

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
76R10544 CMR-D

H.B. 3271
By: Goodman (Harris)
Jurisprudence
4/29/1999
Engrossed

DIGEST

Currently, the Office of Court Administration administers a system of 36 court masters (masters) through a contract with the Office of the Attorney General. The masters hear child support cases in about 40 areas of the state. After the court hearing, however, most of these cases are not monitored to prevent further child support delinquencies. H.B. 3271 would establish conditions regarding the coordination of child support collection and parent location functions of certain state agencies.

PURPOSE

As proposed, H.B. 3271 establishes conditions regarding the coordination of child support collection and parent location functions of certain state agencies.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

This bill does not grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, institution, or agency.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Chapter 231A, Family Code, by adding Section 231.011, as follows:

Sec. 231.011. COOPERATION WITH DEPARTMENT OF PROTECTIVE AND REGULATORY SERVICES. Defines "department." Sets forth requirements for the Title IV-D agency to the extent possible, regarding certain aspects of child support monitoring and collection.

SECTION 2. Amends Chapter 231D, Family Code, by adding Section 231.310, as follows:

Sec. 231.310. INTERAGENCY WORK GROUP. Requires the Title IV-D agency to establish a work group to facilitate the sharing of data and resources to locate parents and relatives of children served by the Title IV-D agency and other health and human services agencies. Sets forth representatives of certain entities that make up the work group. Requires the commissioner of human services or the commissioner's designee to serve as the work group's presiding officer. Requires the work group to evaluate the procedures used by each agency in the work group to locate parents and relatives of children served by the agencies and develop a mechanism to ensure that each agency in the work group or any private contractor is able to access information in the database of each other agency without paying a fee. Requires the work group to evaluate opportunities for using outside contracting and coordinating efforts with other community resources. Requires the Department of Protective and Regulatory Services (DPRS) and the Title IV-D agency, when possible, to use outside contractors and community resources to locate parents in child protection and child support cases.

SECTION 3. Amends Chapter 264C, Family Code, by adding Section 264.208, as follows:

Sec. 264.208. LOCATION OF PARENTS. Requires DPRS to create a division staffed by personnel trained in locating parents and relatives of children throughout the state. Requires DPRS to use outside contractors and volunteer resources to the extent feasible to perform its responsibilities.

SECTION 4. Effective date: September 1, 1999.

SECTION 5. Emergency clause.