

Senator Jesse Bjorkman

Alaska State Legislature

Session Address:

Alaska State Capitol, Rm. 9
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182
Phone: (907) 465-2828
Toll Free: (800) 964-5733

**Interim Address:**

145 Main Street Loop, Ste. 226
Kenai, Alaska 99611-7771
Phone: (907) 283-7996
Fax: (907) 283-8127

Senate Bill 181 Child Placement; Diligent Search

Version H Sectional Analysis

Section 1: Adds language to AS 47.10.080(s) to clarify that foster parents may request a hearing regarding the Department of Family and Community Services' (DFCS) decision to transfer a child out of the foster home.

Section 2: Amends AS 47.10.088(i) to allow for determination of the best interest of the child when making decisions regarding permanent placement of a child. For exceptions to family notification requirements, the section changes the criteria from a person being ineligible for a foster care license to a placement not being in the best interest of the child. This section also adds language regarding determination of best interest, including whether a child is under six years old and has been in the care of the foster family for at least 12 consecutive months.

Section 3: Adds language to AS 47.10.142(i) that conforms to the changes in Section 4.

Section 4: Adds a new section, AS 47.10.145, that requires the Department search for adult family members and family friends suitable for placement of a child within 30 days of the State removing the child from the home, describes what constitutes a diligent statutorily required search, and requires ongoing searches until excused to do so by the court or the child is in a permanent placement.

Section 5: Adds language to AS 47.14.100(e) allowing for consideration of placement with a foster family of children who are under six years old and have been in the care of that foster family for at least 12 consecutive months when an adult family member has also expressed interest. Also amends language to conform to the change in Section 4.

Section 6: Amends AS 47.14.100(m) to remove language prohibiting placement with a family member if the family member does not meet the requirements for a foster care license. Adds language that denying placement due to the best interest of a child with a family member may not include consideration of poverty of the family member or inadequate or crowded housing.

Section 7: Provides for a January 1, 2025 effective date.