



LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Welcome to the first Child Care Aware Legislative Update of the 2021 legislative session. This narrative update, along with our Bill Tracker, will be posted each Tuesday (reflecting activity through the previous Friday) on the [Child Care Aware of Minnesota website](#).

Each week we will provide a brief overview of bills that have been introduced, action that has been taken at the committee level or on the floor, and any other pertinent news related to early care and education and school-age care issues. **If you have additions to recommend to the bill tracker, please contact [Ann McCully](#).**

OVERVIEW

The Legislature convened on Tuesday, January 5 and is off to a quick start. There is no question that the state's response to the impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic is the primary issue facing legislators as they begin this session.

This also a budget year to set the state's budget for July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2023, and while the economic picture has improved since the initial budget forecast last spring, there is still a projected budget deficit in the coming years, leading to some tough decisions ahead. More information about the budget projections can be found on the [State Office of Management and Budget website](#).

COMMITTEE STRUCTURE

A new, two-year legislative session brings new members, new committees, and new committee assignments. While early care and education issues may show up in many places during the process, below are a few of the key committees that we will be watching. We encourage you to follow them as well! To find out about committee upcoming committee hearings and topics, visit the Minnesota State Legislature [combined calendar page](#).

HOUSE COMMITTEES

1. **House Early Childhood Finance & Policy** - This committee now has both a finance and a policy component, so it will have a "target" for spending. It is the main place that early childhood education issues will be heard in the House.

Chair: Dave Pinto. **Vice Chair:** Laurie Pryor. **Members:** Liz Boldon, Jim Davnie, Carlie Kotyza-Witthuhn, Kelly Morrison, Ami Wazlawik, Dan Wolgamott, Mary Franson, Lisa Demuth, Brian Daniels, Peggy Bennett, Tony Jurgens.

2. **House Human Services Finance & Policy** - This committee deals with other human services issues that often intersect with child care issues, including licensing, MFIP, TANF, etc.

Chair: Jennifer Schultz. **Vice Chair:** Kristin Bahner. **Members:** Liz Boldon, Peter Fischer, Luke Frederick, Jessica Hanson, Tina Liebling, Kelly Moller, Mohamud Noor, Dave Pinto, Steve Sandell, Tony Albright, Deb Kiel, Nels Pierson, Joe Schomacker, Jordan Rasmusson, Paul Novotny, Kristin Robbins, John Burkel.

- 3. House Workforce and Business Development Finance & Policy** - This committee oversees the funds and work of the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development, which has been increasingly involved in child care issues.

Chair: Mohamud Noor. **Vice Chair:** Jay Xiong. **Members:** Jim Davnie, Emma Greenman, Erin Koegel, Carlie Kotyza-Witthuhn, Liz Olson, Tou Xiong, Rod Hamilton, Dave Baker, Barb Haley, Tony Jurgens, Keith Franke.

SENATE COMMITTEES

- 1. Senate E-12 Finance and Policy** - This committee is responsible for all education programs from Pre-K to 12 and deals with issues related to early care and education programs and policies administered by the Minnesota Department of Education.

Chair: Roger Chamberlain. **Vice Chair:** Justin Eichorn. **Members:** Chuck Wiger, Julia Coleman, Steve Cwodzinski, Zach Duckworth, Jason Isaacson, Mary Kunesh, Scott Newman.

- 2. Senate Human Services Reform Finance & Policy** - This committee works in tandem with the HHS Finance and Policy Committee (below) to address issues related to early care and education programs and policies administered by the Minnesota Department of Human Services.

Chair: Jim Abeler. **Vice Chair:** Michelle Benson. **Members:** John Hoffman, Omar Fateh, Melissa Franzen, Karin Housley, Carla Nelson, Paul Utke, Melissa Wiklund.

- 3. Senate Health & Human Services Finance and Policy** - This committee works in tandem with the Human Services Reform Committee (above) to address issues related to early care and education programs and policies administered by the Minnesota Department of Human Services and the Minnesota Department of Health.

Chair: Michelle Benson. **Vice Chair:** Rich Draheim. **Members:** Melissa Wiklund, Jim Abeler, Chris Eaton, Matt Klein, Mark Koran, Carla Nelson, Julie Rosen.

- 4. Senate Human Services Licensing Policy** - This is a new committee that will focus on requirements, service standards, and background checks around several licensing categories, including child care.

Chair: Paul Utke. **Vice Chair:** Jim Abeler. **Members:** Chris Eaton, Gene Dornink, Omar Fateh.

- 5. Senate Jobs and Economic Growth Finance and Policy** - This committee oversees the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development, which has been increasingly involved in child care issues.

Chair: Eric Pratt. **Vice Chair:** Karin Housley. **Members:** Bobbie Joe Champion, Rich Draheim, Fong, Hawj, Aric Putnam, Jason Rarick.

COMMITTEE ACTIVITY

Most committees held their first meetings last week and focused on introducing members and staff as well as reviewing the committee jurisdiction (the issues they will be covering) and receiving updates on recent action in those areas.

The **House Early Childhood Finance and Policy Committee** received an update on the efforts to support child care programs during the pandemic, and a presentation on upcoming plans by the Minnesota Department of Human Services to roll out some of the initial federal funding that was recently announced.

BILL INTRODUCTIONS

This list includes topics, numbers, authors, and general committee referrals for bills introduced through January 15. For more information about each bill, please download [our weekly Bill Tracker](#).

- COVID-19; state appropriations replaced with federal funds, child care providers public health support funds funding provided, basic sliding fee program funding provided, and money appropriated. **(HF 5- Pinto)**
- Parental notice of and participation required in maltreatment determination reconsideration and human services licensing sanction appeal hearings. **(HF 60-Koegel/HF 79-Hoffman)**
- Creating the Office of Ombudsperson for Child Care Providers; providing appointments; requiring reports; appropriating money; proposing coding for new law in Minnesota Statutes, chapter 119B. **(HF 61-Demuth/SF 21-Howe)**