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**SUBSTITUTE HOUSE BILL 2725**

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**State of Washington**

**66th Legislature**

**2020 Regular Session**

**By** House Human Services & Early Learning (originally sponsored by Representatives Ortiz-Self, Morgan, Frame, Kilduff, Lovick, Callan, and Leavitt)

READ FIRST TIME 02/07/20.

1 AN ACT Relating to foster resource parents; amending RCW  
2 74.13.250; adding a new section to chapter 74.13 RCW; and providing  
3 an expiration date.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

5 **Sec. 1.** RCW 74.13.250 and 2018 c 20 s 1 are each amended to read  
6 as follows:

7 (1) Preservice training is recognized as a valuable tool to  
8 reduce placement disruptions, the length of time children are in  
9 care, and foster parent turnover rates. Preservice training also  
10 assists potential foster parents in making their final decisions  
11 about foster parenting and assists social service agencies in  
12 obtaining information about whether to approve potential foster  
13 parents.

14 (2) (a) Foster parent preservice training shall include  
15 ~~((information))~~:

16 (i) Information about the potential impact of placement on foster  
17 children; ~~((social))~~

18 (ii) Social service agency administrative processes and the role  
19 of courts in case planning; ~~((the))~~

20 (iii) The requirements, responsibilities, expectations, and  
21 skills needed to be a foster parent; ~~((attachment))~~

1 (iv) Attachment, separation, and loss issues faced by birth  
2 parents, foster children, and foster parents; ((child))

3 (v) Child behavior management ((and)), discipline, and the  
4 effects of trauma on child development; ((birth))

5 (vi) Birth family relationships; ((information on the limits of  
6 the adoption support program as provided in RCW 74.13A.020(4); and  
7 helping))

8 (vii) Information regarding culturally appropriate services,  
9 implicit bias, the Washington state Indian child welfare act under  
10 chapter 13.38 RCW, and the Indian Child Welfare Act of 1978 (92 Stat.  
11 3069; 25 U.S.C. ch. 21 Sec. 1901 et seq.) as amended; and

12 (viii) Helping children leave foster care.

13 (b) Preservice training shall assist applicants in making  
14 informed decisions about whether they want to be foster parents.  
15 Preservice training shall be designed to enable the agency to assess  
16 the ability, readiness, and appropriateness of families to be foster  
17 parents. As a decision tool, effective preservice training provides  
18 potential foster parents with enough information to make an  
19 appropriate decision, affords potential foster parents an opportunity  
20 to discuss their decision with others and consider its implications  
21 for their family, clarifies foster family expectations, presents a  
22 realistic picture of what foster parenting involves, and allows  
23 potential foster parents to consider and explore the different types  
24 of children they might serve.

25 (c) The preservice training must clarify that the focus of foster  
26 parenting is on reunification, separate and apart from the adoption  
27 process. Potential adoptive parents may receive separate training  
28 designed specifically to address their unique needs. The preservice  
29 training must reinforce that foster parenting is temporary in nature  
30 with the following goals:

31 (i) Maintaining the safety of the foster child;

32 (ii) Promoting reunification with the foster child's birth parent  
33 or parents; and

34 (iii) Promoting permanency for the child.

35 (3) Foster parents shall complete preservice training before the  
36 issuance of a foster care license, except that the department may, on  
37 a case by case basis, issue a written waiver that allows the foster  
38 parent to complete the training after licensure, so long as the  
39 training is completed within ninety days following licensure.

1 (4) All components of the foster parent preservice training shall  
2 be made available online, if possible. The department shall allow  
3 individuals to complete as much online preservice training as is  
4 practicable while requiring that some preservice training be  
5 completed in person.

6 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 74.13  
7 RCW to read as follows:

8 (1) The department shall convene a meeting or meetings with  
9 stakeholders to discuss changing the term "foster parent" to "foster  
10 resource parent" or using another term.

11 (a) The department shall use existing processes, including the  
12 process for consultation with foster parents required under RCW  
13 74.13.031(17) to conduct the meetings required under subsection (1)  
14 of this section.

15 (b) The stakeholders consulted under subsection (1) of this  
16 section shall include birth parents, foster parents, and entities  
17 representing the interests of foster parents and birth parents.

18 (2) By November 1, 2020, and in compliance with RCW 43.01.036,  
19 the department shall provide a report to the appropriate committees  
20 of the legislature that includes the following:

21 (a) A description of the meeting or meetings that took place as  
22 required under subsection (1) of this section;

23 (b) A description of the stakeholders who were included in the  
24 meeting or meetings that took place as required under subsection (1)  
25 of this section;

26 (c) A discussion of the terminology proposed to replace the term  
27 "foster parent"; and

28 (d) Recommendations regarding continued use of the term "foster  
29 parent" or using different terminology.

30 (3) This section expires June 30, 2021.

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