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Subject: 2020 Legislative Implementation  
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# COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

## DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

**DATE:** June 26, 2020

**TO:** Children's Residential Facilities

**FROM:** Tara Ragland, Director  
Division of Licensing Programs

**SUBJECT:** 2020 Legislative Implementation

The purpose of this memo is to inform you of legislation that passed in the 2020 Virginia General Assembly session that affects licensed children's residential facilities. This legislation becomes effective July 1, 2020.

### **House Bill 597**

[HB 597](#) amends and reenacts §§ 63.2-1701 and 63.2-1702 requiring that an application for licensure as a children's residential facility contain information regarding any complaints, enforcement actions, or sanctions against a license to operate a children's residential facility held by the applicant in another state.

Additionally, the character and reputation investigation of an applicant shall include consideration of any complaints, enforcement actions, or sanctions against a license to operate a children's residential facility held by the applicant in another state.

Applications for children's residential facilities will be updated to reflect these new requirements.

### **House Bill 1301**

[HB 1301](#) establishes the Office of the Children's Ombudsman to perform changes in policy, procedure, and legislation; educate the public; and investigate and review actions of the Virginia Department of Social Services (VDSS) and local departments of social services (LDSS), child-placing agencies, or child-caring institutions.

The Office of the Children's Ombudsman will monitor and ensure the compliance with relevant statutes, rules and policies pertaining to children's protective services and the

placement, supervision, treatment, and improvement of care to children in foster care and adoptive homes.

The ombudsman is appointed for a four-year term by the Governor and subject to confirmation by the General Assembly. The provisions of this bill are contingent on funding in a General Appropriation Act.

Please contact your licensing inspector if you have any questions.