

LEGISLATION

SB710 - Florida Customer Service Standards Act - This bill defines measurements for state departments interactions with customers and requirements for operating hours.

Signed by Governor Bush

SB856 - Florida Infant Crib Safety Act - This bill would have prohibited commercial users from manufacturing, retrofitting, selling or leasing specified cribs determined to be unsafe for use by infants.

Vetoed by Governor Bush

SB1202 - Nursing Homes/Assisted Living Facilities - This bill revises provisions relating to the regulation of nursing homes and assisted living facilities. This bill will also allow data collected by the state or local long-term care ombudsman councils or the state or local advocacy councils to be used by the agency in investigations involving violations of regulatory standards.

Vetoed by Governor Bush

SB1214 - Foster Care - This bill will allow the lead agency in the prototype region to provide, rather than contract for, core services. It provides that eligible lead community-based providers must be able to maintain eligibility and receive all federal child welfare funds. It also adds requirements for DCF, in collaboration with the local community alliance, to plan for continued efforts to develop capacity for a community-based system of coordinated care. This bill requires DCF to provide the court with recommendations regarding scheduled contact between the child and the parents. It requires visitation to commence within 72 hours of the shelter hearing or DCF must provide justification to the court. DCF must also make available information regarding services to parents voluntarily seeking services at the conclusion of the shelter hearing. In districts 4, 11, 12 and the SunCoast Region, the bill requires that "any child eleven years of age or older who has been in licensed family foster care for 6 months or longer and who is then moved into family foster home placement more than once must be assessed for placement in licensed residential child care". The bill requires special permanency teams to be established to address this critical issue. DCF must report to the legislature annually on children in licensed residential group care. The bill establishes pilot and model programs in districts 4, 11, 12, the SunCoast Region and Miami-Dade and Manatee Counties to serve as teaching laboratory in an effort to improve the quality of foster care. This bill allows for a three-year license to those foster homes in good standing with DCF as evidenced by regular monitoring visits and review. The foster parents in these homes would have no abuse or neglect reports with any maltreatment findings.

Signed by Governor Bush