

FIRST REGULAR SESSION

HOUSE BILL NO. 1335

101ST GENERAL ASSEMBLY

INTRODUCED BY REPRESENTATIVE SAULS.

2663H.01I

DANA RADEMAN MILLER, Chief Clerk

AN ACT

To amend chapter 210, RSMo, by adding thereto one new section relating to foster care, with an emergency clause.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the state of Missouri, as follows:

Section A. Chapter 210, RSMo, is amended by adding thereto one new section, to be known as section 210.489, to read as follows:

210.489. 1. A child who is in foster care shall not be required to leave the foster care system or be ineligible for support or maintenance solely by reason of the child's age while the state is under a state of emergency in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, or until September 30, 2021, whichever occurs later.

2. The division shall:

(1) Permit any child to voluntarily reenter foster care if the child left foster care because of his or her age while the state was under a state of emergency in response to the COVID-19 pandemic;

(2) Provide to each child who was formally discharged from foster care while the state was under a state of emergency in response to the COVID-19 pandemic a notice designed to make the child aware of the option to return to foster care;

(3) Facilitate the voluntary return of any such child to foster care; and

(4) Conduct a public awareness campaign regarding the option to voluntarily reenter foster care for a child who has not attained twenty-two years of age, who aged out of foster care while the state was under a state of emergency in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, and who is otherwise eligible to return to foster care.

3. The division shall:

EXPLANATION — Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets [thus] in the above bill is not enacted and is intended to be omitted from the law. Matter in **bold-face** type in the above bill is proposed language.

18 **(1) Continue to ensure that the safety, permanence, and well-being needs of older**
19 **foster children, including a child who remains in foster care and a child who aged out of**
20 **foster care while the state was under a state of emergency in response to the COVID-19**
21 **pandemic but who reenters foster care under this section, are met; and**

22 **(2) Work with any child who remains in foster care after attaining eighteen years**
23 **of age to develop, or review and revise, a transition plan and assist the child with**
24 **identifying adults who can offer meaningful, permanent connections.**

Section B. Because immediate action is necessary to protect children aging out of the
2 foster care during the COVID-19 pandemic, section A of this act is deemed necessary for the
3 immediate preservation of the public health, welfare, peace, and safety, and is hereby declared
4 to be an emergency act within the meaning of the constitution, and section A of this act shall be
5 in full force and effect upon its passage and approval.

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