

## Department of Children and Youth Memo 25-020

**TO:** Public Children Services Agency Administrators

**FROM:** Laura Graf, Policy Division Deputy Director

**DATE:** March 18, 2025

**SUBJECT:** Changes to Caseworker Educational Requirements

### **Background**

House Bill 497 of the 135<sup>th</sup> General Assembly was signed by Governor DeWine on January 8, 2025. It includes provisions granting flexibility in caseworker educational requirements, which were supported by the Public Children Services Association of Ohio (PCSAO). This law will become effective on April 9, 2025.

### **Summary of Changes**

Provisions in HB 497 include the following:

- **Public Children Services Agency (PCSA) Hiring Flexibility:** Allows a PCSA to hire a caseworker who has completed at least 60 semester credit hours, or the equivalent, towards a degree in human services-related studies from an accredited institution of higher education.
- **Executive Director's Discretion on Educational Requirements:** At the discretion of a PCSA Executive Director, the requirement for certain caseworkers in good standing to obtain a job-related bachelor's degree within five years of employment may be waived if the caseworker demonstrates an inability to meet this requirement due to hardship. An employee in good standing must:
  - Be in compliance with training requirements,
  - Not have received any formal discipline during the twelve months preceding their five-year anniversary date, and
  - Not be the subject of any investigation into allegations of professional misconduct.

These provisions allow, but do not require, an update to PCSA hiring and retention practices. Refer to Section 5153.112 of [HB 497](#) (pages 82 and 83).

### **Contact**

If you have any questions or concerns, contact [Tina.Krueger@childrenandyouth.ohio.gov](mailto:Tina.Krueger@childrenandyouth.ohio.gov).