
SECOND SUBSTITUTE HOUSE BILL 1366

State of Washington

65th Legislature

2017 Regular Session

By House Appropriations (originally sponsored by Representatives Ortiz-Self, Hargrove, Caldier, Tarleton, Pettigrew, Gregerson, Kilduff, Senn, Ryu, Appleton, Goodman, Lovick, Ormsby, and Frame)

READ FIRST TIME 02/24/17.

1 AN ACT Relating to promoting child welfare family reunification;
2 amending RCW 13.34.025; adding a new section to chapter 13.34 RCW;
3 adding a new section to chapter 74.13 RCW; and creating a new
4 section.

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

6 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** A new section is added to chapter 13.34
7 RCW to read as follows:

8 The legislature intends to emphasize and support the efforts to
9 reunify families involved in the child welfare process. The
10 legislature recognizes the importance of parent-child and sibling
11 visitation in allowing families to reunify, and intends to ensure
12 that families receive services and activities designed to facilitate
13 access to and visitation of children by parents and siblings. Parent-
14 child visitation must be provided to families except if that
15 visitation is limited by a court pursuant to RCW 13.34.136.

16 **Sec. 2.** RCW 13.34.025 and 2009 c 520 s 20 are each amended to
17 read as follows:

18 (1) The department and supervising agencies shall develop methods
19 for coordination of services to parents and children in child

1 dependency cases. To the maximum extent possible under current
2 funding levels, the department and supervising agencies must:

3 (a) Coordinate and integrate services to children and families,
4 using service plans and activities that address the children's and
5 families' multiple needs, including ensuring that siblings have
6 regular visits with each other, as appropriate. Assessment criteria
7 should screen for multiple needs;

8 (b) Develop treatment plans for the individual needs of the
9 client in a manner that minimizes the number of contacts the client
10 is required to make; and

11 (c) Access training for department and supervising agency staff
12 to increase skills across disciplines to assess needs for mental
13 health, substance abuse, developmental disabilities, and other areas.

14 (2) The department shall coordinate within the administrations of
15 the department, and with contracted service providers including
16 supervising agencies, to ensure that parents in dependency
17 proceedings under this chapter receive priority access to remedial
18 services recommended by the department or supervising agency in its
19 social study or ordered by the court for the purpose of correcting
20 any parental deficiencies identified in the dependency proceeding
21 that are capable of being corrected in the foreseeable future.
22 Services may also be provided to caregivers other than the parents as
23 identified in RCW 13.34.138.

24 (a) For purposes of this chapter, remedial services are those
25 services defined in the federal adoption and safe families act as
26 time-limited family reunification services. Remedial services include
27 individual, group, and family counseling; substance abuse treatment
28 services; mental health services; assistance to address domestic
29 violence; services designed to provide temporary child care and
30 therapeutic services for families; services and activities designed
31 to facilitate access to and visitation of children by parents and
32 siblings except in cases where that visitation is not in the best
33 interest of the child or a court limits visitation pursuant to RCW
34 13.34.136; and transportation to or from any of the above services
35 and activities.

36 (b) The department shall provide funds for remedial services if
37 the parent is unable to pay to the extent funding is appropriated in
38 the operating budget or otherwise available to the department for
39 such specific services. As a condition for receiving funded remedial
40 services, the court may inquire into the parent's ability to pay for

1 all or part of such services or may require that the parent make
2 appropriate applications for funding to alternative funding sources
3 for such services.

4 (c) If court-ordered remedial services are unavailable for any
5 reason, including lack of funding, lack of services, or language
6 barriers, the department or supervising agency shall promptly notify
7 the court that the parent is unable to engage in the treatment due to
8 the inability to access such services.

9 (d) This section does not create an entitlement to services and
10 does not create judicial authority to order the provision of services
11 except for the specific purpose of making reasonable efforts to
12 remedy parental deficiencies identified in a dependency proceeding
13 under this chapter.

14 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** A new section is added to chapter 74.13
15 RCW to read as follows:

16 The department of social and health services shall convene a
17 parent-child visitation work group with the following duties:

18 (1) Engaging relevant stakeholders to include biological parents
19 involved in or with experience in the child welfare process;

20 (2) Developing and implementing changes in policy or practice to
21 increase the amount and quality of parent-child visitation;

22 (3) Submitting an annual report to the appropriate committees of
23 the legislature by November 1st that includes:

24 (a) The percentage of supervised, unsupervised, and monitored
25 visitation for families that are dependent pursuant to chapter 13.34
26 RCW;

27 (b) The average length of time after visitation is court ordered
28 following a shelter care hearing pursuant to RCW 13.34.065 that
29 parent-child visitation is made available to a family;

30 (c) Incorporating a parent engagement and education component in
31 parent-child visitation;

32 (d) Changes made in policy or practice to improve the
33 effectiveness of parent-child visitation; and

34 (e) Recommendations of further policy or statutory changes to
35 improve the effectiveness of parent-child visitation.

36 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** If specific funding for the purposes of
37 this act, referencing this act by bill or chapter number, is not

1 provided by June 30, 2017, in the omnibus appropriations act, this
2 act is null and void.

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