
OLR Bill Analysis

sSB 972

AN ACT CONCERNING ACCESS TO ORIGINAL BIRTH CERTIFICATES BY ADULT ADOPTED PERSONS.

SUMMARY

This bill expands access to birth certificates for adopted persons age 18 and older and their adult children or grandchildren. It allows all such individuals to obtain an uncertified copy of the adoptee's original birth certificate upon request. Current law provides this access only for adoptions finalized on or after October 1, 1983.

For adoptions before that date, current law allows such access to the original certificate only through a court order. If the birth parents are alive, the court can only issue such an order with their consent, or in certain circumstances, the consent of a legal representative or guardian ad litem.

The bill also transfers, from the Department of Public Health (DPH) to municipalities, the responsibility to issue such original birth certificates upon request of an eligible individual. Specifically, it requires the registrar of vital statistics in the town of the adopted individual's birth to issue the uncertified copy of the certificate, within 30 days of the written request of the adoptee age 18 or older or his or her adult child or grandchild. Current law does not set a timeframe for DPH to issue such birth certificates.

The bill makes a corresponding change by eliminating the requirement for DPH to report annually, until 2021, on the number of adult adoptee birth certificates the department issues.

It also extends by four years the requirement for the Department of Children and Families (DCF) to report annually to the Public Health Committee on the number of birth parent contact preference and health history forms filed with DCF (see BACKGROUND). Under the

bill, the last report is due January 1, 2025.

The bill also makes conforming changes.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2019

BACKGROUND

Adoptee Birth Certificates

In most cases, DPH seals the original birth certificate when a court notifies it that a child born in Connecticut has been adopted. It prepares a new certificate substituting the adoptive parents' names for those appearing on the original certificate (CGS § 7-53).

Contact Preference and Health History Forms

By law, a biological parent may complete a DCF form indicating whether he or she wants to be contacted by his or her adopted adult child or the adoptee's adult children or grandchildren. When receiving a request for a contact preference form, DCF must also provide the parent with a form on which to record his or her health history information (CGS § 17a-60a).

COMMITTEE ACTION

Planning and Development Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 16 Nay 6 (03/25/2019)