



# Senate

General Assembly

**File No. 26**

February Session, 2016

Senate Bill No. 72

*Senate, March 10, 2016*

The Committee on Children reported through SEN. BARTOLOMEO of the 13th Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the Senate, that the bill ought to pass.

***AN ACT CONCERNING A NOTIFICATION OF SUPPORT FOR FOSTER PARENTS AND RELATIVE CAREGIVERS.***

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

1 Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective October 1, 2016*) (a) Not later than January  
2 1, 2017, the Department of Children and Families shall develop a  
3 notification of support to inform foster parents and relative caregivers  
4 of their privileges under various state programs. On and after January  
5 1, 2017, the department shall provide a copy of the notification of  
6 support to foster parents and relative caregivers at the time of the  
7 placement of a child with the foster parent or relative caregiver and  
8 upon request of a foster parent or relative caregiver.

9 (b) The notification of support shall include, but need not be limited  
10 to, information regarding:

11 (1) The foster parent's and relative caregiver's privilege to be a  
12 member of the child's placement and treatment teams and to be  
13 notified of and included in meetings scheduled by the department

14 concerning the child;

15 (2) The foster parent's and relative caregiver's privilege to  
16 communicate with the child's social worker to share information  
17 regarding the child's domestic, social, educational, medical and mental  
18 health needs;

19 (3) The foster parent's and relative caregiver's privilege to be timely  
20 notified of all court hearings and administrative case review meetings  
21 including, but not limited to, permanency hearings and hearings on  
22 motions to revoke commitment concerning a child in the care of the  
23 foster parent or relative caregiver;

24 (4) The foster parent's and relative caregiver's privilege to be  
25 provided with information, support and guidance from professional  
26 service providers, including, but not limited to, referrals to other  
27 professionals regarding the child and assistance in identifying and  
28 obtaining services for a child in the care of the foster parent or relative  
29 caregiver;

30 (5) The foster parent's and relative caregiver's privilege to receive  
31 open and timely responses to requests for information or services that  
32 are relevant to the care of a child in the care of the foster parent or  
33 relative caregiver, including, but not limited to, access to a regional  
34 office on-call system and careline numbers to enable the foster parent  
35 or relative caregiver to contact professional staff after normal business  
36 hours;

37 (6) For a foster parent or relative caregiver who accepts an  
38 emergency placement, the foster parent's and relative caregiver's  
39 privilege to be provided with information to meet the child's  
40 immediate needs not later than twenty-four hours after the time the  
41 child is placed or, if such information about the child is not available at  
42 the time of placement, not later than thirty days after the date of  
43 placement;

44 (7) The foster parent's and relative caregiver's privilege to have

45 access to records pertaining to the domestic, social, educational,  
46 medical and mental health needs of a child placed or being considered  
47 for placement with such foster parent or relative caregiver, provided  
48 no information identifying the child's birth parents shall be disclosed  
49 without such birth parents' permission;

50 (8) The foster parent's and relative caregiver's privilege to be  
51 provided information concerning the department's policies regarding  
52 the role and responsibilities of a foster parent or relative caregiver;

53 (9) The foster parent's and relative caregiver's privilege to be  
54 provided appropriate training and support to enhance the parent's or  
55 caregiver's relevant skills in order to meet any post-licensing training  
56 requirements;

57 (10) The foster parent's and relative caregiver's privilege to express  
58 concerns about a child's treatment plan, advocate for services on behalf  
59 of a child, refuse to accept a child for placement, request removal of a  
60 child for good cause or communicate with a child's former foster  
61 parent, prospective adoptive parent, relative caregiver or birth parent  
62 without risk of retaliation by the department;

63 (11) The foster parent's and relative caregiver's privilege to seek  
64 assistance regarding the problem resolution process through the  
65 department's chain of command as described in the department's  
66 Foster Parent and Adoptive Parent Handbook; and

67 (12) The foster parent's and relative caregiver's privilege to be  
68 provided with a copy of the notification of support upon a child's  
69 placement with the foster parent or relative caregiver and at any time  
70 thereafter upon request of the foster parent or relative caregiver  
71 pursuant to subsection (a) of this section.

72 (c) Nothing in this section shall be construed as creating or  
73 permitting a cause of action for a violation of any provision of this  
74 section.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
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Section 1	<i>October 1, 2016</i>	New section
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**KID**      *Joint Favorable*

The following Fiscal Impact Statement and Bill Analysis are prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose. In general, fiscal impacts are based upon a variety of informational sources, including the analyst's professional knowledge. Whenever applicable, agency data is consulted as part of the analysis, however final products do not necessarily reflect an assessment from any specific department.

**OFA Fiscal Note**

**State Impact:**

<b>Agency Affected</b>	<b>Fund-Effect</b>	<b>FY 17 \$</b>	<b>FY 18 \$</b>
Children & Families, Dept.	GF - Cost	approx. 500	approx. 500

Note: GF=General Fund

**Municipal Impact:** None

**Explanation**

The bill results in an annual cost of approximately \$500 to the Department of Children and Families (DCF), associated with providing a notification of privileges to foster parents/relative caregivers when a child is placed with them, or upon request. There were 3,292 foster parents and relative caregivers as of January 2016. An expenditure assumption of \$0.15 per document, per parent/caregiver, results in a cost of \$494. While some individuals will allow this document to be emailed to them at no cost to the agency, the fiscal impact of approximately \$500 remains in order to account for duplicative copies provided by DCF upon request.

**The Out Years**

The annualized ongoing fiscal impact identified above would continue into the future subject to the number of foster parents and relative caregivers, and inflation.

Sources: Department of Children and Families' January Comprehensive Financial Status Report

**OLR Bill Analysis****SB 72*****AN ACT CONCERNING A NOTIFICATION OF SUPPORT FOR FOSTER PARENTS AND RELATIVE CAREGIVERS.*****SUMMARY:**

This bill requires the Department of Children and Families (DCF), by January 1, 2017, to develop a form informing foster parents and relative caregivers of the support they may receive from the department. Starting January 1, 2017, the department must provide the form to foster parents and relative caregivers when it places a child with them and on request. The bill does not create or permit a cause of action for a violation of any of its provisions.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2016

**NOTIFICATION OF SUPPORT**

The DCF form (“notification of support”) must inform foster parents and relative caregivers of the following support and services they may receive from DCF, as well as actions they may take as parents and relative caregivers, with regard to children in their care. These include, to:

1. be a member of the child’s placement and treatment teams and be notified of, and included in, DCF meetings concerning the child;
2. communicate with the child’s social worker regarding the child’s domestic, social, educational, medical, and mental health needs;
3. be timely notified of all court hearings and administrative case review meetings, including permanency hearings and hearings on motions to revoke commitment of a child in the care of the

- foster parent or relative caregiver;
4. receive information, support, and guidance from professional service providers, including referrals to other professionals regarding the child and assistance in identifying and obtaining services;
  5. receive open and timely responses to requests for information or services related to the care of the child, including access to a regional office on-call system and careline numbers to enable the foster parent or relative caregiver to contact professional staff after normal business hours;
  6. have access to records of the domestic, social, educational, medical, and mental health needs of a child placed or considered for placement with the foster parent or relative caregiver, provided information identifying the child's birth parents is not disclosed without such parent's permission;
  7. receive information on DCF policies on the roles and responsibilities of a foster parent or relative caregiver;
  8. receive appropriate training and support to enhance the relevant skills of the foster parent or relative caregiver to meet any post-licensing training requirements;
  9. express concerns about a child's treatment plan, advocate for services on the child's behalf, refuse to accept a child for placement, or request a child's removal for good cause;
  10. communicate with a child's former foster parent, prospective adoptive parent, relative caregiver, or birth parent without risk of DCF retaliation;
  11. seek help in navigating DCF's problem resolution process described in its Foster Parent and Adoptive Parent Handbook (the Foster Care Manual on the DCF website);

12. receive a copy of the notification of support when a child is placed and subsequently on request; and
13. expect to receive information to meet the child's immediate needs no later than 24 hours after a foster parent or relative caregiver accepts an emergency placement, or if such information is not immediately available, no later than 30 days after placement.

**COMMITTEE ACTION**

Committee on Children

Joint Favorable

Yea 11    Nay 0    (02/25/2016)