
Juvenile Justice & Family Law Committee

SSB 6629

Brief Description: Requiring the administrator for the courts to create a family law handbook.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Human Services & Corrections (originally sponsored by Senators Sheahan, T. Sheldon, Jacobsen, Oke, Hargrove, Swecker, Rasmussen, Honeyford, Shin and Winsley).

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Requires the Administrative Office of the Courts to create a family law handbook to be distributed by county auditors when a person files a marriage certificate.

Hearing Date: 2/26/02

Staff: Trudes Hutcheson (786-7384).

Background:

The Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) was created in 1957 by the Legislature and it operates under the direction of the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court. The AOC has a number of duties, including providing professional and technical support to all the state's courts, and providing coordination, support, and oversight of the funding for a variety of judicial-related programs. In addition, the AOC publishes court forms and reference materials, such as brochures and manuals relating to Washington courts.

Summary of Bill:

The Legislature declares that strong marital relationships result in stronger families, children, and communities, and place less of a fiscal burden on the state. The Legislature also declares that the state has a compelling interest in providing couples applying for a marriage license information regarding marriage and the effects of divorce.

The AOC must develop a family law handbook that contains information on:

- Prenuptial agreements;

- shared parental responsibility for children, including establishing a residential schedule for the child in the event of divorce;
- information on notice requirements and standards for parental relocation;
- information on child support;
- property rights;
- spousal maintenance;
- domestic violence, child abuse, and neglect;
- court process for dissolution;
- effects of dissolution on children; and
- community resources that are available to separating or divorcing persons.

The handbook is given by the county auditor to persons filing marriage certificates.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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