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## OFA Bill Analysis

HB 5447

### ***AN ACT IMPLEMENTING RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE TRANSFORMING CHILDREN'S BEHAVIORAL HEALTH POLICY AND PLANNING COMMITTEE AND CONCERNING TEMPORARY FAMILY ASSISTANCE BENEFITS.***

#### **SUMMARY:**

The bill requires (1) the establishment of working groups concerning the treatment of eating disorders and development of a state-wide food education roadmap and a model school nutrition curriculum (2) a study on the feasibility of establishing an inpatient facility to provide psychiatric treatment services to children and young adults who have intellectual or developmental disabilities, and (3) an increase in benefits under the Temporary Family Assistance (TFA) program.

EFFECTIVE DATE: from passage

#### **§§ 1 & 2 — Commission on Women, Children, Seniors, Equity and Opportunity (CWCSEO) Working Groups**

The bill requires the executive director of the Commission on Women, Children, Seniors, Equity and Opportunity (CWCSEO) to establish a working group concerning the treatment of eating disorders and a working group to develop a state-wide food education roadmap and a model school nutrition curriculum. Each group shall include at least one member from the Transforming Children's Behavioral Health and Policy and Planning Committee (TCBHPPC), and the remaining members are selected by the CWCSEO executive director.

The executive director will report the results of the working group studies to the TCBHPPC, Children, Public Health, Education, and Human Services Committees not later than January 1, 2028. The TCBHPPC is required to annually review the progress of the working

group.

***Working Group Regarding the Treatment of Eating Disorders***

This working group will consult with the Department of Public Health (DPH) and Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services to compile information to be made available to the public for:

1. Providers of eating disorder treatment services in the state, including facilities that provide this treatment;
2. Details about the types of services these providers offer and the ages of people served by the providers; and
3. Any other resources available in the state for persons with eating disorders.

The working group will also consult with DPH to:

1. Within available appropriations, develop at least one question on the subject of eating disorder behaviors to be included in the Connecticut School Health Survey questionnaire; and
2. Establish best practice guidelines for facilities providing treatment for eating disorders.

***Working Group to Develop a State-Wide Food Education Roadmap***

This working group is required to develop a state-wide education roadmap and a model school nutrition curriculum that includes:

1. Developmentally appropriate evidence-based education programs on disordered eating behaviors, nutrition, culinary skills, growing food, food safety and food systems.

**§ 3 — Department of Children and Families’ Feasibility Study**

The bill requires the Commissioner of the Department of Children and Families (DCF), in collaboration with the Departments of Developmental Disabilities and Mental Health and Addiction Services, to study the feasibility of establishing an inpatient facility to provide

psychiatric treatment services to children and young adults, between the ages of 14 and 21, who have intellectual or developmental disabilities. DCF must report the results of the study to the Children’s, Human Services, Public Health and Appropriations committees by January 1, 2027.

By February 1, 2027, DCF must request information from one or more providers of mental health services in the state concerning their ability to establish such a facility and implement best practices for psychiatric treatment services to meet the needs of the population. By July 1, 2027, DCF must submit a summary of the responses to the request for information, along with any recommendations, to the Governor and Children’s, Human Services, Public Health and Appropriations committees.

**§ 4 — TFA Monthly Cash Benefit**

The bill requires that the monthly cash benefit for families receiving Temporary Family Assistance be not less than 55% of the monthly federal poverty level (FPL), on and after July 1, 2026. Currently, the TFA Payment Standard (monthly benefit amount) is set at 73% of the Standard of Need. The Standard of Need is set at 55% FPL (*\$993 for a family of two, monthly*).

**COMMITTEE ACTION**

Appropriations Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 44 Nay 8 (04/01/2026)