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To: DSS_LICENSING@LISTSERV.COV.VIRGINIA.GOV
Subject: Legislation that passed in the 2026 General Assembly

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COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

DATE: May 15, 2026

TO: Licensed Children's Residential Facilities
Licensed Child Caring Institutions

FROM: Tara Ragland, Director
Division of Licensing Programs

SUBJECT: 2026 Legislation Affecting Children's Residential Facilities

This memo gives an overview of new laws passed in the 2026 General Assembly session that affect licensed children's residential facilities.

Senate Bill 640: Centralized Hotline for Reports or Complaints of Child Abuse or Neglect

[Senate Bill 640](#) creates a statewide hotline for all reports of child abuse or neglect. Local departments of social services will no longer take these reports directly. Instead, they must send any report they receive to the state hotline. This change is intended to create a consistent, statewide intake process.

Timeline:

- Centralized intake begins **July 1, 2027**.
- The full transition to the state hotline will take place from **July 1, 2028, to July 1, 2030**.

Mandated reporters may continue to use the Mandated Reporter Portal:

<https://vacps.dss.virginia.gov/VACPSWeb/faces/landingPage.xhtml>

Senate Bill 677/House Bill 840: Department of Health Restaurant Exemption

[Senate Bill 677](#) and [House Bill 840](#) give an exemption from restaurant requirements to children's residential facilities and child-caring institutions that care for 12 or fewer children in a home. This law does not change how these programs currently operate; it simply puts existing practice into the law. Questions regarding a licensed program's eligibility for this exemption should be directed to the [local health department](#).

Effective date: July 1, 2026

House Bill 1327: Fictive Kin Definition

[House Bill 1327](#) updates the definition of *fictive kin*. Under this law, a person can be considered fictive kin if they had a relationship with the child or the child's family **before** the child entered foster care.

Effective date: July 1, 2026

Thank you for your continued commitment to children and families.

If you have any questions about Senate Bill 640 or House Bill 1327, please contact your licensing inspector.