

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

Senate Research Center  
82R1174 KSD-F

H.B. 149  
By: Raymond (Zaffirini)  
Jurisprudence  
5/19/2011  
Engrossed

### **AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT**

Parties in a suit affecting the parent-child relationship are sometimes unable to pay the fees of a parenting coordinator due to hardship. If neither party has the means to pay the fees of a parenting coordinator, a court may appoint a domestic relations officer or an individual from a comparable county agency to act as a parenting coordinator. However, these officers and individuals are not always available in smaller counties.

H.B. 149 allows a court to appoint a person who meets the minimum qualifications prescribed by state law, including an employee of the court, to act as a parenting coordinator on a volunteer basis and without compensation.

H.B. 149 amends current law relating to the appointment of a parenting coordinator or parenting facilitator in a suit affecting the parent-child relationship.

### **RULEMAKING AUTHORITY**

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

### **SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS**

SECTION 1. Amends Section 153.609(d), Family Code, to authorize the court, if due to hardship the parties are unable to pay the fees of a parenting coordinator, and a domestic relations office or a comparable county agency, rather than a public employee, is not available under Subsection (c) (relating to prohibiting public funds from being used to pay the fees of a parenting coordinator), if feasible, to appoint a person who meets the minimum qualifications prescribed by Section 153.610 (Qualification of Parenting Coordinator), including an employee of the court, to act as a parenting coordinator on a volunteer basis and without compensation.

SECTION 2. Amends Section 153.6091, Family Code, to provide that Section 153.609 (Compensation of Parenting Coordinator) applies to a parenting facilitator, rather than to the compensation of a parenting coordinator, in the same manner as provided for a parenting coordinator, rather than for the compensation of a parenting coordinator, except that a person appointed in accordance with Section 153.609(d) to act as a parenting facilitator must meet the minimum qualifications prescribed by Section 153.6101 (Qualifications of Parenting Facilitator).

SECTION 3. Provides that the change in law made by this Act applies to a suit affecting the parent-child relationship that is pending in a trial court on the effective date of this Act or that is filed on or after the effective date of this Act.

SECTION 4. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2011.