

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5105

As of January 16, 2017

Title: An act relating to streamlining foster care licensing.

Brief Description: Streamlining foster care licensing.

Sponsors: Senators O'Ban and Wilson.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Human Services, Mental Health & Housing:

Brief Summary of Bill

- Streamlining the foster care licensing process for private child placing agencies by addressing specific issues within the licensing process.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES, MENTAL HEALTH & HOUSING

Staff: Alison Mendiola (786-7444)

Background: A child-placing agency (CPA) is licensed by the Division of Licensed Resources (DLR) within the Children's Administration to place children in foster homes or adoption. CPAs may also certify foster homes.

Foster Care License. A person must be licensed by DLR or a CPA in order to provide care for an unrelated child on a 24 hour a day basis. A person must complete a licensing application packet with all DLR required documents within 90 days of submitting the application and background authorization forms to DLR. If an applicant does not meet the 90 day deadline, the licensor can withdraw the application.

To be licensed, the applicant and other caregivers over the age of 18 must, among other requirements:

- complete first aid training and age-appropriate adult or infant CPR;
- complete HIV/AIDS and blood borne pathogens training;
- pass background check requirements: anyone over the age of 16 must pass a criminal history check and anyone over the age of 18 must pass an FBI fingerprint check; and

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- have proof of current immunization status for any children living on the premises — exceptions may be granted.

Summary of Bill: To streamline foster care licensing for child-placing agencies (CPAs), the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) is to:

- accept foster care parent applications electronically;
- complete and return background clearances within 30 days, or provide an explanation to either the prospective parent, the CPA, or both about why there is a delay;
- ensure that the forms required across the state are uniform and consistent between DSHS regions;
- not require an applicant to resubmit information on a substantially similar form if forms change after the foster care application has been received;
- ensure that foster parent applications are processed in a timely manner — if the application process is not complete within 90 days of DSHS's receipt, and the delay is not based on missing information from the applicant, DSHS shall extend the application process an additional 30 days; and
- email the fingerprint original case agency number to a CPA within five business days of receipt of the fingerprint-based background notice from the family or CPA, in order to expedite a CPA's ability to arrange for fingerprint appointments for foster parents and potential foster parents.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 17, 2017

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

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