

CHAPTER 252

AN ACT concerning the Division of Youth and Family Services, supplementing Title 30 of the Revised Statutes and making an appropriation.

BE IT ENACTED by the Senate and General Assembly of the State of New Jersey:

C.30:4C-3.1 "Review Panel" established.

1. There is hereby established in, but not of, the Department of Human Services the Division of Youth and Family Services Staffing and Outcome Review Panel ("Review Panel").

C.30:4C-3.2 Membership of Review Panel.

2. The Review Panel shall consist of nineteen (19) members as follows:

a. The Commissioner of Human Services, or a designee, shall serve ex-officio.

b. The Commissioner of Personnel, or a designee, shall serve ex-officio.

c. The State Treasurer, or a designee, shall serve ex-officio.

d. The Attorney General, or a designee, shall serve ex-officio.

e. The Public Defender, or a designee, shall serve ex-officio.

f. The Director of the Administrative Office of the Courts, or a designee, shall serve ex-officio.

g. A representative of the Office of the Governor.

h. Two members of the Senate to be appointed by the President of the Senate who shall each be of different political parties and who shall serve during the legislative session in which the appointment is made, one of whom shall be the Chairman of the Senate Women's Issues, Children and Family Services Committee. A member may be appointed for any number of successive terms.

i. Two members of the General Assembly to be appointed by the Speaker of the General Assembly who shall each be of different political parties and who shall serve during the legislative session in which the appointment is made, one of whom shall be the Chairman of the Assembly Senior Issues and Community Services Committee. A member may be appointed for any number of successive terms.

j. Eight public members shall be directly appointed by the Governor as follows:

(1) three public members who are representatives from employee organizations, two of whom are representatives of the Communications Workers of America;

(2) a public member who is a representative of the Association for Children of New Jersey;

(3) a public member who is a representative of Legal Services of New Jersey;

(4) a public member who is a representative of a contracted service provider to the Division of Youth and Family Services; and

(5) two public members, one of whom is a foster parent and one of whom is an adoptive parent.

C.30:4C-3.3 Terms, voting rights, vacancies.

3. Public members shall serve for terms of three years, and along with ex-officio members, shall have full voting rights. Vacancies in the membership of the Review Panel shall be filled in the same manner provided for the original appointments. The public members of the Review Panel shall serve without compensation but may be reimbursed for traveling and other miscellaneous expenses necessary to perform their duties, within the limits of funds made available to the Review Panel for its purpose.

C.30:4C-3.4 Organization of Review Panel.

4. The Review Panel shall organize as soon as practicable but no later than 60 days following the appointment of its members. The Governor shall appoint a chairman and vice-chairman from among the members.

C.30:4C-3.5 Meetings, availability of services.

5. The Review Panel may meet at the call of its chairman and at the times and in the places it may deem appropriate and necessary to fulfill its charge. The Review Panel shall be entitled to call to its assistance and avail itself of the services of the employees of any State, county or

municipal department, board, bureau, commission or agency as it may require and as may be available to it for its purposes. The Department of Human Services shall provide staff services to the Review Panel.

C.30:4C-3.6 Duties of Review Panel.

6. a. The Review Panel shall review the staffing levels of the Division of Youth and Family Services in the Department of Human Services in order to develop recommendations regarding staffing levels and the most effective methods of recruiting, hiring and retaining staff within the Division of Youth and Family Services. In addition, the panel shall review the division's performance in the achievement of management and client outcomes.

b. The Review Panel shall present a preliminary report of its findings and recommendations to the Governor and the Legislature prior to January 1, 2002, and subsequent reports annually thereafter with the first full report due no later than July 1, 2002.

7. The Department of the Treasury is directed to allocate a minimum of 124 additional positions to the Division of Youth and Family Services for fiscal year 2002.

8. The Commissioners of the Department of Human Services and the Department of Personnel and the State Treasurer are directed to review and make recommendations for the Division of Youth and Family Services for the following personnel and compensation issues:

a. minimum starting salary of \$35,000 for entry level Family Services Specialists for fiscal year 2002;

b. title reevaluations for certain Division of Youth and Family Services direct care positions;

c. retention and hiring bonus programs, or both, for certain DYFS direct care positions;

d. career opportunities for DYFS direct care staff; and

e. title series for clerical staff, with objectives of consolidating and upgrading those titles and establishing bridge titles for DYFS clerical staff that bridges into the professional or paraprofessional job titles.

9. This act shall take effect immediately.

Approved October 31, 2001.