

HOUSE RESEARCH

Bill Summary

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Overview

This bill imposes certain duties on the Department of Human Services related to foster care and creates certain rights for foster care providers and prospective adoptive parents.

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1 Department's duties to foster care providers and prospective adoptive parents. Adds § 260C.216.

Subd. 1. Scope; purpose. Imposes certain duties on the Department of Human Services and provides certain rights to foster care providers and prospective adoptive parents to improve the care provided to foster children.

Subd. 2. Health or safety concerns. Requires the department to inform foster parents or prospective adoptive parents within 30 days of a child's placement of issues regarding the child that may jeopardize the health and safety of the caregiver's family or alter the way the child is parented.

Subd. 3. Review of information. Requires the department to allow foster parents or prospective adoptive parents to review written information regarding the child before placement.

Subd. 4. Clear, written case plan. Requires the department to provide a clear, written

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case plan concerning a child's placement in a foster home.

Subd. 5. Ongoing plan development. Requires the department to solicit input from a foster parent on the child's ongoing plan of services.

Subd. 6. Timely information. Requires the department to provide foster parents with all background information regarding the child and the child's family background and health history in a timely manner and on an ongoing basis. Also requires the foster parents to keep the information confidential, except if necessary to promote or protect the child's health and welfare.

Subd. 7. Changes in case plan; termination of placement. Requires the department to give foster parents timely written notice of changes in the case plan or termination of the placement.

Subd. 8. Scheduled meetings. Requires the department to inform foster parents of meetings and staffing concerning the foster child. Also requires that foster parents be permitted to actively participate in meetings.

Subd. 9. Court orders and proceedings. Requires the department to inform foster parents of decisions made by the courts or the child welfare agency and notify foster parents of all court hearings. Requires that foster parents be permitted to attend hearings at the discretion of the court.

Subd. 10. Communication with professionals. Requires the department to provide written consent so that foster parents can communicate with professionals who work with the foster child.

Subd. 11. Foster home record. Requires the department, upon request, to provide copies of all information related to the foster family and services contained in the family's foster home record.

Subd. 12. Mediation efforts. Requires the department to advise foster parents of mediation efforts.

Subd. 13. Departmental attitude. Requires the department to treat foster parents with dignity, respect, trust, and consideration.

Subd. 14. Explanation of roles of parties. Requires the department to provide foster parents with a clear, written explanation and understanding of the department's and birth family's role in a child's foster care.

Subd. 15. Continuous departmental availability. Requires the department to provide a means by which foster parents can contact the department for assistance 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

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Subd. 16. Timely financial assistance. Requires the department to provide foster parents timely and adequate financial reimbursement for services and advise foster parents of the availability of other financial assistance and services.

Subd. 17. Training. Requires the department to provide training and support to foster parents and adoptive parents.

Subd. 18. Continuity. Requires the department to consider foster parents as a possible first choice for a permanent placement option if the child has been in a specific foster home for a significant period of time and if it is in the child's best interests.