
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL

No. 237 Session of
2019

INTRODUCED BY TOOHL, CALTAGIRONE, MURT, STEPHENS, QUINN,
BERNSTINE, MACKENZIE, T. DAVIS, JONES AND ZIMMERMAN,
JANUARY 28, 2019

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN AND YOUTH, JANUARY 28, 2019

AN ACT

1 Amending Title 23 (Domestic Relations) of the Pennsylvania
2 Consolidated Statutes, in adoption, further providing for
3 home study and preplacement report and for report of
4 intention to adopt, repealing provisions relating to report
5 of intermediary and exhibits, further providing for
6 investigation, for contents of petition for adoption and for
7 exhibits, providing for permissible reimbursement of expenses
8 and further providing for time of entry of decree of
9 adoption.

10 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
11 hereby enacts as follows:

12 Section 1. Sections 2530(a) and (c) and 2531(b)(3) and (4)
13 of Title 23 of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes are
14 amended to read:

15 § 2530. Home study and preplacement report.

16 (a) General rule.--[No intermediary shall place a child] A
17 child shall not be placed in the physical care or custody of a
18 prospective adoptive parent or parents unless a home study
19 containing a favorable recommendation for placement of a child
20 with the prospective parent or parents has been completed within
21 three years prior thereto and which has been supplemented within

1 one year prior thereto. The home study shall be conducted by a
2 local public child-care agency, an adoption agency or a licensed
3 social worker designated by the court to perform such study.

4 * * *

5 (c) Interim placement.--Where a home study required under
6 this section is in process, but not yet completed, [an
7 intermediary may place] a child may be placed in the physical
8 care or custody of a prospective adoptive parent or parents if
9 all of the following conditions are met:

10 (1) [The intermediary has] There is no reason to believe
11 that the prospective adoptive parent or parents would not
12 receive a favorable recommendation for placement as a result
13 of the home study.

14 (2) The individual or agency conducting the home study
15 assents to the interim placement.

16 (3) The [intermediary immediately notifies the] court is
17 immediately notified of the interim placement and the
18 identity of the individual or agency conducting the home
19 study. If at any time prior to the completion of the home
20 study the court is notified by the individual or agency
21 conducting the home study that it withdraws its assent to the
22 interim placement, the court may order the placement of the
23 child in temporary foster care with an agency until a
24 favorable recommendation for placement is received.

25 § 2531. Report of intention to adopt.

26 * * *

27 (b) Contents.--The report shall set forth:

28 * * *

29 (3) The name and address of the intermediary, if an
30 intermediary is being utilized.

1 (4) An itemized accounting of moneys and consideration
2 paid or to be paid to the intermediary, if an intermediary is
3 being utilized.

4 * * *

5 Section 2. Sections 2533 and 2534 of Title 23 are repealed:

6 [§ 2533. Report of intermediary.]

7 (a) General rule.--Within six months after filing the report
8 of intention to adopt, the intermediary who or which arranged
9 the adoption placement of any child under the age of 18 years
10 shall make a written report under oath to the court in which the
11 petition for adoption will be filed and shall thereupon
12 forthwith notify in writing the adopting parent or parents of
13 the fact that the report has been filed and the date thereof.

14 (b) Contents.--The report shall set forth:

15 (1) The name and address of the intermediary.

16 (2) The name, sex, racial background, age, date and
17 place of birth and religious affiliation of the child.

18 (3) The date of the placement of the child with the
19 adopting parent or parents.

20 (4) The name, racial background, age, marital status as
21 of the time of birth of the child and during one year prior
22 thereto, and religious affiliation of the parents of the
23 child.

24 (5) Identification of proceedings in which any decree of
25 termination of parental rights, or parental rights and
26 duties, with respect to the child was entered.

27 (6) The residence of the parents or parent of the child,
28 if there has been no such decree of termination.

29 (7) A statement that all consents required by section
30 2711 (relating to consents necessary to adoption) are

1 attached as exhibits or the basis upon which the consents are
2 not required.

3 (8) An itemized accounting of moneys and consideration
4 paid or to be paid to or received by the intermediary or to
5 or by any other person or persons to the knowledge of the
6 intermediary by reason of the adoption placement.

7 (9) A full description and statement of the value of all
8 property owned or possessed by the child.

9 (10) A statement that no provision of any statute
10 regulating the interstate placement of children has been
11 violated with respect to the placement of the child.

12 (11) If no birth certificate or certification of
13 registration of birth can be obtained, a statement of the
14 reason therefor.

15 (12) A statement that medical history information was
16 obtained and if not obtained, a statement of the reason
17 therefor.

18 (c) Appropriate relief.--The court may provide appropriate
19 relief where it finds that the moneys or consideration reported
20 or reportable pursuant to subsection (b) (8) are excessive.

21 (d) Permissible reimbursement of expenses.--Payments made by
22 the adoptive parents to an intermediary or a third party for
23 reimbursement of the following expenses, calculated without
24 regard to the income of the adoptive parents, are permissible
25 and are not in violation of 18 Pa.C.S. § 4305 (relating to
26 dealing in infant children):

27 (1) Medical and hospital expenses incurred by the
28 natural mother for prenatal care and those medical and
29 hospital expenses incurred by the natural mother and child
30 incident to birth.

1 (2) Medical, hospital and foster care expenses incurred
2 on behalf of the child prior to the decree of adoption.

3 (3) Reasonable expenses incurred by the agency or a
4 third party for adjustment counseling and training services
5 provided to the adoptive parents and for home studies or
6 investigations.

7 (4) Reasonable administrative expenses incurred by the
8 agency, to include overhead costs and attorney fees.

9 § 2534. Exhibits.

10 The report of the intermediary shall have attached to it the
11 following exhibits:

12 (1) A birth certificate or certification of registration
13 of birth of the child if it can be obtained.

14 (2) All consents to adoption required by section 2711
15 (relating to consents necessary to adoption).

16 (3) A certified copy of any decree of termination of
17 parental rights or parental rights and duties made by a court
18 other than the court in which the petition for adoption will
19 be filed.]

20 Section 3. Sections 2535(a), 2701 and 2702 of Title 23 are
21 amended to read:

22 § 2535. Investigation.

23 (a) General rule.--When a report required by section 2531
24 (relating to report of intention to adopt) has been filed, the
25 court shall cause an investigation to be made and a report filed
26 by a local public child care agency, a voluntary child care
27 agency with its consent or an appropriate person designated by
28 the court. In lieu of the investigation, the court may accept an
29 investigation made by the agency which placed the child [and the
30 report of investigation in such cases may be incorporated into

1 the report of the intermediary required by section 2533
2 (relating to report of intermediary)].

3 * * *

4 § 2701. Contents of petition for adoption.

5 A petition for adoption shall set forth:

6 (1) The full name, residence, marital status, age,
7 occupation, religious affiliation and racial background of
8 the adopting parent or parents and their relationship, if
9 any, to the adoptee.

10 (2) That the reports under sections 2530 (relating to
11 home study and preplacement report) [,] and 2531 (relating to
12 report of intention to adopt) [and 2533 (relating to report
13 of intermediary)] have been filed, if required.

14 (3) The name and address of the intermediary, if any.

15 (4) The full name, sex, racial background, age, date and
16 place of birth and religious affiliation of the adoptee and
17 the fact and length of time of the residence of the adoptee
18 with the adopting parent or parents.

19 (5) [If there is no intermediary or if no report of the
20 intermediary has been filed or if the adoptee is over the age
21 of 18 years, all vital statistics and other information
22 enumerated and required to be stated of record by section
23 2533, so far as applicable.] The name, racial background,
24 age, marital status as of the time of birth of the child and
25 during one year prior to the birth of the child, and
26 religious affiliation of the parents of the child.

27 (6) If a change in name of the adoptee is desired, the
28 new name.

29 (7) That all consents required by section 2711 (relating
30 to consents necessary to adoption) are attached as exhibits

1 or the basis upon which such consents are not required.

2 (8) That it is the desire of the petitioner or the
3 petitioners that the relationship of parent and child be
4 established between the petitioner or petitioners and the
5 adoptee.

6 (9) If no birth certificate or certification of
7 registration of birth can be obtained, a statement of the
8 reason therefor and an allegation of the efforts made to
9 obtain the certificate with a request that the court
10 establish a date and place of birth at the adoption hearing
11 on the basis of the evidence presented.

12 (10) An itemized accounting of money and consideration
13 paid or to be paid to or received by an intermediary or any
14 other person or persons to the knowledge of the intermediary
15 by reason of the adoption placement.

16 (11) A statement that medical history information was
17 obtained and, if not obtained, a statement of the reason
18 therefor.

19 (12) A statement that no provision of any statute
20 regulating the interstate placement of children has been
21 violated with respect to the placement of the child.

22 § 2702. Exhibits.

23 The petition shall have attached to it the following
24 exhibits:

25 (1) The consent or consents required by section 2711
26 (relating to consents necessary to adoption).

27 [(2) If not already filed with a report of an
28 intermediary, the exhibits enumerated in section 2534
29 (relating to exhibits).]

30 (3) A birth certificate or certification of registration

1 of birth of the child if it can be obtained.

2 (4) A certified copy of any decree of termination of
3 parental rights or parental rights and duties made by a court
4 other than the court in which the petition for adoption will
5 be filed.

6 (5) A full description and statement of the value of all
7 property owned or possessed by the child.

8 Section 4. Title 23 is amended by adding a section to read:
9 § 2726. Permissible reimbursement of expenses.

10 Payments made by the adoptive parents to an intermediary for
11 reimbursement of the following expenses, calculated without
12 regard to the income of the adoptive parents, are permissible
13 and are not in violation of 18 Pa.C.S. § 4305 (relating to
14 dealing in infant children):

15 (1) Medical and hospital expenses incurred by the birth
16 mother for prenatal care and those medical and hospital
17 expenses incurred by the birth mother and child incident to
18 birth.

19 (2) Medical, hospital and foster care expenses incurred
20 on behalf of the child prior to the decree of adoption.

21 (3) Reasonable expenses incurred by the agency or a
22 third party for adjustment counseling and training services
23 provided to the adoptive parents and for home studies or
24 investigations.

25 (4) Reasonable administrative expenses incurred by the
26 agency, to include overhead costs and attorney fees.

27 (5) Reasonable living expenses incurred by the birth
28 mother three months prior to the due date of the child and 60
29 days after the birth of the child. Living expenses may
30 include food, rent, utilities, maternity clothing and an

1 amount not to exceed \$300 for expenses and transportation
2 costs associated with prenatal, maternity and postmaternity
3 care.

4 Section 5. Section 2901 of Title 23 is amended to read:

5 § 2901. Time of entry of decree of adoption.

6 Unless the court for cause shown determines otherwise, no
7 decree of adoption shall be entered unless the [natural] birth
8 parent or parents' rights have been terminated, the
9 investigation required by section 2535 (relating to
10 investigation) has been completed[, the report of the
11 intermediary has been filed pursuant to section 2533 (relating
12 to report of intermediary)] and all other legal requirements
13 have been met. If all legal requirements have been met, the
14 court may enter a decree of adoption at any time.

15 Section 6. This act shall take effect in 60 days.