
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL

No. 1108 Session of
2017

INTRODUCED BY TOOHIL, LEWIS, BERNSTINE, R. BROWN, V. BROWN,
BULLOCK, D. COSTA, CUTLER, EVERETT, HEFFLEY, HICKERNELL,
KAUFER, KAUFFMAN, MILLARD, MURT, PICKETT, WATSON AND RAPP,
APRIL 12, 2017

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN AND YOUTH, APRIL 12, 2017

AN ACT

1 Amending the act of June 13, 1967 (P.L.31, No.21), entitled "An
2 act to consolidate, editorially revise, and codify the public
3 welfare laws of the Commonwealth," providing for school
4 stability of children in foster care; and making an
5 inconsistent repeal.

6 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
7 hereby enacts as follows:

8 Section 1. The act of June 13, 1967 (P.L.31, No.21), known
9 as the Human Services Code, is amended by adding an article to
10 read:

11 ARTICLE XIII-B

12 SCHOOL STABILITY

13 Section 1301-B. Scope.

14 This article relates to the educational stability of children
15 in foster care.

16 Section 1302-B. Definitions.

17 The following words and phrases when used in this article
18 shall have the meanings given to them in this section unless the

1 context clearly indicates otherwise:

2 "Change in placement." A situation in which the placement of
3 a child is changed consistent with Department of Human Services
4 regulations to achieve the goals of the family service plan or
5 due to discharge from care as the result of age. The term
6 includes any placement made pursuant to 42 Pa.C.S. § 6351
7 (relating to disposition of dependent child) and an emergency
8 modification in placement made pursuant to Pa.R.J.C.P. No. 1606
9 (relating to modification of dependent child's placement),
10 including a family foster care or kinship care placement,
11 placement in a child-care institution or placement resulting
12 from permanent legal guardianship or reunification.

13 "Child in foster care." Either of the following:

14 (1) A child who is the care and responsibility of the
15 Commonwealth and placed in foster care, as defined in 45 CFR
16 1355.20 (relating to definitions), pursuant to 42 Pa.C.S. §
17 6351 or 6352 (relating to disposition of delinquent child).

18 (2) A child placed pursuant to a voluntary placement
19 agreement under 55 Pa. Code § 3130.65 (relating to voluntary
20 placement agreement).

21 "County agency." The county children and youth social
22 service agency exercising the powers and duties provided for in
23 section 405 of the act of June 24, 1937 (P.L.2017, No.396),
24 known as the County Institution District Law, or its successor,
25 and supervised by the Department of Human Services under Article
26 IX.

27 "Foster care maintenance payments." As defined under section
28 475(4) of the Social Security Act (49 Stat. 620, 42 U.S.C. §
29 675(4)).

30 "Foster parent." An individual approved by a public or

1 private foster family care agency to provide foster family care
2 services to a child who is temporarily separated from the
3 child's legal family and placed in the legal custody of an
4 agency.

5 "Kin." An individual 21 years of age or older who is one of
6 the following:

7 (1) A godparent of the child as recognized by an
8 organized church.

9 (2) A member of the child's tribe, nation or tribal
10 organization.

11 (3) An individual with a significant, positive
12 relationship with the child or family.

13 "Kinship care." The full-time nurturing and protection of a
14 child who is separated from the child's parents and placed in
15 the home of a caregiver who has an existing relationship with
16 the child or the child's family.

17 "Local education agency." As defined in section 9101(26) of
18 the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (Public Law
19 89-10, 20 U.S.C. § 7801(26)).

20 "Relative." An individual who is at least 21 years of age
21 and is related within the fifth degree of consanguinity or
22 affinity to the parent or stepparent of a child.

23 "School stability." The right of a child to attend either of
24 the following:

25 (1) the school the child currently attends; or

26 (2) the school the child attended when initially placed
27 by the county agency.

28 Section 1303-B. Case plan to ensure school stability.

29 (a) Case plan required.--If a child has been removed from
30 the child's home under a voluntary placement agreement or is in

1 the legal custody of the county agency, the county agency shall
2 develop a case plan for ensuring school stability for the child.
3 The case plan shall be based on the best interest of the child
4 as determined by a court. Until a court has made a best-interest
5 determination for the child, the child shall remain in the same
6 school unless the county agency determines that remaining in the
7 same school is contrary to the safety or well-being of the
8 child. The case plan shall be part of the family service plan
9 and the individual service plan of the child.

10 (b) Contents of case plan.--The case plan shall include all
11 of the following:

12 (1) The placement of the child shall take into account
13 the appropriateness of the current educational setting and
14 the change in proximity to the school where the child is
15 enrolled at the time of placement or a change in placement.

16 (2) Either:

17 (i) The county agency shall coordinate with the
18 appropriate local education agency to ensure that the
19 child remains in the school where the child is enrolled
20 at the time of placement or a change in placement; or

21 (ii) if remaining in the school is not in the best
22 interest of the child, the county agency and the local
23 education agency where the child will attend shall
24 provide for immediate and appropriate enrollment in a new
25 school. Enrollment in a new school shall occur even if
26 the child cannot provide the documentation normally
27 required for school enrollment.

28 (3) The county agency shall obtain and maintain the
29 child's education records in the case file as required in
30 accordance with Title IV-E of the Social Security Act, that

1 relevant education records shall be provided directly to the
2 school to the extent they are available to the county agency
3 and that the disclosure does not violate applicable
4 confidentiality laws.

5 Section 1304-B. Duty of county agency to collaborate.

6 The county agency shall collaborate with the local education
7 agency that the child will attend to ensure school stability and
8 transportation in compliance with requirements under this
9 article and the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as
10 the Public School Code of 1949, including, where applicable,
11 facilitating immediate enrollment in a new school.

12 Section 1305-B. Transportation.

13 If a court or county agency has determined that it is in the
14 best interest of the child to remain in a prior school under
15 this article, the child shall be entitled to free and
16 appropriate transportation to attend the school in accordance
17 with the following:

18 (1) If the child needs transportation to a prior school
19 and is considered homeless under the Stewart B. McKinney
20 Homeless Assistance Act (Public Law 100-77, 101 Stat. 482),
21 the cost of transportation shall be paid by a local education
22 agency in accordance with that act.

23 (2) If the child needs transportation to the prior
24 school and does not qualify as homeless under the Stewart B.
25 McKinney Homeless Assistance Act, transportation to maintain
26 school stability shall be provided in accordance with the
27 requirements set forth in the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30,
28 No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949, and any
29 applicable contractual agreement.

30 (3) When applicable, the county agency shall provide for

1 the cost of transportation for the child by:

2 (i) making a foster care maintenance payment, in the
3 amount of the reasonable cost of transporting the child
4 to the school, to a foster parent, relative or kin
5 eligible to receive payment under Article XIII;

6 (ii) making a payment in the amount of the
7 reasonable cost of transporting the child to the local
8 education agency that is transporting the child to
9 school; or

10 (iii) any other method approved by the county
11 agency.

12 Section 1306-B. Regulations.

13 The department shall promulgate regulations necessary to
14 carry out the provisions of this article no later than 270 days
15 from the effective date of this section.

16 Section 2. Section 1305 of the act of March 10, 1949
17 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949, is
18 repealed insofar as it is inconsistent with Article XIII-B of
19 the act.

20 Section 3. This act shall take effect in 60 days.