

SECOND REGULAR SESSION

HOUSE BILL NO. 3243

103RD GENERAL ASSEMBLY

INTRODUCED BY REPRESENTATIVE ALLEN.

7081H.011

JOSEPH ENGLER, Chief Clerk

AN ACT

To amend chapter 210, RSMo, by adding thereto one new section relating to emergency placement of certain children.

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 210.168, to read as follows:

210.168. 1. This section shall be known and may be cited as the "MO Families First Act".

2. As used in this section, the following terms mean:

(1) "Child", any person under eighteen years of age;

(2) "Division", the Missouri children's division within the department of social services;

(3) "Federal enforcement action", any arrest, detention, removal, or deportation proceeding initiated by a federal law enforcement or immigration authority;

(4) "Parent or legal guardian", a biological parent, adoptive parent, legal guardian, or other individual legally responsible for the care and custody of a child;

(5) "State system", any public school, charter school, licensed child care facility, foster care program, juvenile justice facility, or state-funded program serving children.

3. If a state agency or educational institution becomes aware that a parent or legal guardian of a child receiving services through a state system has been subject to a federal enforcement action, such agency or institution shall notify the division within twenty-four hours of receiving such information.

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.

17 **4. Upon receipt of notification under subsection 3 of this section, the division**
18 **shall promptly initiate an assessment to determine:**

19 **(1) The child's immediate safety and well-being;**

20 **(2) The availability of appropriate caregivers, including relatives or other**
21 **individuals with an established relationship to the child;**

22 **(3) The child's immediate needs, including housing, medical care, and emotional**
23 **support; and**

24 **(4) The child's educational placement and continuity needs.**

25 **5. In determining appropriate placement, the division shall, consistent with**
26 **existing child welfare laws and safety standards:**

27 **(1) Give priority to placement with a fit and willing relative or known caregiver**
28 **if such placement is in the best interest of the child;**

29 **(2) Make reasonable efforts to preserve sibling relationships;**

30 **(3) Consider the child's existing relationships, community ties, and cultural**
31 **connections;**

32 **(4) When appropriate and safe, consult with the parent or legal guardian**
33 **regarding preferred placement arrangements.**

34 **6. School districts and educational institutions shall make reasonable efforts to**
35 **maintain educational stability for a child affected under this section, including**
36 **preservation of records and coordination with the division, so long as the child**
37 **remains enrolled or placed within the school district or educational institution.**

38 **7. The division shall provide families with information regarding options for**
39 **establishing temporary or permanent guardianship and coordinate, when available,**
40 **with legal service providers to assist families in understanding such options.**

41 **8. Nothing in this section shall be construed to:**

42 **(1) Interfere with federal immigration enforcement authority;**

43 **(2) Require any state or local agency to inquire into or report the immigration**
44 **status of any individual;**

45 **(3) Create a private cause of action against the state or any state agency; or**

46 **(4) Alter existing mandatory reporting requirements relating to child abuse or**
47 **neglect.**

48 **9. The division may promulgate all necessary rules and regulations for the**
49 **administration of this section. Any rule or portion of a rule, as that term is defined in**
50 **section 536.010, that is created under the authority delegated in this section shall**
51 **become effective only if it complies with and is subject to all of the provisions of chapter**
52 **536 and, if applicable, section 536.028. This section and chapter 536 are nonseverable**
53 **and if any of the powers vested with the general assembly pursuant to chapter 536 to**

54 **review, to delay the effective date, or to disapprove and annul a rule are subsequently**
55 **held unconstitutional, then the grant of rulemaking authority and any rule proposed or**
56 **adopted after August 28, 2026, shall be invalid and void.**

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