

FINAL BILL REPORT

ESHB 1287

C 136 L 91
Synopsis As Enacted

Brief Description: Revising provisions for adoption.

By House Committee on Human Services (originally sponsored by Representatives Heavey, Moyer, Franklin, Rayburn, Jones, May, Leonard, Tate, Hine, Ballard, Broback, Winsley, Wineberry, Anderson, Brekke, Miller, Riley, Kremen, Forner and Paris).

House Committee on Human Services
Senate Committee on Children & Family Services

Background: In 1990, the Legislature adopted Engrossed Substitute Senate Concurrent Resolution 8429. The resolution created the Washington State Adoption Commission and charged it to recommend minimum standards of practice for adoptions in Washington. The commission reviewed 11 issues relating to adoptions including: training for adoptive parents and training on cultural relevancy, the education and qualifications of adoption workers, verification of pre-birth consents, independent counsel for relinquishing parents and adopted children, forms used for mandated health information, disclosure statements regarding fees and services, standardized court rules for adoptions, state implementation of the Indian Child Welfare Act, birth father registries, medical insurance for adoptions, family leave as it relates to adoption, and advertising for adoptions.

Summary: Consent forms will contain a statement stating whether the child to be adopted is Native American or an Alaska native. Adoption facilitators will submit sworn statements documenting how they determined whether the federal Indian Child Welfare applies in each adoption. The signing of consent to adoption forms by birth parents and alleged fathers must be witnessed by a person who is at least 18 years of age and selected by the parent or alleged father. Persons preparing adoption preplacement reports must include a statement of the training or experience they have which enables them to discuss relevant adoption issues. The preplacement report must verify that adoptive parents were told of: the lifelong commitment of adoption; the adopted child's potential feelings of identity confusion and loss; ways to disclose the fact of adoption to children; possible questions from the child about birth parents and

relatives; and the relevance of the child's racial, ethnic, and cultural heritage. After July 1, 1992, the adopted child's medical history will be provided to adoptive parents on a standardized form developed by the Department of Social and Health Services. Adoptive parents will receive information from adoption facilitators on finding and evaluating adoption therapists. If requested, adoption facilitators must provide written information on adoption procedures, practices, policies, fees, and services.

Illegally advertising children for adoption is changed from a misdemeanor to a violation of the Consumer Protection Act.

Votes on Final Passage:

House	90	1	
Senate	45	1	(Senate amended)
House	93	1	(House concurred)

Effective: July 28, 1991