

at a day training center or group training home or combination thereof or otherwise.

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CHAPTER 311

[Engrossed Substitute House Bill No. 906]

DEVELOPMENTALLY DISABLED JUVENILES—OUT-OF-HOME PLACEMENT—COURT REVIEW

AN ACT Relating to developmentally disabled juveniles; amending section 31, chapter 291, Laws of 1977 ex. sess. as last amended by section 4, chapter 129, Laws of 1982 and RCW 13.34.030; amending section 6, chapter 160, Laws of 1913 as last amended by section 17, chapter 3, Laws of 1983 and RCW 13.34.070; amending section 5, chapter 302, Laws of 1961 as last amended by section 44, chapter 155, Laws of 1979 and RCW 13.34.110; amending section 41, chapter 291, Laws of 1977 ex. sess. as amended by section 46, chapter 155, Laws of 1979 and RCW 13.34.130; and creating a new section.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of the State of Washington:

NEW SECTION. Sec. 1. The legislature finds that in order for the state to receive federal funds for family foster care under Title IV-B and Title IV-E of the social security act, all children in family foster care must be subjected to periodic court review. Unfortunately, this includes children who are developmentally disabled and who are placed in family foster care solely because their parents have determined that the children's service needs require out-of-home placement. Except for providing such needed services, the parents of these children are completely competent to care for the children. The legislature intends by this act to minimize the embarrassment and inconvenience of developmentally disabled persons and their families caused by complying with these federal requirements.

Sec. 2. Section 31, chapter 291, Laws of 1977 ex. sess. as last amended by section 4, chapter 129, Laws of 1982 and RCW 13.34.030 are each amended to read as follows:

For purposes of this chapter:

(1) "Child" and "juvenile" means any individual under the age of eighteen years;

(2) "Dependent child" means any child:

(a) Who has been abandoned; that is, where the child's parent, guardian, or other custodian has evidenced either by statement or conduct, a settled intent to forego, for an extended period, all parental rights or all parental responsibilities despite an ability to do so; ((or))

(b) Who is abused or neglected as defined in chapter 26.44 RCW by a person legally responsible for the care of the child; ((or))

(c) Who has no parent, guardian, or custodian willing and capable of adequately caring for the child, such that the child is in circumstances which constitute a danger of substantial damage to the child's psychological or physical development; or

(d) Who is developmentally disabled, as defined in RCW 71.20.016 and whose parent, guardian, or legal custodian together with the department determines that services appropriate to the child's needs can not be provided in the home. However, (a), (b), and (c) of this subsection may still be applied if other reasons for removal of the child from the home exist.

Sec. 3. Section 6, chapter 160, Laws of 1913 as last amended by section 17, chapter 3, Laws of 1983 and RCW 13.34.070 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) Upon the filing of the petition, the clerk of the court shall issue a summons, one directed to the child, if the child is twelve or more years of age, and another to the parents, guardian, or custodian, and such other persons as appear to the court to be proper or necessary parties to the proceedings, requiring them to appear personally before the court at the time fixed to hear the petition. If the child is developmentally disabled and not living at home, the notice shall be given to the child's custodian as well as to the child's parent. The developmentally disabled child shall not be required to appear unless requested by the court. Where the custodian is summoned, the parent or guardian or both shall also be served with a summons. The hearing on the petition shall be set for a time no later than forty-five days after the filing of the petition and shall be held at such time, unless for good cause the hearing is continued to a later time at the request of either party.

(2) A copy of the petition shall be attached to each summons.

(3) The summons shall advise the parties of the right to counsel.

(4) The judge may endorse upon the summons an order directing any parent, guardian, or custodian having the custody or control of the child to bring the child to the hearing.

(5) If it appears from affidavit or sworn statement presented to the judge that there is probable cause for the issuance of a warrant of arrest or that the child needs to be taken into custody pursuant to RCW 13.34.050, the judge may endorse upon the summons an order that an officer serving the summons shall at once take the child into custody and take him to the place of shelter designated by the court.

(6) If the person summoned as provided in this section is subject to an order of the court pursuant to subsection (4) or (5) of this section, and if the person fails to abide by the order, he may be proceeded against as for contempt of court. The order endorsed upon the summons shall conspicuously display the following legend:

NOTICE:
VIOLATION OF THIS ORDER
IS SUBJECT TO PROCEEDING

FOR CONTEMPT OF COURT
PURSUANT TO RCW 13.34.070.

(7) If a party to be served with a summons can be found within the state, the summons shall be served upon the party personally at least five court days before the fact-finding hearing, or such time as set by the court. If the party is within the state and cannot be personally served, but the party's address is known or can with reasonable diligence be ascertained, the summons may be served upon the party by mailing a copy thereof by certified mail at least ten court days before the hearing, or such time as set by the court. If a party other than the child is without the state but can be found or the address is known, or can with reasonable diligence be ascertained, service of the summons may be made either by delivering a copy thereof to the party personally or by mailing a copy thereof to the party by certified mail at least ten court days before the fact-finding hearing, or such time as set by the court.

(8) Service of summons may be made under the direction of the court by any person eighteen years of age or older who is not a party to the proceedings or by any law enforcement officer, probation counselor, or department of social and health services social worker.

(9) In any proceeding brought under this chapter where the court knows or has reason to know that the child involved is a member of an Indian tribe, notice of the pendency of the proceeding shall also be sent by registered mail, return receipt requested, to the child's tribe. If the identity or location of the tribe cannot be determined, such notice shall be transmitted to the secretary of the interior of the United States.

Sec. 4. Section 5, chapter 302, Laws of 1961 as last amended by section 44, chapter 155, Laws of 1979 and RCW 13.34.110 are each amended to read as follows:

The court shall hold a fact-finding hearing on the petition and, unless the court dismisses the petition, shall make written findings of fact, stating the reasons therefor, and after it has announced its findings of fact shall hold a hearing to consider disposition of the case immediately following the fact-finding hearing or at a continued hearing within fourteen days or longer for good cause shown. The parties need not appear at the fact-finding or dispositional hearing if all are in agreement; but the court shall receive and review a social study before entering an order based on agreement. No social file or social study may be considered by the court in connection with the fact-finding hearing or prior to factual determination, except as otherwise admissible under the rules of evidence. Notice of the time and place of the continued hearing may be given in open court. If notice in open court is not given to a party, that party shall be notified by mail of the time and place of any continued hearing.

All hearings may be conducted at any time or place within the limits of the county, and such cases may not be heard in conjunction with other

business of any other division of the superior court. The general public shall be excluded, and only such persons may be admitted who are found by the judge to have a direct interest in the case or in the work of the court.

Stenographic notes or any device which accurately records the proceedings may be required as provided in other civil cases pursuant to RCW 2.32.200.

Sec. 5. Section 41, chapter 291, Laws of 1977 ex. sess. as amended by section 46, chapter 155, Laws of 1979 and RCW 13.34.130 are each amended to read as follows:

If, after a fact-finding hearing pursuant to RCW 13.34.110, as now or hereafter amended, it has been proven by a preponderance of the evidence that the child is dependent within the meaning of RCW 13.34.030(2); after consideration of the predisposition report prepared pursuant to RCW 13.34.110 and after a disposition hearing has been held pursuant to RCW 13.34.110, the court shall enter an order of disposition pursuant to this section.

(1) The court shall order one of the following dispositions of the case:

(a) Order a disposition other than removal of the child from his or her home, which shall provide a program designed to alleviate the immediate danger to the child, to mitigate or cure any damage the child has already suffered, and to aid the parents so that the child will not be endangered in the future. In selecting a program, the court should choose those services that least interfere with family autonomy, provided that the services are adequate to protect the child.

(b) Order that the child be removed from his or her home and ordered into the custody, control, and care of a relative or the department of social and health services or a licensed child placing agency for placement in a foster family home or group care facility licensed pursuant to chapter 74.15 RCW or in a home not required to be licensed pursuant to chapter 74.15 RCW. Such an order may be made only if:

(i) There is no parent or guardian available to care for such child; ((or))

(ii) The child is unwilling to reside in the custody of the child's parent, guardian, or legal custodian; ((or))

(iii) The parent, guardian, or legal custodian is not willing to take custody of the child; ((or))

(iv) A manifest danger exists that the child will suffer serious abuse or neglect if the child is not removed from the home; or

(v) The extent of the child's disability is such that the parent, guardian, or legal custodian is unable to provide the necessary care for the child and the parent, guardian, or legal custodian has determined that the child would benefit from placement outside of the home.

(2) Whenever a child is ordered removed from the child's home, the agency charged with his or her care shall provide the court with a specific plan as to where the child will be placed, what steps will be taken to return

the child home, and what actions the agency will take to maintain parent-child ties.

(a) The agency plan shall specify what services the parents will be offered in order to enable them to resume custody and what requirements the parents must meet in order to resume custody.

(b) The agency shall be required to encourage the maximum parent-child contact possible, including regular visitation and participation by the parents in the care of the child while the child is in placement.

(c) A child shall be placed as close to the child's home as possible, preferably in the child's own neighborhood, unless the court finds that placement at a greater distance is necessary to promote the child's or parents' well-being.

(d) The agency charged with supervising a child in placement shall provide all reasonable services that are available within the agency, or within the community, or those services which the department of social and health services has existing contracts to purchase. It shall report to the court if it is unable to provide such services.

(3) The status of all children found to be dependent shall be reviewed by the court at least every six months at a hearing in which it shall be determined whether court supervision should continue.

(a) A child shall be returned home at the review hearing unless the court finds that a reason for removal as set forth in this section still exists. When a child is returned, casework supervision shall continue for a period of six months, at which time there shall be a hearing on the need for continued intervention.

(b) If the child is not returned home, the court shall establish in writing:

(i) What services have been provided to or offered to the parties to facilitate reunion;

(ii) The extent to which the parents have visited the child and any reasons why visitation has not occurred or has been infrequent;

(iii) Whether the agency is satisfied with the cooperation given to it by the parents;

(iv) Whether additional services are needed to facilitate the return of the child to the child's parents; if so, the court shall order that reasonable services be offered; and

(v) When return of the child can be expected.

(c) The court at the review hearing may order that a petition seeking termination of the parent and child relationship be filed.

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