

By: Shapiro

S.B. No. 1062

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to creating an online resource center for judges and attorneys handling child abuse and neglect cases.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1. Chapter 264, Family Code, is amended by adding Subchapter K to read as follows:

SUBCHAPTER K. ONLINE RESOURCE CENTER

Sec. 264.821. DEFINITIONS. In this subchapter:

(1) "Communications tool" means an online method, including an e-mail network, a discussion board, or a document sharing system, for:

(A) judges in this state to communicate with other judges; and

(B) attorneys in this state to communicate with other attorneys.

(2) "Office" means the Office of Court Administration of the Texas Judicial System.

(3) "Online resource center" means a single interactive Internet website that provides informational materials pertinent to child abuse and neglect cases in this state, which may include summaries of Texas cases and statutes relating to child abuse and neglect, sample briefs and other legal forms, articles and papers, manuals with information on Texas legal practice and practice tips, a conference calendar, and communications tools.

1 Sec. 264.822. CONTRACT WITH NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION. (a)

2 The office shall contract with a nonprofit organization in this
3 state to provide an online resource center for judges and attorneys
4 handling child abuse and neglect cases. The online resource center
5 must:

6 (1) provide a means of searching for informational
7 materials by subject; and

8 (2) include a:

9 (A) communications tool for judges; and

10 (B) communications tool for attorneys.

11 (b) The contract under this section must prohibit the
12 nonprofit organization with which the office contracts from
13 spending more than 12 percent of the contract price on the
14 organization's indirect or administrative overhead expenses.

15 Sec. 264.823. ELIGIBILITY FOR CONTRACT. The nonprofit

16 organization with which the office contracts under this subchapter
17 must:

18 (1) have at least three years of experience in
19 operating an online resource center specifically designed for
20 judges and attorneys handling child abuse and neglect cases in this
21 state;

22 (2) have at least one year of experience in providing a
23 communications tool; and

24 (3) employ or contract with at least one attorney who
25 is licensed to practice law in this state and who specializes in
26 child abuse and neglect cases to compile the materials for and
27 oversee the operation of the online resource center.

1 Sec. 264.824. FUNDING. The nonprofit organization with
2 which the office contracts under this subchapter may obtain funding
3 from private foundations and individuals, from state and federal
4 grants, and from any other source to operate the online resource
5 center.

6 Sec. 264.825. CONFIDENTIALITY. All communications
7 conducted through a communications tool provided in connection with
8 the online resource center implemented under this subchapter are
9 confidential and not subject to disclosure under Chapter 552,
10 Government Code.

11 SECTION 2. This Act takes effect September 1, 2009.