
HOUSE BILL 2085

State of Washington

61st Legislature

2009 Regular Session

By Representatives Walsh, Kagi, and Kenney

Read first time 02/10/09. Referred to Committee on Early Learning & Children's Services.

1 AN ACT Relating to promoting more efficient and prompt relative
2 searches for children requiring out-of-home placement in dependency
3 proceedings; adding a new section to chapter 74.13 RCW; and creating a
4 new section.

5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

6 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that children needing
7 out-of-home placement in dependency and termination proceedings are
8 often best served when they are placed with relatives or other suitable
9 persons with whom they have a positive relationship. The legislature
10 further finds that state and federal law recognizes the potential
11 benefit to children of being placed with appropriate relatives and
12 other suitable persons. The legislature also finds that in order to
13 best support the child and reduce the likelihood of multiple
14 placements, the search for potential placements for a child should be
15 prompt, efficient, comprehensive, and conducted at the earliest
16 indication the child has been, or is likely to be, removed from home by
17 court order. The legislature intends to increase the efficiency and
18 expedite the search process for relatives and other suitable persons

1 who may be placement options for a child by directing the department of
2 social and health services to contract with a statewide service
3 provider.

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 74.13 RCW
5 to read as follows:

6 The department shall contract for a statewide relative search
7 service provider, with the goal of earlier identification of more
8 persons who can be appropriate and stable placement options for
9 children in dependency or termination proceedings. The terms of the
10 contract shall:

11 (1) Specify that the search process shall seek to identify
12 relatives, as described in RCW 74.15.020(2)(a) and other suitable
13 persons as described in RCW 13.34.130(1)(b);

14 (2) Briefly describe the methods to be used for gathering
15 preliminary information about the child, the family, and significant
16 relationships, including a process for gathering and documenting
17 preliminary information from the parents and the child, unless by
18 virtue of age or disability, the child is unable to communicate such
19 information;

20 (3) Include a process and timeline for the contractor to provide
21 the names of all persons identified, whether successfully contacted or
22 not, as possible placement options for a child;

23 (4) Describe how the contractor shall make the initial contact with
24 a potential placement resource, as well as how the information from the
25 initial contact will be transmitted to the department for further
26 review and a final determination of whether the potential placement
27 resource meets minimum criteria for a child's out-of-home placement
28 under chapter 13.34 RCW, and whether the department will seek court
29 approval for such placement based on the child's best interests; and

30 (5) Describe the performance outcomes to be measured under the
31 contract, the majority of which must directly relate to earlier
32 identification of appropriate and stable placement options for children
33 needing out-of-home care in dependency or termination proceedings.

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