



Oversight of State Children and Family Services

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Oversight and Accountability Mechanisms

States approach oversight and accountability of their state provision of children and family services in several different ways. NCSL identified 37 states and the District of Columbia with statutes related to oversight of children and family services offices or departments. Ten states and the District of Columbia have statutes supervision or oversight that exists within the office or department.¹ This often takes the form of boards, commissions, or department leads being the responsible entity for ensuring statutory requirements are followed. Twenty-eight states have some form of external oversight defined in statute such as independent boards or ombudsman offices that report to the governor, legislature, or a department outside of an office of children and family services.² These internal and external oversight mechanisms are not necessarily mutually exclusive, Colorado, for example, has statutes related to both forms of oversight.

Children's Ombudsman and Child Advocacy Offices

The most common form of oversight for state offices and divisions of child and family services in statute are Ombudsman Offices or Offices of Child Advocates. NCSL has a [webpage](#) with extensive information about the various structures and responsibilities of Children's Ombudsman Offices, which includes Offices of Child Advocates. As of 2021, 28 states had an Ombudsman office tasked with oversight of state departments and agencies that handle children and family services by investigating complaints. These offices are typically, but not always, established through statute.

Stakeholder and Community Oversight

Many states rely on oversight mechanisms that involve community or stakeholder engagement. Two common forms are [Foster Care Review Boards](#) and [Citizen Review Panels](#).

¹ Alabama, Colorado, Delaware, District of Columbia, Indiana, Louisiana, New Hampshire, Oregon, Rhode Island, Vermont and Virginia

² Alaska, Arizona, Arkansas, Colorado, Connecticut, Florida, Georgia, Hawaii, Illinois, Iowa, Kentucky, Maine, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Utah and Wyoming

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Below is a chart of state statutes identified by NCSL as related to oversight of state offices or departments of children and family services.

State	State Statutes
Alabama	<p>Code of Ala. § 38-2-6</p> <p>The aim of the state department shall be the promotion of a unified development of welfare activities and agencies of the state and of the local governments so that each agency and each governmental institution shall function as an integral part of a general system. In order to carry out effectively these aims, it shall be the duty and responsibility of the state department to:</p> <p>(1) Administer or supervise all forms of public assistance including general home relief, outdoor and indoor care for persons in need of assistance, also including those duties that have to do primarily with the determination of need and authorization of relief.</p> <p>(2) Exercise all the powers, duties, and responsibilities previously vested by law in the State Child Welfare Department.</p> <p>(3) Provide services to county or municipal governments including the organization and supervision of counties for the effective carrying out of welfare functions, the compilation of statistics, and other information relative to public welfare and to make surveys and in other ways to ascertain the facts which cause or contribute to the need for public assistance, family welfare, child welfare, and other welfare activities.</p>
Alaska	<p>Alaska Stat. § 24.55.100</p> <p>(a) The ombudsman has jurisdiction to investigate the administrative acts of agencies</p> <p>Alaska Stat. § 24.55.200</p> <p>Within a reasonable amount of time after the ombudsman reports the opinion and recommendations to an agency the ombudsman may present the opinion and recommendations to the governor, the legislature, a grand jury, the public or any of these. The ombudsman shall include with the opinion any reply made by the agency.</p>
Arizona	<p>A.R.S. § 8-807</p> <p>I. To provide oversight of the department, the department shall provide access to DCS information to the following persons, if the DCS information is reasonably necessary for the person to perform the person's official duties:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Federal or state auditors. 2. Persons conducting any accreditation deemed necessary by the department. 3. A standing committee of the legislature or a committee appointed by the president of the senate or the speaker of the house of representatives for purposes of conducting investigations related to the legislative oversight of the department. This information shall not be further disclosed unless a court has ordered the disclosure of this information, the information has been disclosed in a public or court record, or the information has been disclosed in the course of a public meeting or court proceeding. 4. A legislator who requests DCS information in the regular course of the legislator's duties. A legislator may discuss this information with another legislator if the other legislator has signed the form prescribed in subdivision (d) of this paragraph in regard to the specific file that will be discussed. This information shall not be further disclosed unless a court has ordered the disclosure of this information,

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	<p>the information has been disclosed in a public or court record, or the information has been disclosed in the course of a public meeting or court proceeding. To request a file pursuant to this paragraph:</p> <p>(a) The legislator shall submit a written request for DCS information to the presiding officer of the body of which the state legislator is a member. The request shall state the name of the person whose case file is to be reviewed and any other information that will assist the department in locating the file. The presiding officer may authorize a legislative staff member to attend with the legislator any meeting to review the file.</p> <p>(b) The presiding officer shall forward the request to the department within five working days of the receipt of the request.</p> <p>(c) The department shall make the necessary arrangements for the legislator to review the file at an office of the department, chosen by the legislator, within ten working days.</p> <p>(d) The legislator and staff member shall sign a form, consistent with the requirements of this paragraph and paragraph 3 of this subsection, before reviewing the file, that outlines the confidentiality laws governing department files and penalties for further release of the information.</p> <p>5. A citizen review panel as prescribed by federal law, a child fatality review team as provided in title 36, chapter 35 and the office of ombudsman-citizens aide.</p> <p>6. An independent oversight committee established pursuant to section 41-3801.</p> <p>7. The governor who shall not disclose any information unless a court has ordered the disclosure of the information, the information has been disclosed in a public or court record or the information has been disclosed in the course of a public meeting or court proceeding.</p>
Arkansas	<p>A.C.A. § 10-3-1323</p> <p>(a) The General Assembly finds that the requirements with which the state must comply pursuant to the consent decree from Angela R., et al. v. Bill Clinton, et al. and the Arkansas Child Welfare Reform Document demand close observation and study; that the future of the state's children and youth relies heavily on compliance with the decree; that the financial security of the state is in jeopardy if the state has difficulty or is unable to comply with the consent decree because of the voluminous number of lawsuits that could ensue; that the state has a responsibility to protect children and youth from harm and ensure their healthy development; that the Child Welfare Compliance and Oversight Committee will cease to exist on December 31, 1994; that in order to protect the interests of the state, it is crucial that oversight of child welfare issues continue; that oversight by a committee that focuses specifically on problems relating to children and youth would be the most advantageous manner of monitoring compliance with the consent decree and related problems. Therefore, it is declared to be the intent of the General Assembly to require the Senate Interim Committee on Children and Youth to monitor compliance with the consent decree, to report annually regarding compliance, and to review all bills pertaining to the safety, health, mental health, development, and problems of children and youth.</p> <p>(b) The Senate Interim Committee on Children and Youth shall make a report at least annually regarding the state's compliance with the Arkansas Child Welfare Reform Document and review all bills pertaining to the safety, health, mental health, development, and problems of children and youth. The report shall be made available to all members of the General Assembly.</p> <p>A.C.A. § 16-87-216, Juvenile Ombudsman Division</p> <p>(1) It is the intent of the General Assembly to create a Juvenile Ombudsman Division of the Arkansas Public Defender Commission to provide for independent oversight of the Division of Youth Services' facilities and programs that are unlicensed or unaccredited.</p>



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(2) There shall be created within the Arkansas Public Defender Commission a juvenile ombudsman and assistant juvenile ombudsmen that shall be appointed by the executive director.

A.C.A. § 20-82-211, Child Welfare Ombudsman Division

(5) The Child Welfare Ombudsman shall have the following powers and duties:

(A) The duty to work independently of the:

- (i) Department of Human Services;
- (ii) Administrative Office of the Courts;
- (iii) Commission for Parent Counsel;
- (iv) Attorney Ad Litem Program;
- (v) Arkansas Public Defender Commission; and
- (vi) Arkansas Court Appointed Special Advocates program;

(B) The duty to communicate with a:

- (i) Juvenile after the approval of, and subject to the conditions set by, the:
 - (a) Dependency-neglect attorney ad litem appointed to the juvenile; or
 - (b) Attorney for the juvenile if the juvenile has an attorney other than a dependency-neglect attorney ad litem; and
- (ii) Parent of a juvenile after the approval of, and subject to the conditions set by, the attorney for the parent if the parent has an attorney;

(C) The authority to access a record as allowed by law;

(D) The duty to review and recommend necessary changes to procedures under the Arkansas Juvenile Code of 1989, § 9-27-301 et seq., the Child Maltreatment Act, § 12-18-101 et seq., and other laws relevant to the operation of the child welfare system that are applicable to the:

- (i) Department of Human Services;
- (ii) Division of Arkansas State Police;
- (iii) Administrative Office of the Courts;
- (iv) Attorney Ad Litem Program;
- (v) Commission for Parent Counsel;
- (vi) Arkansas Public Defender Commission; and
- (vii) Arkansas Court Appointed Special Advocates program;

(E) The duty to review an issue or concern related to a court case or investigation of a juvenile if it appears that the juvenile, parent of the juvenile, foster parent of the juvenile, relative of the juvenile, or fictive kin of the juvenile may need assistance from the child welfare ombudsman;

(F) The duty to provide training and technical assistance if a request is received from:

- (i) A member of the child welfare system;
- (ii) The General Assembly; or
- (iii) The office of the Governor;

(G) The duty to make the public aware of the Child Welfare Ombudsman Division and the contact information for the Child Welfare Ombudsman Division; and

(H)

(i) The duty to prepare an annual report concerning the work of the Child Welfare Ombudsman Division, the operation of the child welfare system, and any recommendations related to the operation of the child welfare system.

(ii) The Child Welfare Ombudsman Division shall submit the annual report to the:

- (a) Governor;



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	<p>(b) Secretary of the Department of Human Services; (c) Director of the Division of Arkansas State Police; (d) Director of the Division of Children and Family Services; (e) Director of the Administrative Office of the Courts; (f) Commission for Parent Counsel; (g) House Committee on Aging, Children and Youth, Legislative and Military Affairs; and (h) Senate Interim Committee on Children and Youth. (iii) The annual report shall not contain information that would identify a juvenile or the family of a juvenile.</p>
California	<p>Cal. Welfare And Institutions Code § 16160-16167 The Legislature finds and declares that the people of California have benefited from the establishment of a long-term care ombudsperson pursuant to Section 9710 of the Welfare and Institutions Code and a childcare ombudsperson program pursuant to Section 1596.872a of the Health and Safety Code. The Legislature further finds it is essential to maintain the nonpartisan nature, integrity, and impartiality of ombudsperson functions and services. It is the intent of the Legislature to provide similar protections for foster children by establishing a foster care ombudsperson program within the State Department of Social Services.</p>
Colorado	<p>Colo. Rev. Stat. § 19-3.3-101 (2) The general assembly further finds and declares that the establishment of the office of the child protection ombudsman will: (a) Improve accountability and transparency in the child protection system and promote better outcomes for children and families involved in the child protection system; and (b) Allow families, concerned citizens, mandatory reporters, employees of the state department and county departments, and other professionals who work with children and families to voice their concerns, without fear of reprisal, about the response by the child protection system to children experiencing, or at risk of experiencing, child maltreatment.</p> <p>C.R.S. 26-1-111 (1) The state department, under the supervision of the executive director, is charged with the administration or supervision of all the public assistance and welfare activities of the state, including but not limited to assistance payments, food stamps, social services, child welfare services, rehabilitation, and programs for the aging and for veterans, which activities as enumerated are declared to be state as well as county purposes. (2) The state department, under the supervision of the executive director, shall: (a) Administer or supervise all forms of public assistance and welfare, including but not limited to assistance payments, food stamps, and social services under programs for old age pensions except for the old age pension health and medical care program, and shall also administer and supervise the Colorado works program, aid to the blind, aid to the needy disabled, food stamps supplementation to households not receiving public assistance found eligible for food stamps under rules adopted by the state board, and such other public assistance and welfare activities as may be vested in the state department pursuant to law; (b) Administer or supervise the establishment, extension, and strengthening of child welfare services and other social services in cooperation with the federal department of health, education, and welfare and other state or federal agencies;</p>



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	<p>(c) Administer the establishment, extension, and strengthening of rehabilitation programs and services, programs and services for the aging, and veterans’ affairs activities in cooperation with the federal department of health, education, and welfare and other state or federal agencies;</p> <p>(d)</p> <p>(l) Provide services to county governments including the organization and supervision of county departments for the effective administration of public assistance and welfare functions as set out in the rules of the executive director and the rules of the state board pursuant to section 26-1-107 as to program scope and content, including assistance payments, food stamps, and social services, and compilation of statistics and necessary information relative to assistance payments, food stamps, social services, child welfare services, including out-of-home placement services, rehabilitation, programs for the aging, and veterans’ programs throughout the state, and obtaining federal reimbursement moneys available under the Title IV-E program created under the federal “Social Security Act”, as amended, based on out-of-home placements and alternative care treatment by county departments of children eligible for Title IV-E federal assistance, which moneys shall be allocated to counties to help defray the costs of performing its functions; except that nothing in this paragraph (d) shall be construed to allow counties to continue to receive an amount equal to the increased funding in the event the said funding is no longer available from the federal government.</p>
Connecticut	<p>Conn. Gen. Stat. § 17a-4, state advisory council on children and families</p> <p>(a) There shall be a State Advisory Council on Children and Families which shall consist of twenty members as follows: (1) Fourteen members appointed by the Governor, including two persons who are child care professionals, two persons eighteen to twenty-five years of age, inclusive, served by the Department of Children and Families, one child psychiatrist licensed to practice medicine in this state, one health care professional who has expertise in children’s health and is licensed in the state, one attorney who has expertise in legal issues related to children and youth and seven persons who shall be representative of young persons, parents and others interested in the delivery of services to children and youths, including child protection, behavioral health and prevention services, at least four of whom shall be parents, foster parents or family members of children who have received, or are receiving, behavioral health services or child welfare services; and (2) six members representing the regional advisory councils established pursuant to section 17a-30, appointed one each by the members of each council. Not more than half the members of the council shall be persons who receive income from a private practice or any public or private agency that delivers mental health, substance abuse, child abuse prevention and treatment or child welfare services. Members of the council shall serve without compensation, except for necessary expenses incurred in the performance of their duties. The Department of Children and Families shall provide the council with funding to facilitate the participation of those members representing families and youth, as well as for other administrative support services. Members shall serve on the council for terms of two years each and no member shall serve for more than three consecutive terms. The commissioner shall be an ex-officio member of the council without vote and shall attend its meetings. Any member who fails to attend three consecutive meetings or fifty per cent of all meetings during any calendar year shall be deemed to have resigned. The council shall elect a chairperson and vice-chairperson to act in the chairperson’s absence.</p> <p>(b) The council shall meet quarterly, and more often upon the call of the chair or a majority of the members. The council’s meetings shall be held at locations that facilitate participation by members of the public, and its agenda and minutes shall be posted on the department’s web site. A majority of the members in office, but not less than six members, shall constitute a quorum. The council shall have</p>



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complete access to all records of the institutions and facilities of the department in furtherance of its duties, while at all times protecting the right of privacy of all individuals involved, as provided in section 17a-28.

(c) The duties of the council shall be to: (1) Recommend to the commissioner programs, legislation or other matters which will improve services for children and youths, including behavioral health services; (2) annually review and advise the commissioner regarding the proposed budget; (3) interpret to the community at large the policies, duties and programs of the department; (4) issue any reports it deems necessary to the Governor and the Commissioner of Children and Families; (5) assist in the development of and review and comment on the strategic plan developed by the department pursuant to subsection (b) of section 17a-3; (6) receive on a quarterly basis from the commissioner a status report on the department's progress in carrying out the strategic plan; (7) independently monitor the department's progress in achieving its goals as expressed in the strategic plan; and (8) offer assistance and provide an outside perspective to the department so that it may be able to achieve the goals expressed in the strategic plan.

Conn. Gen. Stat. § 46a-13k, Office of the child advocate established

(a) There is established, within the Office of Governmental Accountability established under section 1-300, an Office of the Child Advocate. The Governor, with the approval of the General Assembly, shall appoint a person with knowledge of the child welfare system and the legal system to fill the Office of the Child Advocate. Such person shall be qualified by training and experience to perform the duties of the office as set forth in section 46a-13l. Upon any vacancy in the position of Child Advocate, the advisory committee established pursuant to section 46a-13r shall meet to consider and interview successor candidates and shall submit to the Governor a list of not fewer than three and not more than five of the most outstanding candidates, not later than sixty days after the occurrence of said vacancy, except that upon any vacancy in said position occurring after January 1, 2012, but before June 15, 2012, the advisory committee shall submit such list to the Governor on or before July 31, 2012. Such list shall rank the candidates in the order of committee preference. Not later than eight weeks after receiving the list of candidates from the advisory committee, the Governor shall designate a candidate for Child Advocate from among the choices on such list. If at any time any of the candidates withdraw from consideration prior to confirmation by the General Assembly, the designation shall be made from the remaining candidates on the list submitted to the Governor. If, not later than eight weeks after receiving the list, the Governor fails to designate a candidate from the list, the candidate ranked first shall receive the designation and be referred to the General Assembly for confirmation. If the General Assembly is not in session, the designated candidate shall serve as acting Child Advocate and be entitled to the compensation, privileges and powers of the Child Advocate until the General Assembly meets to take action on said appointment. The person appointed Child Advocate shall serve for a term of four years and may be reappointed or shall continue to hold office until such person's successor is appointed and qualified. Upon any vacancy in the position of Child Advocate and until such time as a candidate has been confirmed by the General Assembly or, if the General Assembly is not in session, has been designated by the Governor, the Associate Child Advocate shall serve as the acting Child Advocate and be entitled to the compensation, privileges and powers of the Child Advocate.

(b) Notwithstanding any other provision of the general statutes, the Child Advocate shall act independently of any state department in the performance of the advocate's duties.



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	<p>(c) The Child Advocate may, within available funds, appoint such staff as may be deemed necessary provided, for the fiscal years ending June 30, 1996, and June 30, 1997, such staff shall not exceed one and one-half full-time positions or the equivalent thereof. The duties of the staff may include the duties and powers of the Child Advocate if performed under the direction of the Child Advocate.</p> <p>(d) The General Assembly shall annually appropriate such sums as necessary for the payment of the salaries of the staff and for the payment of office expenses and other actual expenses incurred by the Child Advocate in the performance of his or her duties. Any legal or court fees obtained by the state in actions brought by the Child Advocate shall be deposited in the General Fund.</p> <p>(e) The Child Advocate shall annually submit, in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a, to the Governor, the joint standing committees of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to the judiciary, children and human services and the advisory committee established pursuant to section 46a-13r a detailed report analyzing the work of the Office of the Child Advocate.</p>
Delaware	<p>Del. Code Ann. tit. 29 § 9001A The General Assembly hereby declares that the welfare of the children of this State shall be safeguarded by the establishment of an Office of the Child Advocate, with a Child Advocate who shall also serve as Executive Director of the Child Protection Accountability Commission. The Child Advocate shall be responsible for effectuating the purposes of the Commission. The Advocate shall also coordinate efforts on behalf of the children; work with advocacy groups; promote system reform; recommend changes in law, procedure and policy necessary to enhance the protection of Delaware’s children; and to implement and coordinate programs providing legal representation on behalf of a child, including the Court Appointed Special Advocate Program. In order to effectuate these goals, the Child Advocate shall be an attorney duly licensed to practice law in Delaware.</p> <p>Del. Code Ann. tit. 29 § 9005A The Child Advocate shall perform the following duties:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Take all possible actions, including programs of public education and legislative advocacy, to secure and ensure the legal, civil, and special rights of the children. (2) Review periodically relevant policies and procedures with a view toward the rights of children. (3) Refer any person making a complaint or report required by Chapter 9 of Title 16 to the Division of Family Services, and, if warranted, to an appropriate police agency. If a complaint or report includes an allegation of misconduct against a Department employee, the complaint or report must also be referred to the Secretary of the Department. (4) Recommend changes in the procedures for investigating and overseeing the welfare of children. (5) Make the public aware of the services of the Office and the Commission, its purpose, and how it can be contacted. (6) Apply for and accept grants, gifts, and bequests of funds from other state, federal, and interstate agencies, as well as from private firms, individuals, and foundations, for the purpose of carrying out the Office’s and the Commission’s lawful responsibilities. The funds must be deposited with the State Treasurer in a restricted receipt account established to permit funds to be expended in accordance with the provision of the grant, gift, or bequest. (7) Examine policies and procedures and evaluate the effectiveness of the child protection system, specifically the respective roles of the Division, the Attorney General’s Office, the courts, the medical community, and law-enforcement agencies. (8) Review and make recommendations concerning investigative procedures and emergency responses pursuant to this chapter.



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	<p>(9) Develop and provide quality training to Division staff, Deputy Attorneys General, law-enforcement officers, the medical community, family court personnel, Court Appointed Special Advocate volunteers, educators, day care providers, and others on the various standards, criteria, and investigative technology used in these cases.</p> <p>(10) Develop and administer programs to ensure the legal representation of children in this State, which includes the Court Appointed Special Advocate Program.</p> <p>(11) Submit an annual report analyzing the work of the Office that may be included in the Commission’s annual report, or submitted separately.</p> <p>(12) Serve as the Executive Director of the Commission.</p> <p>(13) Provide staff support to the Commission, including assisting the Commission, its committees, and panels in investigating and reviewing the deaths or near deaths of abused or neglected children.</p> <p>(14) Hire employees or contract for services as necessary to assist the Commission, its committees, and panels in investigating and reviewing the deaths or near deaths of abused or neglected children and performing its other duties under subchapter III, Chapter 9 of Title 16, within the limitations of funds appropriated by the General Assembly or obtained from other sources.</p> <p>(15) Hire the Investigation Coordinator and staff to assist the Investigation Coordinator in accomplishing the duties assigned in § 906 of Title 16, including contracts for services as necessary to accomplish its goals.</p> <p>(16) Take whatever other actions are necessary to help the Commission accomplish its goals.</p>
District of Columbia	<p>D.C. Code § 4-1303.02a, Organization and authority of child and family services agency</p> <p>(a) The Agency shall be administered by a full-time Director appointed by the Mayor and confirmed by the Council. The Director shall be qualified by experience and training to carry out the purposes of this subchapter.</p> <p>(b) The Director shall report directly to the Mayor.</p> <p>(c) The Director shall be responsible for all child and family services provided by the Agency, and for monitoring child and family services provided by contract or compact with the Agency.</p>
Florida	<p>Fla. Stat. § 402.40</p> <p>(3) Third-party credentialing entities. The department shall approve one or more third-party credentialing entities for the purpose of developing and administering child welfare certification programs for persons who provide child welfare services. A third-party credentialing entity shall request such approval in writing from the department. In order to obtain approval, the third-party credentialing entity must:</p> <p>(a) Establish professional requirements and standards that applicants must achieve in order to obtain a child welfare certification and to maintain such certification.</p> <p>(b) Develop and apply core competencies and examination instruments according to nationally recognized certification and psychometric standards.</p> <p>(c) Maintain a professional code of ethics and a disciplinary process that apply to all persons holding child welfare certification.</p> <p>(d) Maintain a database, accessible to the public, of all persons holding child welfare certification, including any history of ethical violations.</p> <p>(e) Require annual continuing education for persons holding child welfare certification.</p> <p>(f) Administer a continuing education provider program to ensure that only qualified providers offer continuing education opportunities for certificate holders.</p> <p>(g) Review the findings and all relevant records involving the death of a child or other critical incident following completion of any reviews by the department, the inspector general, or the Office of the</p>

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	<p>Attorney General. Such review may occur only upon the filing of a complaint from an outside party involving certified personnel. This review shall assess the certified personnel’s compliance with the third-party credentialing entity’s published code of ethical and professional conduct and disciplinary procedures.</p> <p>(h) Maintain an advisory committee, including representatives from each region of the department, each sheriff’s office providing child protective services, and each community-based care lead agency, who shall be appointed by the organization they represent. The third-party credentialing entity may appoint additional members to the advisory committee.</p>
Georgia	<p>O.C.G.A. § 15-11-740</p> <p>(a) This article shall be known and may be cited as the “Georgia Child Advocate for the Protection of Children Act.”</p> <p>(b) In keeping with this article’s purpose of assisting, protecting, and restoring the security of children whose well-being is threatened, it is the intent of the General Assembly that the mission of protection of the children of this state should have the greatest legislative and executive priority. Recognizing that the needs of children must be attended to in a timely manner and that more aggressive action should be taken to protect children from abuse and neglect, the General Assembly creates the Office of the Child Advocate for the Protection of Children to provide independent oversight of persons, organizations, and agencies responsible for providing services to or caring for children who are victims of child abuse and neglect or whose domestic situation requires intervention by the state. The Office of the Child Advocate for the Protection of Children will provide children with an avenue through which to seek relief when their rights are violated by state officials and agents entrusted with their protection and care.</p> <p>O.C.G.A. § 15-11-744</p> <p>(a) The advocate shall have the following rights and powers:</p> <p>(1) To communicate privately, by mail or orally, with any child and with each child’s parent, guardian, or legal custodian;</p> <p>(2) To have access to all records and files of DFCS concerning or relating to a child, and to have access, including the right to inspect, copy, and subpoena records held by clerks of the various courts, law enforcement agencies, service providers, including medical and mental health, and institutions, public or private, with whom a particular child has been either voluntarily or otherwise placed for care or from whom the child has received treatment within this state. To the extent any such information provides the names and addresses of individuals who are the subject of any confidential proceeding or statutory confidentiality provisions, such names and addresses or related information that has the effect of identifying such individuals shall not be released to the public without the consent of such individuals. The Office of the Child Advocate for the Protection of Children shall be bound by all confidentiality safeguards provided in Code Sections 49-5-40 and 49-5-44. Anyone wishing to obtain records held by the Office of the Child Advocate shall petition the original agency of record where such records exist;</p> <p>(3) To enter and inspect any and all institutions, facilities, and residences, public and private, where a child has been placed by a court or DFCS and is currently residing. Upon entering such a place, the advocate shall notify the administrator or, in the absence of the administrator, the person in charge of the facility, before speaking to any children. After notifying the administrator or the person in charge of the facility, the advocate may communicate privately and confidentially with children in the facility, individually or in groups, or the advocate may inspect the physical plant. To the extent possible, entry</p>

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	<p>and investigation provided by this Code section shall be conducted in a manner which will not significantly disrupt the provision of services to children;</p> <p>(4) To apply to the Governor to bring legal action in the nature of a writ of mandamus or application for injunction pursuant to Code Section 45-15-18 to require an agency to take or refrain from taking any action required or prohibited by law involving the protection of children;</p> <p>(5) To apply for and accept grants, gifts, and bequests of funds from other states, federal and interstate agencies, independent authorities, private firms, individuals, and foundations for the purpose of carrying out the lawful responsibilities of the Office of the Child Advocate for the Protection of Children;</p> <p>(6) When less formal means of resolution do not achieve appropriate results, to pursue remedies provided by this article on behalf of children for the purpose of effectively carrying out the provisions of this article; and</p> <p>(7) To engage in programs of public education and legislative advocacy concerning the needs of children requiring the intervention, protection, and supervision of courts and state and county agencies.</p>
Hawaii	<p>Hawaii Rev. Stat. § 96-8</p> <p>An appropriate subject for investigation is an administrative act of an agency which might be:</p> <p>(1) Contrary to law;</p> <p>(2) Unreasonable, unfair, oppressive, or unnecessarily discriminatory, even though in accordance with law;</p> <p>(3) Based on a mistake of fact;</p> <p>(4) Based on improper or irrelevant grounds;</p> <p>(5) Unaccompanied by an adequate statement of reasons;</p> <p>(6) Performed in an inefficient manner; or</p> <p>(7) Otherwise erroneous.</p> <p>The ombudsman may investigate to find an appropriate remedy.</p>
Illinois	<p>Ch. 20 Ill. Comp. Stat. § 505/35.5</p> <p>(a) The Governor shall appoint, and the Senate shall confirm, an Inspector General who shall have the authority to conduct investigations into allegations of or incidents of possible misconduct, misfeasance, malfeasance, or violations of rules, procedures, or laws by any employee, foster parent, service provider, or contractor of the Department of Children and Family Services [20 ILCS 510/510-1 et seq.], except for allegations of violations of the State Officials and Employees Ethics Act [5 ILCS 430/1-1 et seq.] which shall be referred to the Office of the Governor’s Executive Inspector General for investigation. The Inspector General shall make recommendations to the Director of Children and Family Services concerning sanctions or disciplinary actions against Department employees or providers of service under contract to the Department. The Director of Children and Family Services shall provide the Inspector General with an implementation report on the status of any corrective actions taken on recommendations under review and shall continue sending updated reports until the corrective action is completed. The Director shall provide a written response to the Inspector General indicating the status of any sanctions or disciplinary actions against employees or providers of service involving any investigation subject to review. In any case, information included in the reports to the Inspector General and Department responses shall be subject to the public disclosure requirements of the Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act [325 ILCS 5/1 et seq.]. Any investigation conducted by</p>

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the Inspector General shall be independent and separate from the investigation mandated by the Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act. The Inspector General shall be appointed for a term of 4 years. The Inspector General shall function independently within the Department of Children and Family Services with respect to the operations of the Office of Inspector General, including the performance of investigations and issuance of findings and recommendations, and shall report to the Director of Children and Family Services and the Governor and perform other duties the Director may designate. The Inspector General shall adopt rules as necessary to carry out the functions, purposes, and duties of the office of Inspector General in the Department of Children and Family Services, in accordance with the Illinois Administrative Procedure Act [5 ILCS 100/1-1 et seq.] and any other applicable law.

(b) The Inspector General shall have access to all information and personnel necessary to perform the duties of the office. To minimize duplication of efforts, and to assure consistency and conformance with the requirements and procedures established in the B.H. v. Suter consent decree and to share resources when appropriate, the Inspector General shall coordinate his or her activities with the Bureau of Quality Assurance within the Department.

(c) The Inspector General shall be the primary liaison between the Department and the Illinois State Police with regard to investigations conducted under the Inspector General's auspices. If the Inspector General determines that a possible criminal act has been committed, or that special expertise is required in the investigation, he or she shall immediately notify the Illinois State Police. All investigations conducted by the Inspector General shall be conducted in a manner designed to ensure the preservation of evidence for possible use in a criminal prosecution.

(d) The Inspector General may recommend to the Department of Children and Family Services, the Department of Public Health, or any other appropriate agency, sanctions to be imposed against service providers under the jurisdiction of or under contract with the Department for the protection of children in the custody or under the guardianship of the Department who received services from those providers. The Inspector General may seek the assistance of the Attorney General or any of the several State's Attorneys in imposing sanctions.

(e) The Inspector General shall at all times be granted access to any foster home, facility, or program operated for or licensed or funded by the Department.

(f) Nothing in this Section shall limit investigations by the Department of Children and Family Services that may otherwise be required by law or that may be necessary in that Department's capacity as the central administrative authority for child welfare.

(g) The Inspector General shall have the power to subpoena witnesses and compel the production of books and papers pertinent to an investigation authorized by this Act. The power to subpoena or to compel the production of books and papers, however, shall not extend to the person or documents of a labor organization or its representatives insofar as the person or documents of a labor organization relate to the function of representing an employee subject to investigation under this Act. Any person who fails to appear in response to a subpoena or to answer any question or produce any books or papers pertinent to an investigation under this Act, except as otherwise provided in this Section, or who knowingly gives false testimony in relation to an investigation under this Act is guilty of a Class A misdemeanor.

(h) The Inspector General shall provide to the General Assembly and the Governor, no later than January 1 of each year, a summary of reports and investigations made under this Section for the prior fiscal year. The summaries shall detail the imposition of sanctions and the final disposition of those recommendations. The summaries shall not contain any confidential or identifying information



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	concerning the subjects of the reports and investigations. The summaries also shall include detailed recommended administrative actions and matters for consideration by the General Assembly.
Indiana	<p>Burns Ind. Code Ann. § 4-13-19-2 As used in this chapter, “ombudsman” means: (1) the person appointed by the governor to serve as ombudsman; or (2) an employee or other individual approved by the office of the department of child services ombudsman to act in the capacity of ombudsman; to receive, investigate, and resolve complaints that allege the department of child services, by an action or omission, failed to protect the physical or mental health or safety of any child or failed to follow specific laws, rules, or written policies.</p> <p>Burns Ind. Code Ann. § 4-13-19-3 The office of department of child services ombudsman is established as a separate bureau within the department. The ombudsman appointed by the governor shall report directly to the commissioner. The ombudsman appointed by the governor must be an attorney licensed to practice law in Indiana or a social worker with at least a master’s degree. The ombudsman appointed by the governor must have significant experience or education in child development and child advocacy, including at least two (2) years experience working with child abuse and neglect.</p>
Iowa	<p>Iowa Code § 2C.9 The ombudsman may: 1. Investigate, on complaint or on the ombudsman’s own motion, any administrative action of any agency, without regard to the finality of the administrative action, except that the ombudsman shall not investigate the complaint of an employee of an agency in regard to that employee’s employment relationship with the agency except as otherwise provided by this chapter. A communication or receipt of information made pursuant to the powers prescribed in this chapter shall not be considered an ex parte communication as described in the provisions of section 17A.17. 2. Investigate, on complaint or on the ombudsman’s own motion, any administrative action of any person providing child welfare or juvenile justice services under contract with an agency that is subject to investigation by the ombudsman. The person shall be considered to be an agency for purposes of the ombudsman’s investigation. 3. Prescribe the methods by which complaints are to be made, received, and acted upon; determine the scope and manner of investigations to be made; and, subject to the requirements of this chapter, determine the form, frequency, and distribution of the conclusions and recommendations of the ombudsman. 4. Request and receive from each agency assistance and information as necessary in the performance of the duties of the office. Notwithstanding section 22.7, pursuant to an investigation the ombudsman may examine any and all records and documents of any agency unless its custodian demonstrates that the examination would violate federal law or result in the denial of federal funds to the agency. Confidential documents provided to the ombudsman by other agencies shall continue to maintain their confidential status. The ombudsman is subject to the same policies and penalties regarding the confidentiality of the document as an employee of the agency. The ombudsman may enter and inspect premises within any agency’s control and may observe proceedings and attend hearings, with the consent of the interested party, including those held under a provision of confidentiality, conducted by any agency unless the agency demonstrates that the attendance or observation would violate federal law or result in the denial of federal funds to that agency. This subsection does not permit the</p>

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	<p>examination of records or access to hearings and proceedings which are the work product of an attorney under section 22.7, subsection 4, or which are privileged communications under section 622.10.</p> <p>5. Issue a subpoena to compel any person to appear, give sworn testimony, or produce documentary or other evidence relevant to a matter under inquiry. The ombudsman, deputies, and assistants of the ombudsman may administer oaths to persons giving testimony before them. If a witness either fails or refuses to obey a subpoena issued by the ombudsman, the ombudsman may petition the district court having jurisdiction for an order directing obedience to the subpoena. If the court finds that the subpoena should be obeyed, it shall enter an order requiring obedience to the subpoena, and refusal to obey the court order is subject to punishment for contempt.</p> <p>6. Establish rules relating to the operation, organization, and procedure of the office of ombudsman. The rules are exempt from chapter 17A and shall be published in the Iowa administrative code.</p>
Kentucky	<p>KRS § 194A.030</p> <p>The cabinet consists of the following major organizational units, which are hereby created:</p> <p>(1) Office of the Secretary. Within the Office of the Secretary, there shall be an Office of the Ombudsman and Administrative Review, an Office of Legal Services, an Office of Inspector General, an Office of Public Affairs, an Office of Human Resource Management, an Office of Finance and Budget, an Office of Legislative and Regulatory Affairs, an Office of Administrative Services, and an Office of Application Technology Services, as follows:</p> <p>(a) The Office of the Ombudsman and Administrative Review shall be headed by an executive director who shall be appointed by the secretary with the approval of the Governor under KRS 12.050 and shall:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Investigate, upon complaint or on its own initiative, any administrative act of an organizational unit, employee, or contractor of the cabinet, without regard to the finality of the administrative act. Organizational units, employees, or contractors of the cabinet shall not willfully obstruct an investigation, restrict access to records or personnel, or retaliate against a complainant or cabinet employee; 2. Make recommendations that resolve citizen complaints and improve governmental performance and may require corrective action when policy violations are identified; 3. Provide evaluation and information analysis of cabinet performance and compliance with state and federal law; 4. Place an emphasis on research and best practices, program accountability, quality service delivery, and improved governmental performance; 5. Provide information on how to contact the office for public posting at all offices where Department for Community Based Services employees or contractors work, at any facility where a child in the custody of the cabinet resides, and to all cabinet or contracted foster parents; 6. Report to the Office of Inspector General for review and investigation any charge or case against an employee of the Cabinet for Health and Family Services where it has cause to believe the employee has engaged in dishonest, unethical, or illegal conduct or practices related to his or her job duties; or any violation of state law or administrative regulation by any organization or individual regulated by, or contracted with the cabinet; 7. Compile a report of all citizen complaints about programs or services of the cabinet and a summary of resolution of the complaints and submit the report upon request to the Child Welfare Oversight and Advisory Committee established in KRS 6.943, and the Interim Joint Committee on Health and Welfare and Family Services;

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	<p>8. Include oversight of administrative hearings; and</p> <p>9. Provide information to the Office of the Attorney General, when requested, related to substantiated violations of state law against an employee, a contractor of the cabinet, or a foster or adoptive parent;</p>
Louisiana	<p>La.R.S. § 46:51. Duties of the department.</p> <p>The Department of Children and Family Services, through its secretary, shall administer the public assistance and welfare laws of the state, as follows:</p> <p>(8) Administer and supervise all public child welfare activities relating to children who are dependent, neglected, delinquent, or have physical, intellectual, or mental disabilities; establish, extend, and strengthen services for such children in parish or regional offices; license and supervise all parish, municipal, and private agencies, institutions, and individuals, caring for children, including visitatorial powers, under the rules and regulations of the department; contract with private individuals to hold their homes open for and to care for children in need of temporary or long time foster care and provide such other services for children as may be authorized by law.</p> <p>L.a. R.S. § 46:52. Duties of the secretary.</p> <p>The secretary, as the executive and administrative officer of the department, shall faithfully conduct and discharge all administrative and executive functions in the carrying out of this Chapter.</p> <p>The secretary shall submit to the legislature an annual financial statement accounting for all funds appropriated for the department, for the purposes of this Chapter and for public welfare purposes, for the specific purposes for which they are appropriated and also a financial statement accounting for all federal funds allotted to the state by the federal government for the purposes of the department. He shall publish annually a full report of the operations and administration of the department under the provisions of this Chapter and for other public welfare purposes together with recommendations and suggestions, and these reports shall be submitted to the governor.</p>
Maine	<p>Me. Rev. Stat. tit. 22 § 4087-A</p> <p>2. Program Established. The ombudsman program is established as an independent program within the Executive Department to provide ombudsman services to the children and families of the State regarding child welfare services provided by the Department of Health and Human Services. The program shall consider and promote the best interests of the child involved, answer inquiries and investigate, advise and work toward resolution of complaints of infringement of the rights of the child and family involved. The program must be staffed, under contract, by an attorney or a master’s level social worker who must have experience in child development and advocacy, and support staff as determined to be necessary. The program shall function through the staff of the program and volunteers recruited and trained to assist in the duties of the program.</p>
Massachusetts	<p>ALM GL ch. 18B, § 6, Commissioner of Children and Families</p> <p>The department shall be under the direction, supervision and control of the commissioner of children and families, in this chapter called the commissioner, who shall be appointed by the secretary of health and human services, with the approval of the governor, and who shall serve at the pleasure of the secretary, and may be removed by the secretary at any time, subject to the approval of the governor. Said commissioner shall be qualified by training and experience to perform the duties of the office and shall at the time of appointment have received a doctorate or other degree beyond the level of the baccalaureate in the field of business, economics, education, government, law, medicine, psychology, public administration, public health, public policy, social work, urban planning, or a field substantially related to one or more of the foregoing and shall have had not less than seven years of responsible administrative experience, at least three of which shall have been in a field related to</p>

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	<p>human services, or said commissioner shall have had experience in one or more of said fields for a period of years equivalent to the number of years required to obtain such other degree beyond that of baccalaureate required herein, and shall have had, in addition thereto, not less than seven years of responsible administrative experience, at least three of which shall have been in a field related to human services. The position of commissioner shall be classified under section 45 of chapter 30 and the salary shall be determined under section 46C of said chapter 30 and the commissioner shall devote full time to the duties of the office. The commissioner shall be the executive and administrative head of the department.</p>
Michigan	<p>MCLS § 722.923. Children’s ombudsman; establishment; appointment; removal.</p> <p>(1) As a means of effecting changes in policy, procedure, and legislation, educating the public, investigating and reviewing actions of the department, child placing agencies, or child caring institutions, monitoring and ensuring compliance with relevant statutes, rules, and policies pertaining to children’s protective services and the placement, supervision, treatment, and improving delivery of care of children in foster care and adoptive homes, the children’s ombudsman is established as an autonomous entity in the department of management and budget.</p> <p>(2) The governor shall appoint an individual as the ombudsman, with the advice and consent of the senate. The individual shall be qualified by training and experience to perform the duties and exercise the powers of the children’s ombudsman and the children’s ombudsman office as provided in this act.</p> <p>(3) The governor may remove the children’s ombudsman from office for cause that includes, but is not limited to, incompetency to properly exercise duties, official misconduct, habitual or willful neglect of duty, or other misfeasance or malfeasance in connection with the operation of the office of the children’s ombudsman. The governor shall report the reason for the removal to the legislature.</p> <p>(4) The children’s ombudsman serving in office on the effective date of the amendatory act that added this subsection shall serve at the pleasure of the governor.</p>
Minnesota	<p>Minn. Stat. § 257.0762</p> <p>Subdivision 1. Duties.</p> <p>(a) Each ombudsperson shall monitor agency compliance with all laws governing child protection and placement, as they impact on children of color. In particular, the ombudsperson shall monitor agency compliance with sections 260C.215; 260.751 to 260.835; and 260C.193, subdivision 3.</p> <p>(b) The ombudsperson shall work with local state courts to ensure that:</p> <p>(1) court officials, public policy makers, and service providers are trained in cultural diversity. The ombudsperson shall document and monitor court activities in order to heighten awareness of diverse belief systems and family relationships;</p> <p>(2) experts from the appropriate community of color including tribal advocates are used as court advocates and are consulted in placement decisions that involve children of color;</p> <p>(3) guardians ad litem and other individuals from communities of color are recruited, trained, and used in court proceedings to advocate on behalf of children of color; and</p> <p>(4) training programs for bilingual workers are provided.</p> <p>Subd. 2. Powers. — Each ombudsperson has the authority to investigate decisions, acts, and other matters of an agency, program, or facility providing protection or placement services to children of color. In carrying out this authority and the duties in subdivision 1, each ombudsperson has the power to:</p> <p>(1) prescribe the methods by which complaints are to be made, reviewed, and acted upon;</p> <p>(2) determine the scope and manner of investigations to be made;</p> <p>(3) investigate, upon a complaint or upon personal initiative, any action of any agency;</p>

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	<p>(4) request and be given access to any information in the possession of any agency deemed necessary for the discharge of responsibilities. The ombudsperson is authorized to set reasonable deadlines within which an agency must respond to requests for information. Data obtained from any agency under this clause shall retain the classification which it had under section 13.02 and shall be maintained and disseminated by the ombudsperson according to chapter 13;</p> <p>(5) examine the records and documents of an agency;</p> <p>(6) enter and inspect, during normal business hours, premises within the control of an agency; and</p> <p>(7) subpoena any agency personnel to appear, testify, or produce documentary or other evidence which the ombudsperson deems relevant to a matter under inquiry, and may petition the appropriate state court to seek enforcement with the subpoena; provided, however, that any witness at a hearing or before an investigation as herein provided, shall possess the same privileges reserved to such a witness in the courts or under the laws of this state. The ombudsperson may compel nonagency individuals to testify or produce evidence according to procedures developed by the advisory board.</p>
Mississippi	<p>Miss. Code Ann. § 43-1-2</p> <p>(3) There shall be a Joint Oversight Committee of the Department of Human Services composed of the respective Chairmen of the Senate Public Health and Welfare Committee, the Senate Appropriations Committee, the House Public Health and Human Services Committee and the House Appropriations Committee, three (3) members of the Senate appointed by the Lieutenant Governor to serve at the will and pleasure of the Lieutenant Governor, and three (3) members of the House of Representatives appointed by the Speaker of the House to serve at the will and pleasure of the Speaker. The chairmanship of the committee shall alternate for twelve-month periods between the Senate members and the House members, on May 1 of each year, with the Chairman of the Senate Public Health and Welfare Committee serving as chairman beginning in even-numbered years, and the Chairman of the House Public Health and Human Services Committee serving as chairman beginning in odd-numbered years. The committee shall meet once each quarter, or upon the call of the chairman at such times as he deems necessary or advisable, and may make recommendations to the Legislature pertaining to any matter within the jurisdiction of the Mississippi Department of Human Services. The appointing authorities may designate an alternate member from their respective houses to serve when the regular designee is unable to attend such meetings of the oversight committee. For attending meetings of the oversight committee, such legislators shall receive per diem and expenses which shall be paid from the contingent expense funds of their respective houses in the same amounts as provided for committee meetings when the Legislature is not in session; however, no per diem and expenses for attending meetings of the committee will be paid while the Legislature is in session. No per diem and expenses will be paid except for attending meetings of the oversight committee without prior approval of the proper committee in their respective houses.</p>
Missouri	<p>§ 37.705 R.S.Mo.</p> <p>1. There is hereby established within the office of administration the “Office of Child Advocate for Children’s Protection and Services”, for the purpose of assuring that children receive adequate protection and care from services, programs offered by the department of social services, or the department of mental health, or the juvenile court. The child advocate shall report directly to the commissioner of the office of administration.</p> <p>2. The office shall be administered by the child advocate, who shall be appointed jointly by the governor and the chief justice of the Missouri supreme court with the advice and consent of the senate. The child advocate shall hold office for a term of six years and shall continue to hold office until a successor has been duly appointed. The advocate shall act independently of the department of social</p>

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	<p>services, the department of mental health, and the juvenile court in the performance of his or her duties. The office of administration shall provide administrative support and staff as deemed necessary.</p>
Montana	<p>41-3-1209, MCA The legislature finds that an independent, impartial, and confidential ombudsman serves: (1) to protect the interests and rights of Montana’s children and families; and (2) to strengthen child and family services by working in consultation with the department and with appropriate county attorneys in cases under review.</p> <p>41-3-1211, MCA The powers and duties of the ombudsman are: (1) to respond to requests for assistance regarding administrative acts and to investigate administrative acts; (2) to investigate circumstances surrounding reports that are provided to the ombudsman pursuant to 41-3-209; (3) to inspect, copy, or subpoena records as needed to perform the ombudsman’s duties under this part; (4) to take appropriate steps to ensure that persons are made aware of the purpose, services, and procedures of the ombudsman and how to contact the ombudsman; (5) to share relevant findings related to an investigation, subject to disclosure restrictions and confidentiality requirements, with individuals or entities legally authorized to receive, inspect, or investigate reports of child abuse or neglect; (6) based on the investigations conducted, to provide oversight of the department’s systems and policies for handling abuse and neglect cases; (7) to periodically review department procedures and promote best practices and effective programs by working in consultation with the department to improve procedures, practices, and programs; (8) to undertake, participate in, and consult with persons and the department in activities, including but not limited to conferences, inquiries, panels, meetings, or studies, that serve to improve the manner in which the department functions; (9) to provide education on the legal rights of children; (10) to apply for and accept grants, gifts, contributions, and bequests of funds for the purpose of carrying out the ombudsman’s responsibilities; and (11) to report annually to the attorney general and the children, families, health, and human services interim committee in accordance with 5-11-210. The report must be public and may contain recommendations from the ombudsman regarding systemic improvements for the department.</p>
Nebraska	<p>R.R.S. Neb. § 81-8,241 The office of Public Counsel is hereby established to exercise the authority and perform the duties provided by sections 81-8,240 to 81-8,254, the Office of Inspector General of Nebraska Child Welfare Act, and the Office of Inspector General of the Nebraska Correctional System Act. The Public Counsel shall be appointed by the Legislature, with the vote of two-thirds of the members required for approval of such appointment from nominations submitted by the Executive Board of the Legislative Council.</p>
New Hampshire	<p>RSA 170-G:3 II. There shall be an administrator for each of the bureaus of the department established by RSA 170-G:2 to administer the laws and rules relative to his respective bureau, subject to the supervision of the</p>

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	<p>commissioner. The administrator of each bureau within the department shall be a full-time classified employee and shall be appointed in accordance with the rules adopted by the director of personnel.</p>
New York	<p>McKinney's Executive Law § 523-c The office of the ombudsman shall:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. visit facilities and programs in accordance with priorities established by the director, hear grievances and complaints, investigate alleged violations of the legal rights of youth residing in facilities operated by the office, and monitor and participate in grievance procedures concerning residents in secure facilities, pursuant to section five hundred four-a of this article; 2. monitor the implementation of the policies and regulations of the office and of the rules and regulations of other state agencies, as such may be applicable to the legal rights of youth residing in facilities operated by the office, and monitor the implementation of statutes, court orders, court decisions and court stipulations which affect youth residing in facilities operated by the office; 3. advise and assist youth residing in facilities operated by the office to obtain legal counsel; 4. recommend policies, regulations, and legislation designed to protect youth residing in facilities operated by the office; 5. serve as a resource to youth residing in facilities operated by the office by informing them of pertinent laws, regulations and policies, and their rights thereunder; 6. present significant complaints and concerns of youth residing in facilities operated by the office to the commissioner, appropriate office staff, and the independent review board; and 7. periodically review procedures established by the office to carry out the provisions of this article, with a view toward the rights, safety and development of youth residing in facilities operated by the office.
Ohio	<p>R.C. § 121.42 The inspector general shall do all of the following:</p> <p>(A) Investigate the management and operation of state agencies on his own initiative in order to determine whether wrongful acts and omissions have been committed or are being committed by state officers or state employees;</p> <p>(B) Receive complaints under section 121.46 of the Revised Code alleging wrongful acts and omissions, determine whether the information contained in those complaints allege facts that give reasonable cause to investigate, and, if so, investigate to determine if there is reasonable cause to believe that the alleged wrongful act or omission has been committed or is being committed by a state officer or state employee;</p> <p>(C) Except as otherwise provided in this division, contemporaneously report suspected crimes and wrongful acts or omissions that were or are being committed by state officers or state employees to the governor and to the appropriate state or federal prosecuting authority with jurisdiction over the matter if there is reasonable cause to believe that a crime has occurred or is occurring. In addition, the inspector general shall report the wrongful acts or omissions, as appropriate under the circumstances, to the appropriate ethics commission in accordance with section 102.06 of the Revised Code, the appropriate licensing agency for possible disciplinary action, or the state officer's or state employee's appointing authority for possible disciplinary action. The inspector general shall not report a wrongful act or omission to a person as required by this division if that person allegedly committed or is committing the wrongful act or omission.</p> <p>(D) Except as otherwise provided in this division, contemporaneously report suspected crimes and wrongful acts or omissions that the inspector general becomes aware of in connection with an investigation of a state agency, state officer, or state employee, and that were or are being committed</p>

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	<p>by persons who are not state officers or state employees to the governor and to the appropriate state or federal prosecuting authority with jurisdiction over the matter if there is reasonable cause to believe that a crime has occurred or is occurring. In addition, the inspector general shall report the wrongful acts or omissions, as appropriate under the circumstances, to the appropriate ethics commission in accordance with section 102.06 of the Revised Code, the appropriate licensing agency for possible disciplinary action, or the person's public or private employer for possible disciplinary action. The inspector general shall not report a wrongful act or omission to a person as required by this division if that person allegedly committed or is committing the wrongful act or omission.</p> <p>(E) Prepare a detailed report of each investigation that states the basis for the investigation, the action taken in furtherance of the investigation, and whether the investigation revealed that there was reasonable cause to believe that a wrongful act or omission had occurred. If a wrongful act or omission was identified during the investigation, the report shall identify the person who committed the wrongful act or omission, describe the wrongful act or omission, explain how it was detected, indicate to whom it was reported, and describe what the state agency in which the wrongful act or omission was being committed is doing to change its policies or procedures to prevent recurrences of similar wrongful acts or omissions.</p> <p>(F) Identify other state agencies that also are responsible for investigating, auditing, reviewing, or evaluating the management and operation of state agencies, and negotiate and enter into agreements with these agencies to share information and avoid duplication of effort;</p> <p>(G) For his own guidance and the guidance of deputy inspectors general, develop and update in the light of experience, both of the following:</p> <p>(1) Within the scope of the definition in division (G) of section 121.41 of the Revised Code, a working definition of “wrongful act or omission”;</p> <p>(2) A manual of investigative techniques.</p> <p>(H) Conduct studies of techniques of investigating and detecting, and of preventing or reducing the risk of, wrongful acts and omissions by state officers and state employees;</p> <p>(I) Consult with state agencies and advise them in developing, implementing, and enforcing policies and procedures that will prevent or reduce the risk of wrongful acts and omissions by their state officers or state employees;</p> <p>(J) After detecting a wrongful act or omission, review and evaluate the relevant policies and procedures of the state agency in which the wrongful act or omission occurred, and advise the state agency as to any changes that should be made in its policies and procedures so as to prevent recurrences of similar wrongful acts or omissions.</p>
Oregon	<p>O.R.S. § 409.161</p> <p>(1) The Department of Human Services shall report to all relevant committees of the Legislative Assembly at each odd-numbered year regular session with respect to department employees in the classified service who directly provide:</p> <p>(a) Child welfare services under ORS 418.005;</p> <p>(b) Temporary assistance for needy families under ORS 412.006;</p> <p>(c) Nutritional assistance under ORS 411.816;</p> <p>(d) Medical assistance eligibility determinations under ORS 411.404;</p> <p>(e) Services to elderly persons and to persons with disabilities under ORS 410.070 and 412.014; and</p> <p>(f) Vocational rehabilitation services under ORS 344.530.</p> <p>(2) The report of the department under this section shall address each of the following:</p> <p>(a) Workload increases or decreases over the current biennium.</p>



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	<p>(b) Workload efficiencies achieved during the current biennium.</p> <p>(c) Additional staffing needs or decreases in staffing needs that exist for the current biennium or that are projected for the next biennium, including a statement of the number of full-time equivalent positions that are vacant on the date the report is prepared or that can be double filled in order to meet any needs for additional staffing.</p> <p>(3) As used in this section, “double filled” means that the department is using one budgeted full-time equivalent position to employ more than one employee.</p>
Pennsylvania	<p>71 P.S. § 213</p> <p>(a) Powers.--The State Inspector General shall have the power to:</p> <p>(1) Make an investigation and report relating to the administration of a program and operation of an executive agency that the State Inspector General determines is necessary. If the State Inspector General determines that a report should be issued, the State Inspector General may consult with the Office of General Counsel or the Attorney General before issuing the report to insure against an adverse impact on a grand jury proceeding or prosecution being conducted by a law enforcement agency.</p> <p>(2) Request information or assistance necessary for carrying out the duties and responsibilities under this article from the Federal Government, an executive agency or a local government agency or a unit of a Federal, State or local government agency.</p> <p>(3) Require and obtain, by written notice from an officer and employee of an executive agency, information, documents, reports, answers, records, accounts, papers and other necessary data and documentary evidence.</p> <p>(4) Have direct and prompt access to the heads of executive agencies if necessary for a purpose pertaining to the performance of functions and responsibilities under this article.</p> <p>(5) Select, appoint and employ individuals necessary for carrying out the functions, powers and duties of the office. The employees shall be employed in accordance with current procedures of the Office of Administration and may be assigned by the State Inspector General to a designated executive agency.</p> <p>(b) Purpose.--The purpose of the Office of State Inspector General is as follows:</p> <p>(1) To deter, detect, prevent and eradicate fraud, waste, misconduct and abuse in a program, operation and contracting of an executive agency.</p> <p>(2) To keep the head of an executive agency and the Governor fully informed about a problem and deficiency relating to the operation or administration of a program or contracts entered into by an executive agency.</p> <p>(3) To provide leadership, coordination and control over satellite Inspector General Offices in a designated executive agency to ensure a coordinated and efficient administration of duties and use of staff.</p> <p>The existing Office of Inspector General in the Department of Transportation shall continue as a satellite Inspector General Office. Each satellite Inspector General Office in an executive agency shall report to and follow the direction of the State Inspector General.</p>
Rhode Island	<p>Gen.Laws 1956, § 42-7.2-5</p> <p>The secretary shall be subject to the direction and supervision of the governor for the oversight, coordination, and cohesive direction of state-administered health and human services and in ensuring the laws are faithfully executed, notwithstanding any law to the contrary. In this capacity, the secretary of the executive office of health and human services (EOHHS) shall be authorized to:</p> <p>...</p> <p>(6) Ensure continued progress toward improving the quality, the economy, the accountability and the</p>

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	<p>efficiency of state-administered health and human services. In this capacity, the secretary shall:</p> <p>(i) Direct implementation of reforms in the human resources practices of the executive office and the departments that streamline and upgrade services, achieve greater economies of scale and establish the coordinated system of the staff education, cross-training, and career development services necessary to recruit and retain a highly-skilled, responsive, and engaged health and human services workforce;</p> <p>(ii) Encourage EOHHS-wide consumer-centered approaches to service design and delivery that expand their capacity to respond efficiently and responsibly to the diverse and changing needs of the people and communities they serve;</p> <p>(iii) Develop all opportunities to maximize resources by leveraging the state's purchasing power, centralizing fiscal service functions related to budget, finance, and procurement, centralizing communication, policy analysis and planning, and information systems and data management, pursuing alternative funding sources through grants, awards and partnerships and securing all available federal financial participation for programs and services provided EOHHS-wide;</p> <p>(iv) Improve the coordination and efficiency of health and human services legal functions by centralizing adjudicative and legal services and overseeing their timely and judicious administration;</p> <p>(v) Facilitate the rebalancing of the long term system by creating an assessment and coordination organization or unit for the expressed purpose of developing and implementing procedures EOHHS-wide that ensure that the appropriate publicly funded health services are provided at the right time and in the most appropriate and least restrictive setting;</p> <p>(vi) Strengthen health and human services program integrity, quality control and collections, and recovery activities by consolidating functions within the office in a single unit that ensures all affected parties pay their fair share of the cost of services and are aware of alternative financing;</p> <p>(vii) Assure protective services are available to vulnerable elders and adults with developmental and other disabilities by reorganizing existing services, establishing new services where gaps exist and centralizing administrative responsibility for oversight of all related initiatives and programs.</p>
<p>South Carolina</p>	<p>Code 1976 § 1-6-20</p> <p>(A) There is hereby established the Office of the State Inspector General that consists of the State Inspector General, who is the director of the office, and a staff of deputy inspectors general, investigators, auditors, and clerical employees employed by the State Inspector General as necessary to carry out the duties of the State Inspector General and as are authorized by law. The State Inspector General shall fix the salaries of all staff subject to the funds authorized in the annual general appropriation act.</p> <p>(B) The State Inspector General is responsible for investigating and addressing allegations of fraud, waste, abuse, mismanagement, misconduct, violations of state or federal law, and wrongdoing in agencies.</p>
<p>Tennessee</p>	<p>T. C. A. § 37-3-102</p> <p>(a) There is created a permanent commission to be known as the commission on children and youth. The commission shall serve as an informational resource and advocacy agency for the efficient and effective planning, enhancement and coordination of state, regional and local policies, programs and services to promote and protect the health, well-being and development of all children and youth in Tennessee.</p> <p>T. C. A. § 37-3-103</p> <p>a)(1) The commission shall perform each of the following duties:</p>

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	<p>(A) Make recommendations concerning establishment of priorities and needed improvements with respect to programs and services for children and youth;</p> <p>(B) On or before September 1 of each year, make recommendations for the state budget for the following fiscal year regarding services for children and youth and submit the recommendations to the governor, the finance, ways and means committee of the senate, the finance, ways and means committee of the house of representatives, the legislative office of budget analysis, and the affected state departments;</p> <p>(C) Implement the provisions of the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act of 1974, compiled in 42 U.S.C. § 5601 et seq., and distribute, consistent with the purpose of the commission as set forth by § 37-3-102(a), such funds as the general assembly shall direct;</p> <p>(D) Advocate and coordinate the efficient and effective development and enhancement of state, local and regional programs and services for children and youth;</p> <p>(E) Publish annually, on or before December 31, a comprehensive report on the status of children and youth in Tennessee; and distribute the report to the governor, to each member of the general assembly and to each of the state's depository libraries; and</p> <p>(F) Promulgate, in accordance with the Uniform Administrative Procedures Act, compiled in title 4, chapter 5, such rules as may be necessary to perform the duties prescribed by this part.</p> <p>(2) If a new, separate or reorganized department, office or agency is established to administer the duties of youth services in the department of correction, the duties in this subsection (a) and the duties and authority provided by §§ 37-1-161 and 37-1-162, and any funds allocated to the commission on children and youth for distribution, may be transferred by executive order of the governor to such new, separate or reorganized entity.</p> <p>(b) To the extent that adequate resources are available, the commission is authorized to perform any one (1) or more of the following activities:</p> <p>(1) Identify and analyze specific problems concerning programs and services for children and youth;</p> <p>(2) Deleted by 2015 Pub.Acts, c. 259, § 3, eff. April 24, 2015.</p> <p>(3) Review licensing or certification standards and program policies, promulgated by entities of state government, that affect children and youth; and make recommendations concerning such standards and policies to the governor, to the entity promulgating any such standard or policy and to each member of the general assembly; and</p> <p>(4) Monitor foster care review boards; report on the impact of foster care review on children and youth in foster care; and make recommendations for improvement of the state's foster care system to the governor and each member of the general assembly.</p>
Texas	<p>V.T.C.A., Human Resources Code § 40.045</p> <p>(a) For purposes of this section, “efficiency audit” means an investigation of the operations of the department to examine fiscal management, efficiency, outcomes for children and families served by the department, and utilization of resources.</p> <p>(b) During the state fiscal year ending August 31, 2022, and every fourth year after that date, the department shall conduct an efficiency audit.</p> <p>(c) In a year in which an efficiency audit is completed as required by this section, the efficiency audit shall satisfy the department's annual internal audit requirements under Chapter 2102, Government Code.</p> <p>(d) The department shall pay the costs associated with an efficiency audit required under this section using money appropriated for administrative and internal audit operations in the state fiscal year the</p>



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	<p>audit is conducted.</p> <p>(e) Not later than March 1 of the state fiscal year in which an efficiency audit is required under this section, the commissioner, in collaboration with the council, the department's chief financial officer, and the department's internal audit director, shall select an external auditor to conduct the efficiency audit.</p> <p>(f) The external auditor shall be independent of the department's direction.</p> <p>(g) The external auditor shall complete the audit not later than the 90th day after the date the auditor is selected.</p> <p>(h) The Legislative Budget Board shall establish the scope of the efficiency audit and determine the areas of investigation for the audit, including:</p> <p>(1) reviewing the department's resources to determine whether they are being used effectively and efficiently to achieve desired outcomes for children and families served by the department, including the following outcomes:</p> <p>(A) ensuring the safety of children in placements;</p> <p>(B) preventing entry into foster care through the use of family preservation services;</p> <p>(C) reducing the amount of time that a child is placed in substitute care and is in the conservatorship of the department;</p> <p>(D) increasing the placement of children with relative or kinship caregivers when possible;</p> <p>(E) ensuring sufficient state capacity for foster care and kinship placements;</p> <p>(F) reducing the number of children who age out of care and enhancing supports for youth at risk of aging out of care; and</p> <p>(G) increasing the reunification of children with the biological parents of the children when possible;</p> <p>(2) identifying cost savings or reallocations of resources; and</p> <p>(3) identifying opportunities for the department to partner with other state agencies and community organizations to improve services through consolidation of essential functions, outsourcing, and elimination of duplicative efforts.</p> <p>(i) Not later than November 1 of the calendar year an efficiency audit is conducted, the auditor shall prepare and submit a report of the audit and recommendations for efficiency improvements to the governor, the Legislative Budget Board, the state auditor, the commissioner, the council, and the chairs of the House Human Services Committee and the Senate Health and Human Services Committee.</p>
Utah	<p>U.C.A. 1953 § 62A-4a-207</p> <p>(1)(a) There is created the Child Welfare Legislative Oversight Panel composed of the following members:</p> <p>(i) two members of the Senate, one from the majority party and one from the minority party, appointed by the president of the Senate; and</p> <p>(ii) three members of the House of Representatives, two from the majority party and one from the minority party, appointed by the speaker of the House of Representatives.</p> <p>(b) Members of the panel shall serve for two-year terms, or until their successors are appointed.</p> <p>(c) A vacancy exists whenever a member ceases to be a member of the Legislature, or when a member resigns from the panel. Vacancies shall be filled by the appointing authority, and the replacement shall fill the unexpired term.</p> <p>...</p> <p>(4) The panel shall:</p>



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	<p>(a) examine and observe the process and execution of laws governing the child welfare system by the executive branch and the judicial branch;</p> <p>(b) upon request, receive testimony from the public, the juvenile court, and from all state agencies involved with the child welfare system, including the division, other offices and agencies within the department, the attorney general's office, the Office of Guardian Ad Litem, and school districts;</p> <p>(c) before October 1 of each year, receive a report from the judicial branch identifying the cases not in compliance with the time limits established in the following sections, and the reasons for noncompliance:</p> <p>(i) Subsection 80-3-301(1), regarding shelter hearings;</p> <p>(ii) Section 80-3-401, regarding pretrial and adjudication hearings;</p> <p>(iii) Section 80-3-406, regarding dispositional hearings and reunification services; and</p> <p>(iv) Section 80-3-409, regarding permanency hearings and petitions for termination;</p> <p>(d) receive recommendations from, and make recommendations to the governor, the Legislature, the attorney general, the division, the Office of Guardian Ad Litem, the juvenile court, and the public;</p> <p>(e)(i) receive reports from the executive branch and the judicial branch on budgetary issues impacting the child welfare system; and</p> <p>(ii) recommend, as the panel considers advisable, budgetary proposals to the Social Services Appropriations Subcommittee and the Executive Offices and Criminal Justice Appropriations Subcommittee, which recommendation should be made before December 1 of each year;</p> <p>(f) study and recommend proposed changes to laws governing the child welfare system;</p> <p>(g) study actions the state can take to preserve, unify, and strengthen the child's family ties whenever possible in the child's best interest, including recognizing the constitutional rights and claims of parents whenever those family ties are severed or infringed;</p> <p>(h) perform such other duties related to the oversight of the child welfare system as the panel considers appropriate; and</p> <p>(i) annually report the panel's findings and recommendations to the president of the Senate, the speaker of the House of Representatives, the Health and Human Services Interim Committee, and the Judiciary Interim Committee.</p>
Vermont	<p>§ 3052. Mandatory duties</p> <p>(a) The commissioner shall determine the policies of the department, and may exercise the powers and shall perform the duties required for its effective administration.</p> <p>(b) In addition to other duties imposed by law, the commissioner shall:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) administer the laws assigned to the department; (2) coordinate and integrate the work of the divisions; (3) supervise and control all staff functions.
Virginia	<p>VA Code Ann. § 37.2-200</p> <p>A. The State Board of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services is established as a policy board, within the meaning of § 2.2-2100, in the executive branch of government. The Board shall consist of nine nonlegislative citizen members to be appointed by the Governor, subject to confirmation by the General Assembly. The nine members shall consist of one individual who is receiving or who has received services, one family member of an individual who is receiving or who has received services, one individual who is receiving or who has received services or family member of such individual, one elected local government official, one psychiatrist licensed to practice in Virginia, and four citizens of the Commonwealth at large. The Governor, in appointing the psychiatrist member, may make his selection from nominations submitted by the Medical Society of Virginia in collaboration with the</p>

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	<p>Psychiatric Society of Virginia and the Northern Virginia Chapter of the Washington Psychiatric Society.</p> <p>VA Code Ann. § 37.2-203</p> <p>The Board shall have the following powers and duties:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To develop and establish programmatic and fiscal policies governing the operation of state hospitals, training centers, community services boards, and behavioral health authorities; 2. To ensure the development of long-range programs and plans for mental health, developmental, and substance abuse services provided by the Department, community services boards, and behavioral health authorities; 3. To review and comment on all budgets and requests for appropriations for the Department prior to their submission to the Governor and on all applications for federal funds; 4. To monitor the activities of the Department and its effectiveness in implementing the policies of the Board; 5. To advise the Governor, Commissioner, and General Assembly on matters relating to mental health, developmental, and substance abuse services; 6. To adopt regulations that may be necessary to carry out the provisions of this title and other laws of the Commonwealth administered by the Commissioner or the Department; 7. To ensure the development of programs to educate citizens about and elicit public support for the activities of the Department, community services boards, and behavioral health authorities; 8. To ensure that the Department assumes the responsibility for providing for education and training of school-age individuals receiving services in state facilities, pursuant to § 37.2-312; 9. To change the names of state facilities; and 10. To adopt regulations that establish the qualifications, education, and experience for registration of peer recovery specialists by the Board of Counseling. <p>Prior to the adoption, amendment, or repeal of any regulation regarding substance abuse services, the Board shall, in addition to the procedures set forth in the Administrative Process Act (§ 2.2-4000 et seq.), present the proposed regulation to the Substance Abuse Services Council, established pursuant to § 2.2-2696, at least 30 days prior to the Board's action for the Council's review and comment.</p>
Washington	<p>West's RCWA 43.216.015</p> <p>(b) The office of the family and children's ombuds shall establish the board. The board is authorized for the purpose of monitoring and ensuring that the department achieves the stated outcomes of chapter 6, Laws of 2017 3rd sp. sess., and complies with administrative acts, relevant statutes, rules, and policies pertaining to early learning, juvenile rehabilitation, juvenile justice, and children and family services.</p> <p>...</p> <p>(11) The board has general oversight over the performance and policies of the department and shall provide advice and input to the department and the governor.</p> <p>(12) The board must no less than twice per year convene stakeholder meetings to allow feedback to the board regarding contracting with the department, departmental use of local, state, private, and federal funds, and other matters as relating to carrying out the duties of the department.</p> <p>(13) The board shall review existing surveys of providers, customers, parent groups, and external services to assess whether the department is effectively delivering services, and shall conduct additional surveys as needed to assess whether the department is effectively delivering services.</p> <p>(14) The board is subject to the open public meetings act, chapter 42.30 RCW, except to the extent disclosure of records or information is otherwise confidential under state or federal law.</p>

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	<p>(15) Records or information received by the board is confidential to the extent permitted by state or federal law. This subsection does not create an exception for records covered by RCW 13.50.100.</p> <p>(16) The board members shall receive no compensation for their service on the board, but shall be reimbursed for travel expenses incurred while conducting business of the board when authorized by the board and within resources allocated for this purpose, except appointed legislators who shall be reimbursed for travel expenses in accordance with RCW 43.03.050 and 43.03.060.</p> <p>(17) The board shall select, by majority vote, an executive director who shall be the chief administrative officer of the board and shall be responsible for carrying out the policies adopted by the board. The executive director is exempt from the provisions of the state civil service law, chapter 41.06 RCW, and shall serve at the pleasure of the board established in this section.</p> <p>(18) The board shall maintain a staff not to exceed one full-time equivalent employee. The board-selected executive director of the board is responsible for coordinating staff appointments.</p> <p>(19) The board shall issue an annual report to the governor and legislature by December 1st of each year with an initial report delivered by December 1, 2019. The report must review the department's progress towards meeting stated performance measures and desired performance outcomes, and must also include a review of the department's strategic plan, policies, and rules.</p> <p>(20) The definitions in this subsection apply throughout this section unless the context clearly requires otherwise.</p> <p>(a) "Board" means the oversight board for children, youth, and families established in subsection (8) of this section.</p>
West Virginia	<p>W. Va. Code, § 9-2-6</p> <p>Within limits of state appropriations and federal grants and subject to provisions of state and federal laws and regulations, the secretary, in addition to all other powers, duties, and responsibilities granted and assigned to that office in this chapter and elsewhere by law, is authorized to:</p> <p>...</p> <p>(7) Establish within the department an Office of Inspector General for the purpose of conducting and supervising investigations, performing inspections, evaluations, and review, and providing quality control for the programs of the department.</p> <p>The Office of Inspector General shall be headed by the Inspector General who shall report directly to the secretary. Neither the secretary nor any employee of the department may prevent, inhibit, or prohibit the Inspector General or his or her employees from initiating, carrying out, or completing any investigation, inspection, evaluation, review or other activity oversight of public integrity by the Office of the Inspector General. The secretary shall place within the Office of Inspector General any function he or she deems necessary. Qualification, compensation, and personnel practice relating to the employees of the Office of the Inspector General, including that of the position of Inspector General, shall be governed by the classified service provisions of § 29-6-1 <i>et seq.</i> of this code and rules promulgated thereunder. The Inspector General shall supervise all personnel of the Office of Inspector General.</p>
Wisconsin	<p>W.S.A. 15.204</p> <p>(1) Office of the inspector general. There is created an office of the inspector general in the department of children and families. The inspector general shall be appointed by, and report directly to, the secretary of children and families.</p>
Wyoming	<p>W.S.1977 § 9-2-3201</p> <p>The department of administration and information is created.</p>

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W.S.1977 § 9-2-3202

(b) The department may assist the governor in discharging his duties as chief executive and administrative officer of the executive branch of government of the state of Wyoming. The governor through the department shall:

- (i) Improve techniques used for management of state government;
- (ii) Coordinate, consolidate and provide services which are used by more than one (1) agency;
- (iii) Review agency programs, expenditures and management to identify problems and suggest improvements;
- (iv) Promote economy and efficiency in government; and
- (v) Establish uniform standards of administration.