

HCS HB 1414 -- PROTECTION OF CHILDREN (Solon)

COMMITTEE OF ORIGIN: Standing Committee on Children and Families

This bill requires the Children's Division within the Department of Social Services to complete a standard risk assessment within 72 hours of a report of abuse or neglect as part of its structured decision-making protocols. However, the bill also requires the division and the Office of the State Court Administrator to develop a joint safety assessment tool before December 31, 2020 to replace the current risk assessment. The safety assessment tool must be implemented before January 1, 2022.

The bill prohibits the division from requiring foster parents to conduct or be present for supervised visits with a child in their care.

The bill states that the court shall only require a child to appear in court if necessary for making a decision and after considering all of the information provided by the division and family support team and the appropriateness of the courtroom environment and the hardship to the child and current guardians.