

5413-S

Sponsor(s): Senate Committee on Human Services & Corrections
(originally sponsored by Senators Stevens, Hargrove, Long and
Roach)

Brief Description: Improving accountability in child dependency
cases.

SB 5413-S.E - DIGEST

(DIGEST AS ENACTED)

Provides that, following shelter care and no later than twenty-five days prior to fact-finding, the department, upon the parent's request or counsel for the parent's request, shall facilitate a conference to develop and specify in a written service agreement the expectations of both the department and the parent regarding the care and placement of the child.

Directs the department to invite to the conference the parent, counsel for the parent, the foster parent or other out-of-home care provider, caseworker, guardian ad litem, counselor, or other relevant health care provider, and any other person connected to the development and well-being of the child.

Requires the initial written service agreement expectations to correlate with the court's findings at the shelter care hearing. The written service agreement must set forth specific criteria that enables the court to measure the performance of both the department and the parent, and must be updated throughout the dependency process to reflect changes in expectations.

Provides that the court shall review the written service agreement at each stage of the dependency proceedings and evaluate the performance of both the department and the parent for consistent, measurable progress in complying with the expectations identified in the agreement.

Provides that, at any other stage in a dependency proceeding, the department, upon the parent's request, shall facilitate a case conference.

Requires the department of social and health services to promulgate rules that create good cause exceptions to the establishment and enforcement of child support from parents of children in out-of-home placement under chapter 13.34 or 13.32A RCW that do not violate federal funding requirements. The department shall present the rules and the department's plan for implementation of the rules to the appropriate committees of the legislature prior to the 2002 legislative session.