



General Assembly

February Session, 2012

Raised Bill No. 156

LCO No. 877

* SB00156KIDHS_030712 *

Referred to Committee on Select Committee on Children

Introduced by:
(KID)

AN ACT CONCERNING SIBLING VISITATION FOR CHILDREN IN THE CARE AND CUSTODY OF THE COMMISSIONER OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES.

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

1 Section 1. Section 17a-10a of the general statutes is repealed and the
2 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October 1, 2014*):

3 (a) The Commissioner of Children and Families shall ensure that a
4 child placed in the care and custody of the commissioner pursuant to
5 an order of temporary custody or an order of commitment is provided
6 visitation with such child's parents and siblings, unless otherwise
7 ordered by the court.

8 (b) The commissioner shall ensure that such child's visits with his or
9 her parents shall occur as frequently as reasonably possible, based
10 upon consideration of the best interests of the child, including the age
11 and developmental level of the child, and shall be sufficient in number
12 and duration to ensure continuation of the relationship.

13 (c) If such child has an existing relationship with a sibling and is
14 separated from such sibling as a result of intervention by the

15 commissioner including, but not limited to, placement in a foster home
16 or in the home of a relative, the commissioner shall, based upon
17 consideration of the best interests of the child, ensure that such child
18 has access to and visitation rights with such sibling throughout the
19 duration of such placement. The commissioner shall ensure that such
20 child's visits with his or her sibling shall occur, on average, not less
21 than once per week, unless the commissioner finds that the frequency
22 of such visitation is not in the best interests of each sibling. In
23 determining the number, frequency and duration of such visits, the
24 commissioner shall consider the best interests of each sibling, given
25 each child's age and developmental level and the continuation of the
26 sibling relationship.

27 (d) The commissioner shall include in each child's plan of treatment
28 information relating to the factors considered in making visitation
29 determinations pursuant to this section. If the commissioner
30 determines that such visits are not in the best interests of the child, that
31 such child's minimum baseline of, on average, not less than one visit
32 per week with his or her sibling is not in the best interests of each
33 sibling, or that the number, frequency or duration of the visits
34 requested by the child's attorney or guardian ad litem is not in the best
35 interests of the child, the commissioner shall include the reasons for
36 such determination in the child's plan of treatment.

37 (e) On or before October first of each year, the commissioner shall
38 report, in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a to the select
39 committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters
40 relating to children, data sufficient to demonstrate compliance with
41 subsections (a), (c) and (d) of this section.

42 Sec. 2. (NEW) (*Effective from passage*) The Commissioner of Children
43 and Families shall meet with the members of each branch of the Youth
44 Advisory Board to gather recommendations for and to draft a "Sibling
45 Bill of Rights," which may include, but is not limited to, ways to
46 protect the relationships of siblings separated as a result of said
47 commissioner's intervention and an affirmation by the department of

48 its commitment to preserve the relationships between siblings who
49 have been separated from each other while under department care.
50 The Department of Children and Families shall incorporate the final
51 version of the Sibling Bill of Rights into department policy and share
52 such policy with each child placed in the care and custody of the
53 commissioner pursuant to an order of temporary custody or an order
54 of commitment. On or before October 1, 2013, the commissioner and
55 such members of the Youth Advisory Board shall submit the Sibling
56 Bill of Rights to the select committee of the General Assembly having
57 cognizance of matters relating to children for consideration of possible
58 legislative action.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	<i>October 1, 2014</i>	17a-10a
Sec. 2	<i>from passage</i>	New section

KID

Joint Favorable C/R

HS