

By: Raymond

H.B. No. 4009

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to the appointment of associate judges for child protection cases.

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

SECTION 1. The heading to Section 201.201, Family Code, is amended to read as follows:

Sec. 201.201. APPOINTMENT OF ASSOCIATE JUDGE [~~AUTHORITY OF PRESIDING JUDGE~~].

SECTION 2. Sections 201.201(a) and (b), Family Code, are amended to read as follows:

(a) The presiding judge of each administrative judicial region, after conferring with the judges of courts in the region having family law jurisdiction and a child protection caseload, shall determine which courts require the appointment of a full-time or part-time associate judge to complete cases under Subtitle E within the times specified under that subtitle.

(b) On receiving from the judges of courts in the region having family law jurisdiction and a child protection caseload a recommendation to appoint an associate judge for the region, the [The] presiding judge shall appoint an associate judge to serve the courts in the region in which at least two-thirds of the child protection cases for the region are filed [may limit the appointment to a specified period and may terminate an appointment at any time]. The judges of the district courts in the region shall

1 recommend to the presiding judge the length of the associate
2 judge's appointment and the procedures for appointing, evaluating,
3 and terminating the associate judge. The district court judges
4 every two years shall submit to the presiding judge the associate
5 judge's evaluation results for those years and recommendations for
6 reappointment or termination of the associate judge.

7 SECTION 3. Section 201.2061, Family Code, is amended to
8 read as follows:

9 Sec. 201.2061. REPORT ON [~~SUPERVISION OF~~] ASSOCIATE
10 JUDGES. The office of court administration shall annually submit
11 to the presiding judges a report on the associate judges appointed
12 under this subchapter that includes the following [~~assist the~~
13 ~~presiding judges in~~]:

14 (1) information on [~~monitoring~~] the associate judges'
15 compliance with any applicable job performance standards, uniform
16 practices adopted by the presiding judges, and federal and state
17 laws and policies, including information made available to the
18 office by the presiding judges;

19 (2) [~~addressing~~] the training [~~needs~~] and resource
20 requirements for [~~of~~] the associate judges; and

21 (3) the process for [~~conducting annual performance~~
22 ~~evaluations for the associate judges and other personnel appointed~~
23 ~~under this subchapter based on written personnel performance~~
24 ~~standards adopted by the presiding judges, and~~

25 [~~(4)~~] receiving, investigating, and resolving
26 complaints about particular associate judges or the associate judge
27 program under this subchapter based on a uniform process adopted by

1 the presiding judges.

2 SECTION 4. The changes in law made by this Act apply to the
3 appointment of an associate judge under Subchapter C, Chapter 201,
4 Family Code, on or after the effective date of this Act.

5 SECTION 5. This Act takes effect September 1, 2015.