

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center

S.B. 1117
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Health & Human Services
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Enrolled

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Despite requirements that the Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) provide transitional living services to foster care children 14 years and older, homelessness remains an issue among youth who age out of the foster care system. Transitional living services include housing services, but vague statutory language makes it difficult for DFPS to prioritize and collect needed information to ensure the youth's housing needs are considered and met.

S.B. 1117 requires DFPS to ensure that the transition plan for youth 16 years of age or older includes provisions that identify with youth as part of their transition; the cost of housing in relation to youth's income; the youth's housing goals; typical rental applications and required documentation; and persons who are able to cosign or serve as references for a housing application.

S.B. 117 requires DFPS to inform youth about supervised independent living; and college housing, including dormitories. What's more, the bill clarifies that DFPS is required to review a common rental application with youth.

S.B. 1117 amends current law relating to housing services provided through the transitional living services program to certain children in the conservatorship of the Department of Family and Protective Services.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

This bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, institution, or agency.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Section 264.121, Family Code, by adding Subsection (i), as follows:

(i) Requires the Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) to ensure that the transition plan for each youth 16 years of age or older includes provisions to assist the youth in managing the youth's housing needs after the youth leaves foster care, including provisions that:

(1) identify the cost of housing in relation to the youth's sources of income, including any benefits or rental assistance available to the youth;

(2) if the youth's housing goals include residing with family or friends, state that DFPS has addressed the following with the youth:

(A) the length of time the youth expects to stay in the housing arrangement;

(B) expectations for the youth regarding paying rent and meeting other household obligations;

(C) the youth's psychological and emotional needs, as applicable; and

(D) any potential conflicts with other household members, or any difficulties connected to the type of housing the youth is seeking, that may arise based on the youth's psychological and emotional needs;

(3) inform the youth about emergency shelters and housing resources, including supervised independent living and housing at colleges and universities, such as dormitories;

(4) require DFPS to review a common rental application with the youth and ensure that the youth possess all of the documentation required to obtain rental housing; and

(5) identify any individuals who are able to serve as cosigners or references on the youth's applications for housing.

SECTION 2. Effective date: September 1, 2015.