



Senate Bill No. 180

Public Act No. 16-123

AN ACT CONCERNING YOUTH ADVISORY COUNCILS AND FOSTER FAMILIES.

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

Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective from passage*) (a) As used in this section:

(1) "Child" or "children" means any person or persons under eighteen years of age, except as otherwise specified, or any person or persons under twenty-one years of age who is or are in full-time attendance in a secondary school, a technical school, a college or a state-accredited job training program; and

(2) "Child care facility" has the same meaning as provided in section 17a-93 of the general statutes.

(b) Not later than January 1, 2017, the Commissioner of Children and Families shall require each child care facility that has the capacity to house not less than ten children to establish a youth advisory council. Each youth advisory council shall (1) create leadership opportunities for children residing in such child care facility, (2) enable children residing in such child care facility an opportunity to express and address grievances, (3) encourage open communication with staff members of such child care facility, and (4) enable children residing in such child care facility to develop skills, including, but not limited to,

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peer advocacy, public speaking and conflict resolution.

(c) The Commissioner of Children and Families shall establish procedures to enable each youth advisory council to report, not less than quarterly, to each youth advisory board established pursuant to section 17a-10c of the general statutes to offer recommendations for policy and practice reforms to be used in child care facilities.

Sec. 2. Subsection (b) of section 17a-114 of the 2016 supplement to the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October 1, 2016*):

(b) (1) No child in the custody of the Commissioner of Children and Families shall be placed in foster care with any person, unless (A) (i) such person is licensed for that purpose by the department or the Department of Developmental Services pursuant to the provisions of section 17a-227, or [(B)] (ii) such person's home is approved by a child placing agency licensed by the commissioner pursuant to section 17a-149, or [(C)] (iii) such person has received approval as provided in this section, and (B) on and after January 1, 2017, for a child twelve years of age or older, such child has received a foster family profile in accordance with the provisions of section 3 of this act. Any person licensed by the department may be a prospective adoptive parent. The commissioner shall adopt regulations, in accordance with the provisions of chapter 54, to establish the licensing procedures and standards.

(2) The commissioner shall require each applicant for licensure or approval pursuant to this section and any person sixteen years of age or older living in the household of such applicant to submit to state and national criminal history records checks prior to issuing a license or approval to such applicant to accept placement of a child for purposes of foster care or adoption. Such criminal history records checks shall be conducted in accordance with section 29-17a. The

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commissioner shall also check the state child abuse registry established pursuant to section 17a-101k for the name of such applicant and for the name of any person sixteen years of age or older living in the household of such applicant.

(3) The commissioner, at his or her discretion, may require any person sixteen years of age or older, who is not living in the household but who has regular unsupervised access to a child in the home of an applicant for licensure or approval, to submit to state and national criminal history records checks prior to issuing a license or approval to such applicant to accept placement of a child. Such criminal history records checks shall be conducted in accordance with section 29-17a. The commissioner may also check the state child abuse registry established pursuant to section 17a-101k for the name of any person sixteen years of age or older who is not living in the household but who has regular unsupervised access to a child.

(4) The commissioner shall require each individual licensed or approved pursuant to this section and any person sixteen years of age or older living in the household of such individual to submit to state and national criminal history records checks prior to renewing a license or approval for any individual providing foster care.

(5) The commissioner, at his or her discretion, may require any person sixteen years of age or older who is not living in the household but who has regular unsupervised access to a child in the home of any individual licensed or approved pursuant to this section to submit to state and national criminal history records checks prior to renewing a license or approval for such individual providing foster care.

Sec. 3. (NEW) (*Effective from passage*) (a) On and after January 1, 2017, the Commissioner of Children and Families shall create a foster family profile on each foster family, as defined in section 17a-93 of the general statutes, fictive kin caregiver, as defined in section 17a-114 of

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the general statutes, and relative caregiver for distribution to each child twelve years of age or older who is placed in foster care pursuant to section 17a-114 of the general statutes, as amended by this act. Such foster family profile shall be distributed to such child not less than seven days prior to such child being placed with such foster family, fictive kin caregiver or relative caregiver or, in the case of an emergency placement, as soon as is practicable. Such foster family profile shall contain information including, but not limited to, the name and location of the school the child will attend, the name, age and gender of each individual living in the household, the sleeping arrangements in the household, information on the presence of pets in the household and a brief summary of household expectations.

(b) Not later than January 1, 2017, the Department of Children and Families shall develop or approve a foster care family survey for distribution to each child seven years of age or older who is removed from or leaves a foster family. On and after January 1, 2017, the department shall (1) distribute a foster family survey to a child not later than fifteen days after such child is removed from or leaves a foster home, and (2) catalogue the results of such foster family surveys to gather data that may be used by the department to recruit, train and retain high-quality foster families.

Approved June 7, 2016