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07/07/2009

1       **AN ACT** *to amend* 48.981 (8) (d) 1. of the statutes; **relating to:** training for child  
2       welfare case workers.

*The people of the state of Wisconsin, represented in senate and assembly, do enact as follows:*

**JOINT LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL PREFATORY NOTE:** This draft was prepared for the Special Committee on Strengthening Wisconsin Families.

Current law requires training in child abuse and neglect protective services and in unborn child abuse protective services for each agency staff member and supervisor whose responsibilities include investigation or treatment of child abuse and neglect or of unborn child abuse. The training must be approved by the Department of Children and Families (DCF) and must include information on means of recognizing and responding to domestic abuse.

This bill draft requires that the training for each agency staff member or supervisor be completed prior to that staff member or supervisor managing cases.

3       **SECTION 1.** 48.981 (8) (d) 1. of the statutes is amended to read:  
4       48.981 **(8)** (d) 1. Each agency staff member and supervisor whose responsibilities  
5       include investigation or treatment of child abuse and neglect or of unborn child abuse shall,  
6       prior to managing cases, successfully complete training in child abuse and neglect protective  
7       services and in unborn child abuse protective services approved by the department. The  
8       training shall include information on means of recognizing and appropriately responding to  
9       domestic abuse, as defined in s. 49.165 (1) (a). The department shall monitor compliance with  
10      this subdivision according to rules promulgated by the department.

**NOTE:** This bill draft requires that the training for each agency staff member or supervisor be completed prior to that staff member or supervisor managing cases.

**COMMENT:** 1. Section DCF 43.04 (1), adm. code, describes the specifications of the pre-service training required for agency staff and

supervisors, including the format and records of the training. The section further provides that a caseworker who completes pre-service training may provide child protective services as a primary caseworker and that a caseworker who has not completed pre-service training may only provide child protective services as a secondary caseworker under the direction of a child protective services supervisor or experienced child protective services worker.

The committee might consider whether to continue to allow a caseworker who has not completed pre-service training to provide services under the direction of a supervisor or an experienced caseworker.

2. Section DCF 43.06 (1), adm. code, provides that an employing agency may exempt a caseworker or supervisor from pre-service training for one of the following reasons:

- The caseworker or supervisor received pre-service training through employment at another agency as a caseworker or supervisor and the caseworker or supervisor provides the employing agency with documentation of that training or the employing agency can verify that the caseworker or supervisor received pre-service training or an exemption from pre-service training.
- The caseworker or supervisor began employment as a child protective services caseworker before February 1, 2008, and the caseworker or supervisor provides the employing agency with documentation of training, work experience, or any combination thereof, that is equivalent to pre-service training.
- The caseworker or supervisor received a bachelor's degree in social work or a master's level social work degree from a council on social work education-accredited program that is approved by DCF as having the curriculum content that is equivalent to pre-service training.

The committee might consider whether to continue to allow exemptions to the training requirement.

3. Current law requires that caseworker training include information on recognizing and responding to domestic abuse. The committee might consider whether to specify additional topics that must be covered in the training.