

HOUSE SUMMARY OF SENATE AMENDMENTS**HB 37****2021 Regular Session****Bacala**

ADOPTION: Provides for uniform post-placement functions associated with agency adoptions and private adoptions

Synopsis of Senate Amendments

1. Provides that all prerequisites for adoption must be completed by the private adoption agency or DCFS through the utilization of a social worker.
2. Specifies that in-home visit information be documented in a report.
3. Adds reporting requirements to include whether either of the adopted parents are related to the child and the age of the child at placement.
4. Requires the attorney arranging the private adoption to ensure that a licensed professional maintain contact with the proposed adoptive home directly or through another agency, if ordered by the court.
5. Deletes provisions in proposed law requiring DCFS to ensure the accuracy and thoroughness of the confidential court report for private adoptions.
6. Makes technical changes.

Digest of Bill as Finally Passed by Senate

Proposed law requires multiple visits by a social worker, counselor, psychologist, psychiatrist, or therapist, who is required to document each visit, prior to the final agency adoption decree. The observations made during the visits shall be used in making recommendations for finalizations of agency adoptions.

Proposed law requires the families and children be provided assistance, consultation, and twenty-four hour crisis intervention through finalization.

Proposed law requires courts to report adoptions and statistical, nonidentifying information to DCFS including the age of the child and whether the adoptive parents are related to the child.

Proposed law requires DCFS to release a yearly report of adoption statistics within the state and adoptions that place the child out-of-state.

Present law provides that courts may render a final decree at first hearings for private adoptions if the child has lived in the petitioner's home for one year.

Proposed law shortens the length of time a child has lived in the petitioner's home to six months.

Proposed law requires multiple visits by a social worker, counselor, psychologist, psychiatrist, or therapist, who is required to document each visit, prior to the final private adoption decree. The observations made during the visits shall be used in making recommendations for finalizations of private adoptions.

(Amends Ch.C. Arts. 1213(A) and (B), 1233, and 1235; Adds Ch.C. Arts. 1213(D), 1217.1, and 1239.1)