

YOUTH GUIDE TO HB 151

Placement with Relatives and Family Friends

Current law: If you can't live at home, OCS is supposed to find a relative or safe family friend for you to live with before placing you in a foster home. This is true at the beginning of your case and any time you need to change placement.

 HB 151 adds: An OCS supervisor has to certify that a relative search has been made; if it hasn't, then it needs to happen quickly.

 HB 151 also adds: OCS is supposed to help your relative fill out an application for a foster care license so they can have enough money to take care of you.

 HB 151 also adds: If your relative applies for a license, OCS is supposed to give them an answer (approve or deny the application) within 45 days.

Remaining in the Home with a Safe Parent or Relative

Current law: When you're in OCS custody, you may be allowed to live at home if one of your parents is safe (your other parent may be required to leave).

 HB 151 adds: You may be allowed to live at home if a safe adult relative lives with you.

Contact with Siblings and Previous Placements

Current law: You and your siblings are supposed to be placed together, if possible.

 HB 151 adds: If you're separated from your sibling, OCS must give each of you contact information (like phone numbers) for the other, and your caregivers should make sure you're able to contact and see each other. This is true even if any of you have been adopted - siblings are still siblings.

 HB 151 also adds: You should also be allowed to have contact with previous placements, if that would be in your best interests.

Participation in Activities



HB 151 says: Your foster parents can make decisions about your participation in activities, including travel, sports, field trips, overnight activities, and extracurricular, enrichment, cultural, and social activities. Their decisions are supposed to keep you healthy and safe, and encourage your emotional and developmental growth.

Participation in Case Planning and Permanency Goals



HB 151 says: If you're 14 or older, OCS has to include you in meetings to make your case plan and decide on a permanency goal. You are allowed to pick two adults to come to the meetings (unless OCS objects for a good reason), and you can pick one of the adults to be your advocate.

Adoption and Guardianship Subsidies

Current law: Your adoptive parent or legal guardian can receive a subsidy (a monthly payment so they can afford to take care of you) until you are 18.



HB 151 change: The subsidy can continue until you are 21.

Documents when you are Released from OCS Custody



HB 151 says: If you're 16 or older and released from OCS custody, you should be provided with (or get help obtaining) your birth certificate, social security card, health insurance information, medical records, driver's license or ID card, and Certificate of Degree of Indian/Alaska Native Blood.

OCS Training and Workload Standards



HB 151 requires OCS to provide more training and lower caseloads for newer workers. Also, OCS is required to write a report to the legislature if it is having trouble hiring and keeping enough workers to do their jobs.