



General Assembly

Substitute Bill No. 6227

January Session, 2011

* _____HB06227KIDHS_022311_____*

**AN ACT CONCERNING CHANGES TO THE GENERAL STATUTES
CONCERNING THE DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES.**

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. Section 17a-98a of the general statutes is repealed and the
2 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2011*):

3 [(a)] The Department of Children and Families, in consultation with
4 the Departments of Social Services, Mental Health and Addiction
5 Services and Developmental Services, shall establish, within available
6 appropriations, a kinship navigator program. Such program shall
7 ensure that: (1) When the Department of Children and Families
8 determines that it is in the best interest of the child to be placed with a
9 relative for foster care, the department informs the relative regarding
10 procedures to become licensed as a foster parent, and (2) grandparents
11 and other relatives caring for a minor child are provided with
12 information on the array of state services and benefits for which they
13 may be eligible, including the subsidy program established pursuant
14 to section 17a-126, as amended by this act. The Commissioner of
15 Children and Families shall, within available appropriations, ensure
16 that information on the array of services available under the kinship
17 navigator program is accessible through the 2-1-1 Infoline program.

18 [(b)] Not later than January 1, 2008, and annually thereafter, the

19 Commissioner of Children and Families shall report, in accordance
20 with section 11-4a, on the implementation of the kinship navigator
21 program to the joint standing committee of the General Assembly
22 having cognizance of matters relating to human services.]

23 Sec. 2. Section 17a-6b of the general statutes is repealed and the
24 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2011*):

25 (a) The advisory group for the Connecticut Juvenile Training School,
26 established pursuant to subsection (b) of section 17a-6, [and the
27 Connecticut Juvenile Training School public safety committee,
28 established pursuant to section 17a-27f,] shall provide an on-going
29 review of the Connecticut Juvenile Training School with
30 recommendations for improvement or enhancement. The review shall
31 include, but not be limited to:

32 (1) The number, age, ethnicity and race of the residents placed at the
33 training school, including the court locations that sentenced them, the
34 number sentenced from each court location and the offenses for which
35 they were sentenced;

36 (2) The percentage of residents in need of substance abuse treatment
37 and the programming interventions provided to assist residents;

38 (3) A review of the program and policies of the facility;

39 (4) The educational and literacy programs available to the residents,
40 including the educational level of residents, the number of residents
41 requiring special education and related services, including school
42 attendance requirements, the number of residents who are educated in
43 the alternative school and the reasons for such education;

44 (5) The vocational training programs available to the residents and
45 the actual number of residents enrolled in each training program,
46 including all vocational attendance requirements;

47 (6) The delinquency recidivism rates of such residents, which shall

48 include the number of children discharged to residential placement,
49 the number of children discharged due to expiration of the period of
50 commitment and the number of children returned to the Connecticut
51 Juvenile Training School;

52 (7) The diagnosis of each resident after intake assessment;

53 (8) The costs associated with the operation of the training school,
54 including staffing costs and average cost per resident; [and]

55 (9) Reintegration strategies and plans to transition the residents to
56 their home communities; and

57 (10) A review of safety and security issues that affect the host
58 municipality.

59 (b) The Department of Children and Families shall serve as
60 administrative staff of the advisory group referred to in subsection (a)
61 of this section.

62 (c) Not later than February 4, 2004, and annually thereafter, the
63 Commissioner of Children and Families shall report, in accordance
64 with the provisions of section 11-4a, to the joint standing committees of
65 the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to the
66 judiciary and human services and to the select committee of the
67 General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to children
68 with respect to the Connecticut Juvenile Training School.

69 (d) Each report required pursuant to subsection (c) of this section
70 shall summarize the information and recommendations specified in
71 subsection (a) of this section and shall also include such other
72 information that the Department of Children and Families has
73 identified as requiring immediate legislative action.

74 Sec. 3. Section 17a-126 of the general statutes is repealed and the
75 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2011*):

76 (a) As used in this section, (1) "relative caregiver" means a person
77 who is caring for a child related to such person because the parent of
78 the child has died or become otherwise unable to care for the child for
79 reasons that make reunification with the parent and adoption not
80 viable options within the foreseeable future, and (2) "commissioner"
81 means the Commissioner of Children and Families.

82 (b) The commissioner shall establish a program of subsidized
83 guardianship for the benefit of children in foster care who have been
84 living with relative caregivers, who are licensed foster care providers
85 pursuant to section 17a-114, and who have been in foster care [or
86 certified relative care] for not less than six consecutive months. A
87 relative caregiver may request a guardianship subsidy from the
88 commissioner.

89 (c) If a relative caregiver who is receiving a guardianship subsidy
90 for a related child is also caring for the child's sibling who is not
91 related to the caregiver, the commissioner shall provide a
92 guardianship subsidy to such relative caregiver [if the sibling has been
93 in foster care for not less than eighteen months, and the commissioner
94 shall, within available appropriations, provide a guardianship subsidy
95 to such relative caregiver] in accordance with regulations adopted by
96 the commissioner pursuant to subsection (e) of this section. For
97 purposes of this subsection, "child's sibling" includes a stepbrother,
98 stepsister, a half-brother or a half-sister.

99 (d) The commissioner shall provide the following subsidies under
100 the subsidized guardianship program in accordance with this section
101 and the regulations adopted pursuant to subsection (e) of this section:
102 (1) A special-need subsidy, which shall be a lump sum payment for
103 one-time expenses resulting from the assumption of care of the child
104 and shall not exceed two thousand dollars; and (2) a medical subsidy
105 comparable to the medical subsidy to children in the subsidized
106 adoption program. [if the child lacks private health insurance.] The
107 subsidized guardianship program shall also provide a monthly
108 subsidy on behalf of the child payable to the relative caregiver that is

109 based on the circumstances of the relative caregiver and the needs of
110 the child and shall not exceed the foster care maintenance payment
111 that would have been paid on behalf of the child if the child had
112 remained in licensed foster care.

113 (e) The commissioner shall adopt regulations, in accordance with
114 chapter 54, implementing the subsidized guardianship program
115 established under this section. Such regulations shall include all
116 federal requirements necessary to maximize federal reimbursement
117 available to the state, including, but not limited to, (1) eligibility for the
118 program, (2) the maximum age at which a child is no longer eligible for
119 a guardianship subsidy, including the maximum age, for purposes of
120 claiming federal reimbursement under Title IV-E of the Social Security
121 Act, at which a child is no longer eligible for a guardianship subsidy,
122 and (3) a procedure for determining the types and amounts of the
123 subsidies.

124 (f) At a minimum, the guardianship subsidy provided under this
125 section shall continue until the child reaches the age of eighteen or the
126 age of twenty-one if such child is in full-time attendance at a secondary
127 school, technical school or college or is in a state accredited job training
128 program or otherwise meets the criteria set forth in federal law.
129 Annually, the subsidized guardian shall submit to the commissioner a
130 sworn statement that the child is still living with and receiving support
131 from the guardian. The parent of any child receiving assistance
132 through the subsidized guardianship program shall remain liable for
133 the support of the child as required by the general statutes.

134 (g) A guardianship subsidy shall not be included in the calculation
135 of household income in determining eligibility for benefits of the
136 relative caregiver of the subsidized child or other persons living within
137 the household of the relative caregiver.

138 (h) Payments for guardianship subsidies shall be made from
139 moneys available from any source to the commissioner for child
140 welfare purposes. The commissioner shall develop and implement a

141 plan that: (1) Maximizes use of the subsidized guardianship program
142 to decrease the number of children in the legal custody of the
143 commissioner and to reduce the number of children who would
144 otherwise be placed into nonrelative foster care when there is a family
145 member willing to provide care; (2) maximizes federal reimbursement
146 for the costs of the subsidized guardianship program, provided
147 whatever federal maximization method is employed shall not result in
148 the relative caregiver of a child being subject to work requirements as a
149 condition of receipt of benefits for the child or the benefits restricted in
150 time or scope other than as specified in subsection (c) of this section;
151 and (3) ensures necessary transfers of funds between agencies and
152 interagency coordination in program implementation. The
153 commissioner shall seek all federal waivers and reimbursement as are
154 necessary and appropriate to implement this plan.

155 (i) In the case of the death, severe disability or serious illness of a
156 relative caregiver who is receiving a guardianship subsidy, the
157 commissioner may transfer the guardianship subsidy to a new relative
158 caregiver who meets the Department of Children and Families foster
159 care safety requirements and is appointed as legal guardian by a court
160 of competent jurisdiction.

161 (j) Nothing in this section shall prohibit the commissioner from
162 continuing to pay guardianship subsidies to those relative caregivers
163 who entered into written subsidy agreements with the Department of
164 Children and Families prior to October 5, 2009.

165 Sec. 4. Section 45a-709 of the general statutes is repealed and the
166 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2011*):

167 (a) Notwithstanding any provision of sections [17a-91,] 17a-112, 17a-
168 113, 17a-148, 45a-187, 45a-606, 45a-607, 45a-706 to 45a-708, inclusive,
169 45a-715 to 45a-718, inclusive, 45a-724, 45a-727, 45a-732 to 45a-734,
170 inclusive, and 52-231a, to the contrary, any adoption completed after
171 October 1, 1973, in which the application and agreement of adoption
172 were received by the Court of Probate before October 1, 1973, shall be

