

AN ACT

relating to the use of an Internet application to allow access by court-appointed volunteer advocates to child protective services case information.

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

SECTION 1. Subchapter G, Chapter 264, Family Code, is amended by adding Section 264.614 to read as follows:

Sec. 264.614. INTERNET APPLICATION FOR CASE TRACKING AND INFORMATION MANAGEMENT SYSTEM. (a) Subject to the availability of money as described by Subsection (c), the department shall develop an Internet application that allows a court-appointed volunteer advocate representing a child in the managing conservatorship of the department to access the child's case file through the department's automated case tracking and information management system and to add the volunteer advocate's findings and reports to the child's case file.

(b) The court-appointed volunteer advocate shall maintain the confidentiality required by this chapter and department rule for the information accessed by the advocate through the system described by Subsection (a).

(c) The department may use money appropriated to the department and money received as a gift, grant, or donation to pay for the costs of developing and maintaining the Internet application required by Subsection (a). The department may solicit

1 and accept gifts, grants, and donations of any kind and from any
2 source for purposes of this section.

3 (d) The executive commissioner of the Health and Human
4 Services Commission shall adopt rules necessary to implement this
5 section.

6 SECTION 2. (a) As soon as practicable after the effective
7 date of this Act, the Department of Family and Protective Services
8 shall solicit money, if necessary, and develop the Internet
9 application as required by Section 264.614, Family Code, as added
10 by this Act.

11 (b) As soon as practicable after the effective date of this
12 Act, the executive commissioner of the Health and Human Services
13 Commission shall adopt rules necessary to implement Section
14 264.614, Family Code, as added by this Act.

15 SECTION 3. This Act takes effect September 1, 2013.

President of the Senate

Speaker of the House

I certify that H.B. No. 1227 was passed by the House on April 18, 2013, by the following vote: Yeas 143, Nays 0, 2 present, not voting; and that the House concurred in Senate amendments to H.B. No. 1227 on May 20, 2013, by the following vote: Yeas 144, Nays 1, 2 present, not voting.

Chief Clerk of the House

I certify that H.B. No. 1227 was passed by the Senate, with amendments, on May 17, 2013, by the following vote: Yeas 31, Nays 0.

Secretary of the Senate

APPROVED: _____

Date

Governor