
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL

No. 1808 Session of
2015

INTRODUCED BY TOOHL, LEWIS, BOBACK, R. BROWN, DEAN, FEE,
HARHART, A. HARRIS, HICKERNELL, McNEILL, MILLARD, MURT,
PICKETT, ROTHMAN, STEPHENS AND WARD, JANUARY 27, 2016

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN AND YOUTH, JANUARY 27, 2016

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
19 context clearly indicates otherwise:

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

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

13 (1) A child who is the care and responsibility of the
14 Commonwealth and placed in foster care, as defined in 45 CFR
15 1355.20 (relating to definitions), pursuant to 42 Pa.C.S. §
16 6351 (relating to disposition of dependent child) or 6352
17 (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 If a child has been removed from the child's home under a
30 voluntary placement agreement or is in the legal custody of the

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

10 (1) Assurances that the placement of the child takes
11 into account the appropriateness of the current educational
12 setting and the change in proximity to the school where the
13 child is enrolled at the time of placement or a change in
14 placement.

15 (2) Either:

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

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

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

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

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

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