

RCW 13.34.025 Child dependency cases—Coordination of services—Remedial services. (1) The department and agencies shall develop methods for coordination of services to parents and children in child dependency cases. To the maximum extent possible under current funding levels, the department and agencies must:

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

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

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

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

(a) For purposes of this chapter, remedial services are those services defined in the federal adoption and safe families act as family reunification services that facilitate the reunification of the child safely and appropriately within a timely fashion. Remedial services include individual, group, and family counseling; substance abuse treatment services; mental health services; assistance to address domestic violence; services designed to provide temporary child care and therapeutic services for families; and transportation to or from any of the above services and activities.

(b) The department shall provide funds for remedial services if the parent is unable to pay to the extent funding is appropriated in the operating budget or otherwise available to the department for such specific services. As a condition for receiving funded remedial services, the court may inquire into the parent's ability to pay for all or part of such services or may require that the parent make appropriate applications for funding to alternative funding sources for such services.

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

(d) This section does not create an entitlement to services and does not create judicial authority to order the provision of services except for the specific purpose of making reasonable efforts to remedy parental deficiencies identified in a dependency proceeding under this chapter. [2019 c 172 § 1; 2018 c 284 § 1; 2009 c 520 § 20; 2007 c 410 § 2; 2002 c 52 § 2; 2001 c 256 § 2.]

Short title—2007 c 410: See note following RCW 13.34.138.

Intent—2002 c 52: "It is the intent of the legislature to recognize that those sibling relationships a child has are an integral aspect of the family unit, which should be nurtured. The legislature presumes that nurturing the existing sibling relationships is in the best interest of a child, in particular in those situations where a child cannot be with their parents, guardians, or legal custodians as a result of court intervention." [2002 c 52 § 1.]

Finding—2001 c 256: "The department of social and health services serves parents and children with multiple needs, which cannot be resolved in isolation. Further, the complexity of service delivery systems is a barrier for families in crisis when a child is removed or a parent is removed from the home. The department must undertake efforts to streamline the delivery of services." [2001 c 256 § 1.]