
Early Learning & Human Services Committee

HB 1365

Brief Description: Requiring the use of trained meeting facilitators in certain planning meetings involving children, parents, caregivers, and others.

Sponsors: Representatives Ortiz-Self, Pettigrew, Hargrove, Ryu, Lovick and Ormsby.

<p style="text-align: center;">Brief Summary of Bill</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Requires that designated facilitators facilitate all child welfare shared planning meetings unless the Department of Social and Health Services finds good cause to proceed without a facilitator.
--

Hearing Date: 1/31/17

Staff: Luke Wickham (786-7146).

Background:

The Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) holds shared planning meetings for families involved in the child welfare system. There are various types of meetings that occur in the child welfare context including: family team decision making meetings, shelter care case conferences, child health and education tracking meetings, permanency planning meetings, adoption planning meetings, placement staffings, mental health and substance abuse treatment planning, behavioral rehabilitative services meetings, 17.5 transition staffings, foster care assessment program meetings, tribal staffings, and end-of-life care meetings.

Generally, the assigned caseworker or supervisor must conduct the meeting, invite participants, provide remote participation options, and ask youth age 14 and older to identify at least two support persons to attend the meetings. During the meeting, the caseworker or supervisor will present the case history, provide the participants an opportunity to present information, identify

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

family strengths and community and cultural supports, and address child safety, permanency, and well-being.

In certain circumstances, DSHS facilitators will lead the shared planning meetings, including conducting the meetings, and make invitations in a process seeking to build consensus using a standardized procedure. These facilitators are employees of the DSHS but not the caseworker or supervisor assigned to the particular case.

Summary of Bill:

Requires that child welfare shared planning meeting facilitators:

- facilitate all child welfare shared planning meetings unless the DSHS finds good cause to proceed without a facilitator;
- receive standardized training;
- emphasize child safety in consensus-based decision making and prioritize efforts toward family reunification when possible; and
- encourage biological parents to include foster parents, relative placements, or other placement resources in shared planning meetings.

Shared planning meetings are defined as any meeting that includes families, youth, relatives, fictive kin, natural supports, and others who can assist in a plan that prioritizes child safety and meets the support and service needs of parents, children, and caregivers.

Facilitator is defined as the trained person who leads the shared planning meeting process, who may be an employee of the DSHS.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 26, 2017.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.