

Existing law requires one or more parents to complete a treatment program prior to awarding custody or allowing visitation when there is a history of family violence.

Prior law defined "treatment program" as a course of evaluation and psychotherapy designed specifically for perpetrators of family violence. Further required the treatment program to be conducted by a licensed mental health professional.

New law changes prior law by defining a "treatment program" as used in the Post-Separation Violence Relief Act as a treatment program comprised of a minimum of 26 in-person sessions that follows a model designed specifically for perpetrators of domestic abuse. Requires the provider of the program to have all of the following:

- (1) Experience in working directly with the perpetrators and victims of domestic abuse.
- (2) Experience in facilitating batterer intervention groups.
- (3) Training in the causes and dynamics of domestic violence, characteristics of batterers, victim safety, and sensitivity of victims.

Effective August 1, 2014.

(Amends R.S. 9:362(7))