strategies, services, and programs will be available to assist the child
15 in becoming linguistically age-appropriate. This includes how the family of the child can be
16 provided training, benchmark materials, and support to insure appropriate language growth and
17 what the child's IFSP should include to assist the child in becoming linguistically age-appropriate,
18 and said recommendations to be carefully considered by the IFSP team and to become a part of

1 [the child's file. The department of human services with the assistance of the department of](#)
2 [education must develop specific action plans and regulations by January 2017 to fully implement](#)
3 [the "language assessment" protocol and processes for children who are deaf and hard-of-hearing](#)
4 [under the age of three \(3\).](#)

5 [\(b\) The qualified language expert in ASL and other language experts shall be part of the](#)
6 [IFSP team.](#)

7 SECTION 2. This act shall take effect on July 1, 2017.

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EXPLANATION
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
OF

A N A C T

RELATING TO HEALTH AND SAFETY - MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH SERVICES
FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL HEALTH CARE NEEDS

1 This act would require the department of human service, with assistance from the
2 department of education, to develop an action plan by January, 2017 whereby the departments
3 would establish a procedure to monitor deaf and hard-of-hearing children's language
4 development. The process would require tracking to determine if a pre-school child's language
5 skills are age appropriate, using ASL (American Sign Language) and English. If the child does
6 not have age-appropriate communication skills, and individual family service plan (IFSP) must be
7 developed, that would include an action plan as well as specific recommendations as to what
8 strategies, services, and programs that will be available to assist the child.

9 This act would take effect on July 1, 2017.

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