

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SSB 6500

As Reported by House Committee On: Human Services & Early Learning

Title: An act relating to foster care licensing following a foster-family home licensee's move to a new location.

Brief Description: Addressing foster care licensing following a foster-family home licensee's move to a new location.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Human Services, Reentry & Rehabilitation (originally sponsored by Senators Padden, Darneille, Nguyen and Wilson, C.).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Human Services & Early Learning: 2/20/20, 2/26/20 [DP].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Requires the Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) to conduct a home inspection following notification that a foster family home licensee has moved to a new location.
- Requires foster family home licensees who have no children in their care at the time of a move to notify the DCYF within 90 days and, if the licensee is in good standing, the DCYF must place the home on a no-referral status and complete a home inspection within 30 days.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES & EARLY LEARNING

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 13 members: Representatives Senn, Chair; Callan, Vice Chair; Frame, Vice Chair; Dent, Ranking Minority Member; Eslick, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; McCaslin, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Corry, Goodman, Griffey, Kilduff, Klippert, Lovick and Ortiz-Self.

Staff: Luke Wickham (786-7146).

Background:

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.

Foster Family Home License Requirements of the Home and Property.

In addition to age, training, and background check requirements, there are certain requirements of the home and property of an individual seeking a foster family home license:

- The home must have adequate indoor and outdoor space, ventilation, toilet, and bathing facilities, light, and heat to ensure the health and comfort of the household.
- The home must have a properly operating kitchen with a properly maintained and working:
 - sink;
 - refrigerator;
 - stove; and
 - oven.
- The individual must keep the home, property, living areas, and furnishings:
 - clean, safe, and sanitary;
 - reasonably free from pests, such as rodents, flies, cockroaches, fleas, and other insects using the least toxic methods available; and
 - free from dangerous objects and hazards to children.
- All toxic materials must be out of reach of children and separated from food.
- There must be adequate laundry and drying equipment or other arrangements for laundry.
- People must be able to easily open doors from the inside and outside in all areas of the home that are occupied.
- The cleanliness and care of the home must meet generally accepted health standards for the storage and preparation of food.
- A plan must be developed with a licensor to address hazardous conditions present in the home or on the property.
- All local and state regulations must be followed.

Foster family licenses are issued for a period of three years. A foster family license is limited to a particular location which must be stated on the license. For licensed foster family homes having an acceptable history of child care, the license may remain in effect for 30 days after a move but will apply only if the family remains intact. Licensees must notify a licensor before moving to a new location and may request a continuation of the license at the new location. At the request of the licensee, the DCYF must amend the license to reflect the new location within 30 days, if the new location and licensee meets minimum licensing standards.

Summary of Bill:

The provision allowing licensed foster-family homes having an acceptable history of child care to maintain a license for 30 days following a move to a new location is limited to foster family homes who have children placed in their home.

The DCYF must conduct a home inspection following notification that a foster family home has moved to a new location. If the new location and licensees meet minimum licensing standards, the licensor must amend the license to reflect the new location.

Licensees whose family remains intact and have no children placed in their care at the time of a move to a new location must notify the licensor within 90 days of moving. If the licensee is in good standing at the time of the move, the licensor must place the home on no-referral status and complete a home inspection within 30 days of notification. These licensees must remain on no-referral status, and no new placements may be made in the home until the inspection is complete and the licensor determines that the new location meets minimum licensing standards.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) There are foster parents who take time off from foster parenting after moving. This bill allows these families to notify the DCYF after 90 instead of 30 days, which will allow more homes to remain licensed. There are foster children in hotels and motels and additional placement options are needed, and this bill will help increase the number of foster homes.

(Opposed)

Persons Testifying: Senator Padden, prime sponsor.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.