HLS 18RS-731 ORIGINAL

2018 Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 466

BY REPRESENTATIVE GISCLAIR

CHILDRENS CODE: Provides relative to authority granted to CASA volunteers

1 AN ACT 2 To amend and reenact Children's Code Articles 424.2, 424.4(B), 616(C), and 616(C) which 3 was amended and reenacted to become 616(D) by Act No. 348 of the 2017 Regular 4 Session of the Legislature, relative to court appointed special advocates; to provide 5 authority to access the child's home; to provide relative to the attendance of certain 6 hearings and meetings; to provide for screenings of CASA volunteers, staff 7 members, and board of director members; to provide for contingent effective dates; 8 and to provide for related matters. 9 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana: 10 Section 1. Children's Code Articles 424.2 and 424.4(B) are hereby amended and 11 reenacted to read as follows: 12 Art. 424.2. CASA; order of assignment 13 To accomplish the assignment of a CASA volunteer, the court shall issue an 14 order of assignment which shall grant the CASA volunteer the authority to review 15 all relevant documents pursuant to Article 424.6 and to interview all parties and 16 witnesses involved in the proceeding in which he is appointed. The order shall grant 17 the CASA volunteer the authority to access the home in which a child is placed, and 18 may do so unannounced if access is needed in order to assess safety concerns. 19 20 Art. 424.4. CASA; notice 21

Page 1 of 3

CODING: Words in struck through type are deletions from existing law; words <u>underscored</u> are additions.

1	B. The CASA volunteer shall be notified by the department and shall be
2	entitled to attend all of all administrative review hearings and family team meetings
3	concerning the case to which he has been assigned.
4	Section 2. Children's Code Article 616(C) is hereby amended and reenacted to read
5	as follows:
6	Art. 616. Central registry; screening court-appointed special advocates volunteers;
7	confidentiality
8	* * *
9	C. Upon the written request of the court during its evaluation of an
10	individual applying to work as a court-appointed special advocate, program staff
11	member, or board of directors member, and with the consent of the applicant, the
12	department shall search the central registry and report to the court any justified report
13	of abuse or neglect alleging that the applicant is a perpetrator.
14	* * *
15	Section 3. Children's Code Article 616(C) which was amended and reenacted to
16	become Children's Code Article 616(D) by Act No. 348 of the 2017 Regular Session of the
17	Legislature is hereby amended and reenacted as follows:
18	* * *
19	D. Upon the written request of the court during its evaluation of an
20	individual applying to work as a court-appointed special advocate, program
21	staff member, or board of directors member, and with the consent of the
22	applicant, the department shall search the central registry and report to the
23	court any justified report of abuse or neglect alleging that the applicant is a
24	perpetrator.
25	* * *
26	Section 4. The provisions of Section 3 of this Act shall become effective upon
27	promulgation and publication by the Department of Children and Family Services of the
28	final rules to implement the provisions of this Act and Act No. 348 of the 2017 Regular
29	Session of the Legislature.

DIGEST

The digest printed below was prepared by House Legislative Services. It constitutes no part of the legislative instrument. The keyword, one-liner, abstract, and digest do not constitute part of the law or proof or indicia of legislative intent. [R.S. 1:13(B) and 24:177(E)]

HB 466 Original

2018 Regular Session

Gisclair

Abstract: Grants authority to CASA volunteers to access a child's home and to attend all administrative review hearings and family team meetings related to the case, and provides for the screening of CASA staff members or members of the board of directors.

<u>Present law</u> (Ch.C. Art. 424.2) allows CASA to review relevant documents and to interview parties and witnesses involved in the proceeding.

<u>Proposed law</u> retains <u>present law</u> and grants authority to CASA volunteers to access the child's home to evaluate the home for safety concerns.

<u>Present law</u> (Ch.C. Art. 424.4) requires CASA volunteers to be notified of all administrative review hearings related to the case.

<u>Proposed law</u> retains <u>present law</u> and requires that CASA volunteers be allowed to attend all family team meetings as well as administrative review hearings related to the case.

<u>Present law</u> (Ch.C. Art. 616) allows a court to screen individuals applying to work as a court appointed special advocate for any justified reports of abuse or neglect.

<u>Proposed law</u> retains <u>present law</u> and adds CASA program staff members and board of director members to those individuals who may be screened by a court for any justifiable reports of abuse or neglect.

(Amends Ch.C. Arts. 424.2, 424.4(B), 616(C), and (616(C) which was amended and reenacted to become Ch.C. Art. 616(D) by Act 348 of the 2017 R.S.))