

2013 ACT 55

FAMILY FINDING AND KINSHIP CARE

Section 19. Section 1301 of the act, added September 30, 2003 (P.L.169, No.25), is amended to read:

Section 1301. [Scope] **Legislative intent.**

[This article relates to the Kinship Care Program.] **This article is intended to ensure that family finding occurs on an ongoing basis for all children entering the child welfare system. This article is also intended to promote the use of kinship care when it is necessary to remove a child from the child's home in an effort to:**

(1) **Identify and build positive connections between the child and the child's relatives and kin.**

(2) **Support the engagement of relatives and kin in children and youth social service planning and delivery.**

(3) **Create a network of extended family support to assist in remedying the concerns that led the child to be involved with the county agency.**

Section 20. Section 1302 of the act is amended by adding definitions to read:

Section 1302. Definitions.

The following words and phrases when used in this article shall have the meanings given to them in this section unless the context clearly indicates otherwise:

"Accept for service." Decide on the basis of the needs and problems of an individual to admit or receive the individual as a client of the county agency or as required by a court order entered under 42 Pa.C.S. Ch. 63 (relating to juvenile matters).

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"Family finding." Ongoing diligent efforts between a county agency, or its contracted providers, and relatives and kin to:

(1) **Search for and identify adult relatives and kin and engage them in children and youth social service planning and delivery.**

(2) **Gain commitment from relatives and kin to support a child or parent receiving children and youth social services.**

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Section 21. The act is amended by adding sections to read:
Section 1302.1. **Family finding required.**

Family finding shall be conducted for a child when the child is accepted for services and at least annually thereafter, until the child's involvement with the county agency is terminated or the family finding is discontinued in accordance with section 1302.2.

Section 1302.2. **Discontinuance of family finding.**

(a) General rule.--A county agency may discontinue family finding for a child under the following circumstances:

(1) The child has been adjudicated dependent pursuant to 42 Pa.C.S. Ch. 63 (relating to juvenile matters), and a court has made a specific determination that continued family finding no longer serves the best interests of the child or is a threat to the child's safety.

(2) The child is not under the jurisdiction of a court, and the county agency has determined that continued family finding is a threat to the child's safety. A determination that continued family finding is a threat to the child's safety must be based on credible information about a specific safety threat, and the county agency shall document the reasons for its determination.

(3) The child is in a preadoptive placement, and court proceedings to adopt the child have been commenced pursuant to 23 Pa.C.S. Pt. III (relating to adoption).

(b) Resuming family finding.--Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection (a), a county agency shall resume family finding for a child if:

(1) the child is under the jurisdiction of a court, and the court determines that resuming family finding is best suited to the safety, protection and physical, mental and moral welfare of the child and does not pose a threat to the child's safety; or

(2) the child is not under the jurisdiction of a court, and the county agency determines that resuming family finding serves the best interest of the child and does not pose a threat to the child's safety.