

SB 593 INDEPENDENT ASSESSMENT

The purpose of SB 593 is to evaluate:

- HHSC and DFPS' rules, minimum standards, and contract requirements that apply to child-placing agencies, residential child-care facilities including foster homes, relative caregivers, and adoptive homes
- The **standards or oversight requirements prescribed by law** to determine the relevance of the standard or oversight requirement; whether the standard or oversight requirement is the best practice.

The independent assessment is intended to make the following findings and recommendations:

1. Simplifying minimum standards to
 - a. Prioritize health, safety, and well-being of children
 - b. Reduce barriers to opening a child-care operation, agency, or becoming a foster parent
2. Adjusting the weights of minimum standards to ensure a methodical and consistent approach and reflective of the focus on health and safety.
3. Addressing licensing, training, and oversight requirements that are barriers to:
 - a. Retaining kinship or foster home capacity
 - b. Retaining operational capacity
4. Update licensing standards to
 - a. Prioritize health, safety, and well-being of children
 - b. Reduce barriers to hiring and maintaining workforce including direct care, admin, and leadership
5. Provide flexibility in applying standards so that services and care are in response to individual needs of child
6. Defining HHSC and DFPS' roles in licensing, investigating, contract oversight, and any other regulatory activity to eliminate duplicative functions
7. Promote transparency and clarity of HHSC and DFPS expectations for caregivers and organizations.