

**First Regular Session  
Seventy-third General Assembly  
STATE OF COLORADO**

**INTRODUCED**

LLS NO. 21-0995.02 Alana Rosen x2606

**HOUSE BILL 21-1313**

---

**HOUSE SPONSORSHIP**

**Benavidez and Gonzales-Gutierrez,**

**SENATE SPONSORSHIP**

**(None),**

---

**House Committees**  
Judiciary

**Senate Committees**

---

**A BILL FOR AN ACT**

101      **CONCERNING PERMITTING THE OFFICE OF THE CHILD PROTECTION**  
102           **OMBUDSMAN TO INITIATE INVESTIGATIONS ON BEHALF OF**  
103           **UNACCOMPANIED IMMIGRANT CHILDREN WHO ARE HOUSED IN**  
104           **STATE-LICENSED RESIDENTIAL CHILD CARE FACILITIES.**

---

**Bill Summary**

*(Note: This summary applies to this bill as introduced and does not reflect any amendments that may be subsequently adopted. If this bill passes third reading in the house of introduction, a bill summary that applies to the reengrossed version of this bill will be available at <http://leg.colorado.gov>.)*

Under current law, the office of the child protection ombudsman (ombudsman) has a duty to receive complaints made by or on behalf of a child relating to the child protection system. Once the ombudsman

Shading denotes HOUSE amendment. Double underlining denotes SENATE amendment.  
Capital letters or bold & italic numbers indicate new material to be added to existing statute.  
Dashes through the words indicate deletions from existing statute.

receives a complaint, the ombudsman may investigate and seek resolution of the complaint. The bill extends the scope of the ombudsman's duties to self-initiate impartial and independent investigations and ongoing reviews of the safety and well-being of unaccompanied immigrant children who live in a state-licensed residential child care facility (facility) and who are in the custody of the office of refugee resettlement of the federal department of health and human services. The ombudsman may seek resolution of such investigations and ongoing reviews by referring an investigation and ongoing review to the state department of human services (department) or the appropriate agency or entity and making a recommendation for action relating to the investigation and ongoing review of the facility. The ombudsman may request, review, and receive copies of information, records, or documents that the ombudsman deems necessary to conduct a thorough and independent investigation and ongoing review of the facility. The ombudsman shall report the results of the investigation and ongoing review in the ombudsman's annual report.

The bill requires the facility to notify the ombudsman and the department within 3 days after the arrival of an unaccompanied immigrant child.

The bill permits the department and the ombudsman to coordinate site visits to investigate and review a facility. The department and the ombudsman may share final reports based on their site visits.

---

1 *Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Colorado:*

2 **SECTION 1.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, 19-3.3-103, **add**  
3 (1)(a.5) as follows:

4 **19-3.3-103. Office of the child protection ombudsman - powers**  
5 **and duties - access to information - confidentiality - testimony -**  
6 **judicial review - definitions.** (1) The ombudsman has the following  
7 duties, at a minimum:

8 (a.5) (I) NOTWITHSTANDING ANY PROVISION OF THIS SECTION TO  
9 THE CONTRARY, THE OMBUDSMAN MAY SELF-INITIATE AN INDEPENDENT  
10 AND IMPARTIAL INVESTIGATION AND ONGOING REVIEW OF THE SAFETY  
11 AND WELL-BEING OF AN UNACCOMPANIED IMMIGRANT CHILD WHO LIVES  
12 IN A STATE-LICENSED RESIDENTIAL CHILD CARE FACILITY, AS DEFINED IN  
13 SECTION 26-6-102, AND WHO IS IN THE CUSTODY OF THE OFFICE OF

1 REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT OF THE FEDERAL DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND  
2 HUMAN SERVICES AS SET FORTH IN 8 U.S.C. SEC. 1232 ET SEQ. THE  
3 OMBUDSMAN MAY SEEK RESOLUTION OF SUCH INVESTIGATION AND  
4 ONGOING REVIEW, WHICH MAY INCLUDE, BUT NEED NOT BE LIMITED TO,  
5 REFERRING AN INVESTIGATION AND ONGOING REVIEW TO THE STATE  
6 DEPARTMENT OR APPROPRIATE AGENCY OR ENTITY AND MAKING A  
7 RECOMMENDATION FOR ACTION RELATING TO AN INVESTIGATION AND  
8 ONGOING REVIEW.

9 (II) (A) IN SELF-INITIATING AN INVESTIGATION AND ONGOING  
10 REVIEW OF THE SAFETY AND WELL-BEING OF AN UNACCOMPANIED  
11 IMMIGRANT CHILD WHO LIVES IN A STATE-LICENSED RESIDENTIAL CHILD  
12 CARE FACILITY, THE OMBUDSMAN HAS THE AUTHORITY TO REQUEST,  
13 REVIEW, AND RECEIVE COPIES OF ANY INFORMATION, RECORDS, OR  
14 DOCUMENTS, INCLUDING RECORDS OF THIRD PARTIES, THAT THE  
15 OMBUDSMAN DEEMS NECESSARY TO CONDUCT A THOROUGH AND  
16 INDEPENDENT INVESTIGATION AND ONGOING REVIEW AS DESCRIBED IN  
17 SUBSECTION (1)(a.5)(I) OF THIS SECTION, WITHOUT COST TO THE  
18 OMBUDSMAN.

19 (B) A STATE-LICENSED RESIDENTIAL CHILD CARE FACILITY SHALL  
20 NOTIFY THE OMBUDSMAN AND THE STATE DEPARTMENT WITHIN THREE  
21 DAYS AFTER THE ARRIVAL OF AN UNACCOMPANIED IMMIGRANT CHILD.

22 (C) THE OMBUDSMAN MAY CREATE AND DISTRIBUTE OUTREACH  
23 MATERIALS TO A STATE-LICENSED RESIDENTIAL CHILD CARE FACILITY AND  
24 TO INDIVIDUALS WHO MAY HAVE REGULAR CONTACT WITH AN  
25 UNACCOMPANIED IMMIGRANT CHILD.

26 (III) AS USED IN THIS SUBSECTION (1)(a.5), "UNACCOMPANIED  
27 IMMIGRANT CHILD" MEANS A CHILD WHO HAS NO LAWFUL IMMIGRATION

1 STATUS IN THE UNITED STATES; HAS NOT ATTAINED EIGHTEEN YEARS OF  
2 AGE; AND HAS NO PARENT OR LEGAL GUARDIAN IN THE UNITED STATES,  
3 OR NO PARENT OR LEGAL GUARDIAN IN THE UNITED STATES IS AVAILABLE  
4 TO PROVIDE CARE AND PHYSICAL CUSTODY.

5 **SECTION 2.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, 19-3.3-108, **amend**  
6 (1) introductory portion; and **add** (1)(c) as follows:

7 **19-3.3-108. Office of the child protection ombudsman - annual**  
8 **report.** (1) On or before September 1 of each year, commencing with the  
9 September 1 following the first fiscal year in which the office was  
10 established, the ombudsman shall prepare a written report that ~~shall~~ **MUST**  
11 include, but need not be limited to, information from the preceding fiscal  
12 year and any recommendations concerning the following:

13 (c) RESULTS OF THE OMBUDSMAN'S SELF-INITIATED INVESTIGATION  
14 AND ONGOING REVIEW OF THE SAFETY AND WELL-BEING OF AN  
15 UNACCOMPANIED IMMIGRANT CHILD WHO IS HOUSED IN A STATE-LICENSED  
16 RESIDENTIAL CHILD CARE FACILITY, AS DESCRIBED IN SECTION 19-3.3-103.

17 **SECTION 3.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, 26-6-107, **add** (5) as  
18 follows:

19 **26-6-107. Investigations and inspections - local authority -**  
20 **reports - rules.** (5) AS DESCRIBED IN SECTION 19-3.3-103, THE STATE  
21 DEPARTMENT AND THE OFFICE OF THE CHILD PROTECTION OMBUDSMAN  
22 SHALL COORDINATE SITE VISITS TO INVESTIGATE AND REVIEW  
23 RESIDENTIAL CHILD CARE FACILITIES THAT HOUSE UNACCOMPANIED  
24 IMMIGRANT CHILDREN WHO ARE IN THE CUSTODY OF THE OFFICE OF  
25 REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT OF THE FEDERAL DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND  
26 HUMAN SERVICES AS SET FORTH IN 8 U.S.C. SEC. 1232 ET SEQ. THE STATE  
27 DEPARTMENT AND THE OFFICE OF THE CHILD PROTECTION OMBUDSMAN

1 MAY SHARE FINAL REPORTS BASED ON THEIR SITE VISITS.

2           **SECTION 4. Safety clause.** The general assembly hereby finds,  
3 determines, and declares that this act is necessary for the immediate  
4 preservation of the public peace, health, or safety.