By:  Minjarez, et al. (Senate Sponsor - Powell) H.B. No. 53

(In the Senate - Received from the House April 15, 2019; April 16, 2019, read first time and referred to Committee on Health & Human Services; May 16, 2019, reported favorably by the following vote: Yeas 9, Nays 0; May 16, 2019, sent to printer.)

COMMITTEE VOTE

                 Yea Nay Absent  PNV

Kolkhorst         X

Perry             X

Buckingham        X

Campbell          X

Flores            X

Johnson           X

Miles             X

Powell            X

Seliger           X

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to the transitional living services program for certain youth in foster care.

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

SECTION 1.  Sections 264.121(a-2) and (f), Family Code, are amended to read as follows:

(a-2)  The experiential life-skills training under Subsection (a-1) must include:

(1)  a financial literacy education program developed in collaboration with the Office of Consumer Credit Commissioner and the State Securities Board that:

(A) [~~(1)~~]  includes instruction on:

(i) [~~(A)~~]  obtaining and interpreting a credit score;

(ii) [~~(B)~~]  protecting, repairing, and improving a credit score;

(iii) [~~(C)~~]  avoiding predatory lending practices;

(iv) [~~(D)~~]  saving money and accomplishing financial goals through prudent financial management practices;

(v) [~~(E)~~]  using basic banking and accounting skills, including balancing a checkbook;

(vi) [~~(F)~~]  using debit and credit cards responsibly;

(vii) [~~(G)~~]  understanding a paycheck and items withheld from a paycheck; [~~and~~]

(viii)  understanding the time requirements and process for filing federal taxes;

(ix) [~~(H)~~]  protecting financial, credit, and personally identifying information in personal and professional relationships and online;

(x)  forms of identity and credit theft; and

(xi)  using insurance to protect against the risk of financial loss; and

(B) [~~(2)~~]  assists a youth who has a source of income to:

(i)  establish a savings plan and, if available, a savings account that the youth can independently manage; and

(ii)  prepare a monthly budget that includes the following expenses:

(a)  rent based on the monthly rent for an apartment advertised for lease during the preceding month;

(b)  utilities based on a reasonable utility bill in the area in which the youth resides;

(c)  telephone service based on a reasonable bill for telephone service in the area in which the youth resides;

(d)  Internet service based on a reasonable bill for Internet service in the area in which the youth resides; and

(e)  other reasonable monthly expenses; and

(2)  for youth who are 17 years of age or older, lessons related to:

(A)  insurance, including applying for and obtaining automobile insurance and residential property insurance, including tenants insurance; and

(B)  civic engagement, including the process for registering to vote, the places to vote, and resources for information regarding upcoming elections.

(f)  The department shall require a person with whom the department contracts for transitional living services for foster youth to provide or assist youth in obtaining:

(1)  housing services;

(2)  job training and employment services;

(3)  college preparation services;

(4)  services that will assist youth in obtaining a general education development certificate;

(5)  services that will assist youth in developing skills in food preparation;

(6)  nutrition education that promotes healthy food choices;

(7)  a savings or checking account if the youth is at least 18 years of age and has a source of income;

(8)  mental health services;

(9)  financial literacy education and civic engagement lessons required under Subsection (a-2); and

(10) [~~(8)~~]  any other appropriate transitional living service identified by the department.

SECTION 2.  The changes in law made by this Act apply only to a person who enters into a contract with the Department of Family and Protective Services to provide transitional living services for foster youth on or after the effective date of this Act.

SECTION 3.  This Act takes effect September 1, 2019.

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