

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2505

As Reported by House Committee On:
Health Care & Wellness

Title: An act relating to exempting certain former foster care providers from adult family home licensure.

Brief Description: Exempting certain former foster care providers from adult family home licensure.

Sponsors: Representatives Eslick, Dent, Reeves, Leavitt and Fosse; by request of Department of Social and Health Services.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Health Care & Wellness: 1/23/26, 1/28/26 [DPS].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Exempts certain individuals from adult family home licensing requirements if they have been licensed to operate a foster family home or approved for a child-specific license when the only unrelated adults receiving care in the home are former foster youth who had received personal care from the individual or youth for whom the individual received the child-specific license.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH CARE & WELLNESS

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 18 members: Representatives Bronoske, Chair; Lekanoff, Vice Chair; Rule, Vice Chair; Schmick, Ranking Minority Member; Marshall, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Valdez, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Davis, Engell, Low, Macri, Manjarrez, Obras, Parshley, Shavers, Simmons, Stonier, Stuebe and Thai.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Staff: Chris Blake (786-7392).

Background:

Foster Family Homes.

A foster family home, also known as a foster parent, provides a temporary home for a child that has been removed from a birth parent due to abuse, neglect, or abandonment. Foster parents may be licensed directly through a state agency, the Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF), or through a child placing agency. A prospective foster parent must be 21 years of age or older and complete certain preservice training requirements, interviews with a licensor, and a home inspection. A foster care license is valid for a three-year period, and may be renewed at the end of that period.

Child-Specific Foster Care Licenses.

The DCYF may issue a child-specific license to a relative or a suitable person who opts to become licensed for placement of a specific child, as well as that child's siblings or relatives, in DCYF's care, custody, and control. Such individuals must meet all minimum licensing requirements for foster family homes and other criteria the DCYF establishes by rule.

Adult Family Homes.

Adult family homes are community-based facilities licensed to care for adults who need long-term care. These homes provide room, board, laundry, necessary supervision, and assistance with activities of daily living, personal care, and nursing services. Adult family homes may care for up to six adults, but may increase their bed capacity to seven or eight beds if they meet additional licensing standards. The number of residents that an adult family home is licensed to care for depends on several factors related to the structure of the house, the number and qualifications of the staff, and the mix of persons living in the home.

Several regulated facilities are exempt from adult family home licensing requirements, including nursing homes, assisted living facilities, residential treatment centers, hospitals, homes for individuals with developmental disabilities, and medical foster homes.

Summary of Substitute Bill:

Exemptions from adult family home licensing requirements are created for certain individuals who have been licensed to operate a foster family home or approved for a child-specific license.

The exemption for individuals who hold or have held a license to operate a foster family home for at least three years applies when:

- the individual had provided personal care services for the former foster youth in the individual's care for at least three years on the date they exited foster care;

- the only unrelated adults receiving care in the home are those former foster youth or youths who have received personal care from the individual;
- there are no founded or substantiated findings against the individual by Child Protective Services or final substantiated findings by Adult Protective Services; and
- there are no pending or prior adverse licensing actions against the individual at the time the youth in their care exits the foster care system.

The exemption for individuals who are or have been approved for a child-specific license applies when:

- the only unrelated adults receiving personal care in the home are the former foster youth or youths for whom the individual received the child-specific license;
- there are no founded or substantiated findings against the individual by Child Protective Services or final substantiated findings by Adult Protective Services; and
- there are no pending or prior adverse licensing actions against the individual at the time the youth in their care exits the foster care system.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:

The substitute bill limits the application of the exemption from adult family home licensing to those foster family homes and individuals holding a child-specific license that do not have: (1) a final substantiated finding by Adult Protective Services; or (2) a prior adverse licensing action against them at the time the youth exits the foster care system.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) This bill lets former foster youth stay in their foster family home without requiring the foster family to go through the hoops of becoming an adult family home. The current definition of an adult family home presents a significant challenge to certain foster family homes and may displace vulnerable young adults from their homes and family structures if the foster provider who has cared for them is unable to get an adult family home licensure due to expense, local regulations, or barriers. Providing this narrow exemption from statute will give vulnerable adults exiting the foster care system the option to remain in their homes with their foster parents and caregivers if that is their desire.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Representative Carolyn Eslick, prime sponsor; and Bea Rector, Dept. of Social and Health Services Aging and Long-Term Supports Administration (DSHS ALTSA).

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.