
OLR Bill Analysis

sSB 359

AN ACT CONCERNING SERVICES PROVIDED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES TO RELATIVES OF A PERSON WHOSE DEATH WAS CAUSED BY INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE.

SUMMARY

This bill establishes procedures the Department of Children and Families (DCF) must follow when an intimate partner homicide involves a child's parent.

The bill requires the DCF commissioner, upon being informed about the homicide, to assign the case to an employee who is an intimate partner violence specialist. Under the bill, the intimate partner violence specialist is responsible for using due diligence to identify adults who could potentially care for the child. These relatives include the child's adult grandparents and other adult relatives, such as any the grandparents suggest, with exceptions due to family or domestic violence.

Under the bill, within seven days after being assigned the case, the intimate partner violence specialist must give the commissioner a list of the pertinent identifying information of all adult relatives who potentially could care for the child. The commissioner must then give certain written materials to the listed individuals, including information about options to participate in the child's care and placement.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2024

WRITTEN MATERIALS

Under the bill, the commissioner must give people on the list written materials that:

1. explain the options that the relative has under federal, state, and

local law to participate in the child’s care and placement, including information on how to file a guardianship or custody petition in the probate court;

2. describe the requirements to get a foster care license and for additional services and supports available to children placed in a foster home; and
3. describe the subsidized guardianship program (see BACKGROUND), including eligibility requirements, how to apply, and available financial assistance.

BACKGROUND

Subsidized Guardianship Program

Licensed relative guardians of children involved in the child welfare system (e.g., victims of child abuse) can receive benefits under the DCF Subsidized Guardianship program once the child or children have lived with the caregiver for at least six months. Guardians receive monthly stipends at the prevailing foster care rate. Relative guardians may also qualify for a one-time exceptional expense payment of up to \$500 per child for expenses incurred in the guardianship transfer process (Conn. Agencies Regs., §§ 17a-126-1 to 17a-126-23).

COMMITTEE ACTION

Judiciary Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 31 Nay 4 (04/01/2024)