

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SHB 2725

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As of February 26, 2020

**Title:** An act relating to foster resource parents.

**Brief Description:** Renaming foster resource parents.

**Sponsors:** House Committee on Human Services & Early Learning (originally sponsored by Representatives Ortiz-Self, Morgan, Frame, Kilduff, Lovick, Callan and Leavitt).

**Brief History:** Passed House: 2/13/20, 86-11.

**Committee Activity:** Human Services, Reentry & Rehabilitation: 2/26/20.

### Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires the Department of Children, Youth, and Families to convene a meeting or meetings with stakeholders, including birth parents and foster parents, to discuss changing the term "foster parent" and provide a report to the Legislature and the Governor regarding these meetings and recommendations regarding continued use of that terminology or using different terminology.
- Requires that foster parent preservice training demonstrate foster resource parenting is temporary in nature with the goal of maintaining safety of the child, promoting reunification, and promoting permanency for the child.

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES, REENTRY & REHABILITATION

**Staff:** Alison Mendiola (786-7488)

**Background:** Foster Parent Licensure. Anyone, including the Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF), may file a petition in court alleging a child should be a dependent of the state due to abuse, neglect, or because there is no parent, guardian, or custodian capable of adequately caring for the child.

When a child is taken into custody, the court is to hold a shelter care hearing within 72 hours to determine whether the child can be immediately and safely returned home while the dependency case is being resolved. When the child is placed in out-of-home care pursuant to a dependency court process, the child may be placed with relatives or in foster care. Foster

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parents are licensed by DCYF to provide 24-hour temporary care to children placed in out-of-home care. Individuals can apply for a foster parent license directly to DCYF or through a child-placing agency (CPA). The CPAs are licensed by the DCYF and can certify an individual meets foster licensing requirements before the application is sent to DCYF. The CPAs also provide ongoing case management to foster families.

To receive a foster parent license, an individual must:

- be age 21 or older,
- complete the following training, along with individuals age 18 or older in the household:
  - first aid;
  - age-appropriate adult and/or infant cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR);
  - human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immunodeficiency syndrome; and
  - blood borne pathogens;
- pass, along with certain household members, a background check;
- submit, along with individuals age 18 or older in the household, a negative tuberculosis test or an X-ray;
- submit proof of current immunization status for any children living on the premises, not in out-of-home care;
- to serve foster children under the age of two, submit proof of pertussis and influenza immunizations for all people living in the home;
- pass an assessment of demonstrating an ability to provide a safe home and to provide the quality of care needed by children placed in the home; and
- complete training requirements.

Foster Parent Preservice Training. An individual must complete certain training requirements before becoming a licensed foster parent. The first preservice training requirement for foster parents is an orientation. The orientation provides an overview of the licensure process. Individuals are encouraged to attend this orientation in person but can complete an online orientation. Following the orientation, individuals must complete 24 hours of core preservice training. The Alliance for Child Welfare Excellence provides this training. This training consists of eight, 3-hour sessions and a break for a field experience. All components of the foster parent preservice training must be made available online. DCYF must allow individuals to complete as much online preservice training as is practicable while requiring some preservice training be completed in person. Prospective foster parents must also complete a first aid/CPR and blood borne pathogens course. All licensed family foster homes are required to complete ongoing training during each three-year licensing period.

***Summary of Bill:*** The foster parent preservice training must include information regarding culturally appropriate services, implicit bias, the Washington State Indian Child Welfare Act, and the federal Indian Child Welfare Act. The preservice training must clarify that the focus of foster resource parenting is on reunification, separate and apart from the adoption process, instead of prohibiting any formal training regarding foster resource parenting as a process that could lead to adoption. Potential adoptive parents may receive separate training designed specifically to address their unique needs.

The preservice training must reinforce that foster parenting is temporary in nature with goals of:

- maintaining the safety of the foster child;
- promoting reunification with the foster child's birth parent or parents; and
- promoting permanency for the child.

The foster resource parent preservice training must demonstrate that foster resource parenting is temporary in nature with the goal of maintaining the safety of the foster child and promoting reunification with the foster child's birth parent or parents.

DCYF must convene a meeting or meetings with stakeholders, including birth parents and foster parents, to discuss changing the term "foster parent" and provide a report to the Legislature and the Governor by November 1, 2020, regarding these meetings and recommendations regarding continued use of that terminology or using different terminology.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Requested on January 21, 2020.

**Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members:** No.

**Effective Date:** Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony:** PRO: Addressing the preservice training will clarify what a foster parent is getting into and it is not the right place to discuss adoption. The feds, philanthropy and other organizations are investing in services upfront to prevent out-of-home placements. Reunification results in the best outcomes for children. Nationally there is also a lot of work about bringing together foster parent and biological parents, to support the child and reduce trauma. Revising the trainings to emphasize reunification as the goal will help with this. The training is a way to look at changing the culture—there can still be a training on adoption, it just needs to be separate.

OTHER: We should put back in some of the intent language that was in the original version of the bill.

**Persons Testifying:** PRO: Representative Lillian Ortiz-Self, Prime Sponsor; Jamie Lucas, citizen; Laurie Lippold, Partners for Our Children.

OTHER: Byron Manering, Brigid Collins.

**Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying:** No one.