By: Frank H.B. No. 3331

Substitute the following for H.B. No. 3331:

By: Klick C.S.H.B. No. 3331

#### A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

2 relating to the procedures and grounds for terminating the 3 parent-child relationship, for taking possession of a child, and

4 for certain hearings in a suit affecting the parent-child

- 5 relationship involving the Department of Family and Protective
- 6 Services.

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- 7 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:
- 8 SECTION 1. Sections 161.001(c) and (e), Family Code, are
- 9 amended to read as follows:
- 10 (c) In making [A court may not make] a finding under
- 11 Subsection (b) and ordering [order] termination of the parent-child
- 12 relationship, the court may not consider [based on] evidence that
- 13 the parent:
- 14 (1) homeschooled the child;
- 15 (2) is economically disadvantaged;
- 16 (3) has been charged with a nonviolent misdemeanor
- 17 offense other than:
- 18 (A) an offense under Title 5, Penal Code;
- 19 (B) an offense under Title 6, Penal Code; or
- 20 (C) an offense that involves family violence, as
- 21 defined by Section 71.004 of this code;
- 22 (4) provided or administered low-THC cannabis to a
- 23 child for whom the low-THC cannabis was prescribed under Chapter
- 24 169, Occupations Code; [or]

- 1 (5) declined immunization for the child for reasons of
- 2 conscience, including a religious belief; or
- 3 (6) after taking reasonable precautionary measures,
- 4 allowed a child, who is of sufficient maturity, physical condition,
- 5 and mental ability to avoid substantial risk of physical harm, to
- 6 engage in independent activities, including:
- 7 (A) traveling to and from the child's home and
- 8 school, including by walking, running, or bicycling;
- 9 (B) traveling to and from the child's home and a
- 10 commercial or recreational facility near to the child's home;
- (C) engaging in outdoor play;
- 12 <u>(D) remaining at the child's home unattended; or</u>
- (E) engaging in other age-appropriate normalcy
- 14 activities as defined by Section 264.001.
- 15 (e) This section does not prohibit the Department of Family
- 16 and Protective Services from offering evidence described by
- 17 Subsection (c), for purposes other than a finding under Subsection
- 18 (b), as part of an action to terminate the parent-child
- 19 relationship under this subchapter.
- SECTION 2. Section 161.101, Family Code, is amended to read
- 21 as follows:
- Sec. 161.101. PETITION ALLEGATIONS. (a) A petition for the
- 23 termination of the parent-child relationship is sufficient without
- 24 the necessity of specifying the underlying facts if the petition
- 25 alleges in the statutory language the ground for the termination
- 26 and that termination is in the best interest of the child.
- 27 (b) A petition or motion filed by the Department of Family

and Protective Services is subject to Chapter 10, Civil Practice 1 and Remedies Code, and Rule 13, Texas Rules of Civil Procedure. 2 SECTION 3. Section 261.001(4), Family Code, is amended to 3 read as follows: 4 (4) 5 "Neglect": (A) includes: 6 (i) 7 the leaving of a child in a situation 8 where the child would be exposed to a substantial risk of physical or mental harm, without arranging for necessary care for the child, 9 and the demonstration of an intent not to return by a parent, 10 guardian, or managing or possessory conservator of the child; 11 12 (ii) the following acts or omissions by a 13 person: 14 placing a child in or failing to 15 remove a child from a situation that a reasonable person would realize requires judgment or actions beyond the child's level of 16 17 maturity, physical condition, or mental abilities and that results in bodily injury or a substantial risk of immediate harm to the 18 child; 19 failing to seek, obtain, or follow 20 (b) through with medical care for a child, with the failure resulting in 21 or presenting a substantial risk of death, disfigurement, or bodily 22 23 injury or with the failure resulting in an observable and material 24 impairment to the growth, development, or functioning of the child;

with food, clothing, or shelter necessary to sustain the life or

health of the child, excluding failure caused primarily by

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(c) the failure to provide a child

- 1 financial inability unless relief services had been offered and
- 2 refused;
- 3 (d) placing a child in or failing to
- 4 remove the child from a situation in which the child would be
- 5 exposed to a substantial risk of sexual conduct harmful to the
- 6 child; or
- 7 (e) placing a child in or failing to
- 8 remove the child from a situation in which the child would be
- 9 exposed to acts or omissions that constitute abuse under
- 10 Subdivision (1)(E), (F), (G), (H), or (K) committed against another
- 11 child;
- 12 (iii) the failure by the person responsible
- 13 for a child's care, custody, or welfare to permit the child to
- 14 return to the child's home without arranging for the necessary care
- 15 for the child after the child has been absent from the home for any
- 16 reason, including having been in residential placement or having
- 17 run away; or
- 18 (iv) a negligent act or omission by an
- 19 employee, volunteer, or other individual working under the auspices
- 20 of a facility or program, including failure to comply with an
- 21 individual treatment plan, plan of care, or individualized service
- 22 plan, that causes or may cause substantial emotional harm or
- 23 physical injury to, or the death of, a child served by the facility
- 24 or program as further described by rule or policy; and
- 25 (B) does not include:
- 26 (i) the refusal by a person responsible for
- 27 a child's care, custody, or welfare to permit the child to remain in

- 1 or return to the child's home resulting in the placement of the
- 2 child in the conservatorship of the department if:
- $\underline{\text{(a)}}$  [ $\underline{\text{(i)}}$ ] the child has a severe
- 4 emotional disturbance;
- 5 (b) [<del>(ii)</del>] the person's refusal is
- 6 based solely on the person's inability to obtain mental health
- 7 services necessary to protect the safety and well-being of the
- 8 child; and
- 9  $\underline{\text{(c)}}$  [ $\frac{\text{(iii)}}{\text{)}}$ ] the person has exhausted
- 10 all reasonable means available to the person to obtain the mental
- 11 health services described by <u>Sub-subparagraph (b); or</u>
- 12 <u>(ii)</u> the decision by a person responsible
- 13 for a child's care, custody, or welfare, after taking reasonable
- 14 precautionary measures, to permit the child, if the child is of
- 15 sufficient maturity, physical condition, and mental ability to
- 16 avoid substantial risk of physical harm, to engage in independent
- 17 activities, including:
- 18 (a) traveling to and from the child's
- 19 home and school, including by walking, running, or bicycling;
- (b) traveling to and from the child's
- 21 home and a commercial or recreational facility near to the child's
- 22 home;
- (c) engaging in outdoor play;
- 24 (d) remaining at the child's home
- 25 unattended; or
- 26 (e) engaging in other age-appropriate
- 27 normalcy activities as defined by Section 264.001 [Subparagraph

- $1 \frac{(ii)}{(ii)}$ ].
- 2 SECTION 4. Section 262.001, Family Code, is amended by
- 3 adding Subsection (c) to read as follows:
- 4 (c) In determining the reasonable efforts that are required
- 5 to be made with respect to preventing or eliminating the need to
- 6 remove a child from the child's home, the court shall consider
- 7 whether based on all the information available at the time a
- 8 reasonably prudent person would determine that the immediate danger
- 9 to the physical health and safety of the child caused by remaining
- 10 in the child's home outweighs the emotional distress that results
- 11 or may result from disrupting the parent-child relationship by
- 12 removing the child from the child's home or parent. In making the
- 13 determination the court may not:
- 14 (1) consider expert testimony; or
- 15 (2) authorize a psychological evaluation of the child
- or an assessment of the child's mental health.
- 17 SECTION 5. Section 262.101, Family Code, is amended to read
- 18 as follows:
- 19 Sec. 262.101. FILING PETITION BEFORE TAKING POSSESSION OF
- 20 CHILD. An original suit filed by a governmental entity that
- 21 requests permission to take possession of a child without prior
- 22 notice and a hearing must be supported by an affidavit sworn to by a
- 23 person with personal knowledge and stating facts sufficient to
- 24 satisfy a person of ordinary prudence and caution, or in accordance
- 25 with another standard otherwise required by this section, that:
- 26 (1) there is an immediate danger to the physical
- 27 health or safety of the child or the child has been a victim of

- 1 neglect or sexual abuse;
- 2 (2) continuation in the home would be contrary to the
- 3 child's welfare;
- 4 (3) there is no time, consistent with the physical
- 5 health or safety of the child, for a full adversary hearing under
- 6 Subchapter C; [and]
- 7 (4) reasonable efforts, consistent with the
- 8 circumstances and providing for the safety of the child, were made
- 9 to prevent or eliminate the need for the removal of the child; and
- 10 (5) using the standard required by Section 262.001(c),
- 11 the immediate danger to the physical health and safety of the child
- 12 caused by remaining in the child's home outweighs the emotional
- 13 distress that results or may result from disrupting the
- 14 parent-child relationship by removing the child from the child's
- 15 home or parent.
- SECTION 6. Section 262.105(b), Family Code, is amended to
- 17 read as follows:
- 18 (b) An original suit filed by a governmental entity after
- 19 taking possession of a child under Section 262.104 must be
- 20 supported by an affidavit stating facts sufficient to satisfy a
- 21 person of ordinary prudence and caution, or in accordance with
- 22 another standard otherwise required by this subsection, that:
- 23 (1) based on the affiant's personal knowledge or on
- 24 information furnished by another person corroborated by the
- 25 affiant's personal knowledge, one of the following circumstances
- 26 existed at the time the child was taken into possession:
- 27 (A) there was an immediate danger to the physical

- 1 health or safety of the child;
- 2 (B) the child was the victim of sexual abuse or of
- 3 trafficking under Section 20A.02 or 20A.03, Penal Code;
- 4 (C) the parent or person who had possession of
- 5 the child was using a controlled substance as defined by Chapter
- 6 481, Health and Safety Code, and the use constituted an immediate
- 7 danger to the physical health or safety of the child; or
- 8 (D) the parent or person who had possession of
- 9 the child permitted the child to remain on premises used for the
- 10 manufacture of methamphetamine; and
- 11 (2) based on the affiant's personal knowledge:
- 12 (A) continuation of the child in the home would
- 13 have been contrary to the child's welfare;
- 14 (B) there was no time, consistent with the
- 15 physical health or safety of the child, for a full adversary hearing
- 16 under Subchapter C; [and]
- 17 (C) reasonable efforts, consistent with the
- 18 circumstances and providing for the safety of the child, were made
- 19 to prevent or eliminate the need for the removal of the child; and
- 20 (D) using the standard required by Section
- 21 <u>262.001(c)</u>, the immediate danger to the physical health and safety
- 22 of the child caused by remaining in the child's home outweighs the
- 23 emotional distress that results or may result from disrupting the
- 24 parent-child relationship by removing the child from the child's
- 25 <u>home or parent</u>.
- SECTION 7. Section 262.113, Family Code, is amended to read
- 27 as follows:

- 1 Sec. 262.113. FILING SUIT WITHOUT TAKING POSSESSION OF
- 2 CHILD. An original suit filed by a governmental entity that
- 3 requests to take possession of a child after notice and a hearing
- 4 must be supported by an affidavit sworn to by a person with personal
- 5 knowledge and stating facts sufficient to satisfy a person of
- 6 ordinary prudence and caution that:
- 7 (1) there is a continuing danger to the physical
- 8 health or safety of the child caused by an act or failure to act of
- 9 the person entitled to possession of the child and that allowing the
- 10 child to remain in the home would be contrary to the child's
- 11 welfare; [and]
- 12 (2) reasonable efforts, consistent with the
- 13 circumstances and providing for the safety of the child, have been
- 14 made to prevent or eliminate the need to remove the child from the
- 15 child's home; and
- 16 (3) using the standard required by Section 262.001(c),
- 17 the immediate danger to the physical health and safety of the child
- 18 caused by remaining in the child's home outweighs the emotional
- 19 distress that results or may result from disrupting the
- 20 parent-child relationship by removing the child from the child's
- 21 <u>home or parent</u>.
- SECTION 8. Section 262.116(a), Family Code, is amended to
- 23 read as follows:
- 24 (a) The Department of Family and Protective Services may not
- 25 take possession of a child under this subchapter based on evidence
- 26 that the parent:
- 27 (1) homeschooled the child;

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               (2) is economically disadvantaged;
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                    has been charged with a nonviolent misdemeanor
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   offense other than:
                         an offense under Title 5, Penal Code;
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                         an offense under Title 6, Penal Code; or
                     (B)
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                    (C)
                         an offense that involves family violence, as
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   defined by Section 71.004 of this code;
               (4) provided or administered low-THC cannabis to a
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   child for whom the low-THC cannabis was prescribed under Chapter
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   169, Occupations Code; [or]
               (5) declined immunization for the child for reasons of
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   conscience, including a religious belief; or
               (6) after taking reasonable precautionary measures,
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   allowed a child, who is of sufficient maturity, physical condition,
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   and mental ability to avoid substantial risk of physical harm, to
   engage in independent activities, including:
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                    (A) traveling to and from the child's home and
   school, including by walking, running, or bicycling;
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                    (B) traveling to and from the child's home and a
   commercial or recreational facility near to the child's home;
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                    (C) engaging in outdoor play;
                    (D) remaining at the child's home unattended; or
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                    (E) engaging in other age-appropriate normalcy
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   activities as defined by Section 264.001.
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          SECTION 9. Section 262.201, Family Code, is amended by
26
   amending Subsections (e-1), (g), (h), and (j) and adding
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Subsections (g-1), (j-1), (j-2), (j-3), and (n-1) to read as

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- 1 follows:
- 2 (e-1) If a parent who is not indigent appears in opposition
- 3 to the suit, the court may, for good cause shown, postpone the full
- 4 adversary hearing for not more than seven days from the date of the
- 5 parent's appearance to allow the parent to hire an attorney or to
- 6 provide the parent's attorney time to respond to the petition and
- 7 prepare for the hearing. A postponement under this subsection is
- 8 subject to the limits and requirements prescribed by Subsection (e)
- 9 and Section 155.207.
- 10 (g) In a suit filed under Section 262.101 or 262.105, at the
- 11 conclusion of the full adversary hearing, the court shall order the
- 12 return of the child to the parent, managing conservator, possessory
- 13 conservator, guardian, caretaker, or custodian entitled to
- 14 possession from whom the child is removed unless the court finds
- 15 [sufficient evidence to satisfy a person of ordinary prudence and
- 16 caution] that:
- 17 (1) there was a danger to the physical health or safety
- 18 of the child, including a danger that the child would be a victim of
- 19 trafficking under Section 20A.02 or 20A.03, Penal Code, which was
- 20 caused by an act or failure to act of the person entitled to
- 21 possession and for the child to remain in the home is contrary to
- 22 the welfare of the child;
- 23 (2) the urgent need for protection required the
- 24 immediate removal of the child and reasonable efforts, consistent
- 25 with the circumstances and providing for the safety of the child,
- 26 were made to eliminate or prevent the child's removal; [and]
- 27 (3) reasonable efforts have been made to enable the

- 1 child to return home, but there is a substantial risk of a
- 2 continuing danger if the child is returned home; and
- 3 (4) using the standard required by Section 262.001(c),
- 4 the immediate danger to the physical health and safety of the child
- 5 caused by remaining in the child's home outweighs the emotional
- 6 distress that results or may result from disrupting the
- 7 parent-child relationship by removing the child from the child's
- 8 home or parent.
- 9 (g-1) In a suit filed under Section 262.101 or 262.105, if
- 10 the court does not order the return of the child under Subsection
- 11 (g) and finds that another parent, managing conservator, possessory
- 12 conservator, guardian, caretaker, or custodian entitled to
- 13 possession did not cause the immediate danger to the physical
- 14 health or safety of the child or was not the perpetrator of the
- 15 <u>neglect or abuse alleged in the suit, the court shall grant</u>
- 16 possession of the child to that person unless the court finds,
- 17 specific to each person entitled to possession, that:
- 18 (1) the person cannot be located after the exercise of
- 19 <u>due diligence by the Department of Family and Protective Services</u>
- 20 or the person is unable or unwilling to take possession of the
- 21 child; or
- 22 (2) reasonable efforts have been made to enable the
- 23 person's possession of the child but granting possession to that
- 24 person presents a continuing danger to the physical health or
- 25 safety of the child caused by an act or failure to act of the person,
- 26 including a danger that the child would be a victim of trafficking
- 27 under Section 20A.02 or 20A.03, Penal Code.

- (h) In a suit filed under Section 262.101 or 262.105, if the court finds sufficient evidence to make the applicable finding under Subsection (g) or (g-1) [satisfy a person of ordinary prudence and caution that there is a continuing danger to the physical health or safety of the child and for the child to remain in the home is contrary to the welfare of the child], the court shall issue an appropriate temporary order under Chapter 105.
- 8 In a suit filed under Section 262.113, at the conclusion of the full adversary hearing, the court shall issue an appropriate 9 10 temporary order under Chapter 105 if the court finds, with respect to the parent, managing conservator, possessory conservator, 11 12 guardian, caretaker, or custodian entitled to possession from whom the Department of Family and Protective Services is seeking 13 removal, [sufficient evidence to satisfy a person of ordinary 14 15 prudence and caution] that:
- (1) there is a continuing danger to the physical health or safety of the child caused by an act or failure to act of the person entitled to possession of the child and continuation of the child in the <u>person's</u> home would be contrary to the child's welfare; [and]
- (2) reasonable efforts, consistent with the circumstances and providing for the safety of the child, were made to prevent or eliminate the need for the removal of the child; and
- (3) using the standard required by Section 262.001(c),
  the immediate danger to the physical health and safety of the child
  caused by remaining in the child's home outweighs the emotional
  distress that results or may result from disrupting the person's

- 1 relationship with the child by removing the child from the child's
- 2 home or the person.
- 3 (j-1) In a suit filed under Section 262.113, if the court
- 4 orders the removal of the child under Subsection (j) and finds that
- 5 another parent, managing conservator, possessory conservator,
- 6 guardian, caretaker, or custodian entitled to possession did not
- 7 cause the continuing danger to the physical health or safety of the
- 8 child or was not the perpetrator of the neglect or abuse alleged in
- 9 the suit, the court shall grant possession of the child to that
- 10 person unless the court finds, specific to each person entitled to
- 11 possession, that:
- 12 (1) the person cannot be located after the exercise of
- 13 due diligence by the department or the person is unable or unwilling
- 14 to take possession of the child; or
- 15 (2) reasonable efforts have been made to enable the
- 16 person's possession of the child, but granting possession to that
- 17 person presents a continuing danger to the physical health or
- 18 safety of the child caused by an act or failure to act of the person.
- 19 (j-2) A person who otherwise qualifies to take possession of
- 20 a child under Subsection (j-1) shall be granted possession of the
- 21 child if:
- 22 (1) the person did not receive possession of the child
- 23 under Subsection (j-1) because the person could not be located or
- 24 was unable to take possession; and
- 25 (2) the person's location is known and the person
- 26 submits to the department a written request to take possession of
- 27 the child.

- 1 (j-3) On receipt of a written request to take possession of
- 2 a child under Subsection (j-2)(2), the Department of Family and
- 3 Protective Services shall file a motion with the court requesting
- 4 an order granting possession of the child to the person.
- 5 (n-1) If the court does not grant possession of a child to a
- 6 parent, managing conservator, possessory conservator, guardian,
- 7 caretaker, or custodian entitled to possession under Subsection
- 8 (g), (g-1), (j-1), or (j-2), the court shall place the child with a
- 9 relative of the child unless the court finds that the placement with
- 10 <u>a relative is not in the best interest of the child.</u>
- 11 SECTION 10. Section 263.002, Family Code, is amended by
- 12 amending Subsection (c) and adding Subsection (d) to read as
- 13 follows:
- 14 (c) At each permanency hearing before the final order, the
- 15 court shall review the placement of each child in the temporary
- 16 managing conservatorship of the department who has not been
- 17 returned to the child's home. At the end of the hearing, the court
- 18 shall order the department to return the child to the child's parent
- 19 or parents unless the court finds, with respect to each parent,
- 20 that:
- 21 (1) there is a continuing danger to the physical
- 22 health or <u>safety of the child; and</u>
- 23 (2) returning the child to the child's parent or
- 24 parents [The court shall make a finding on whether returning the
- 25 child to the child's home is safe and appropriate, whether the
- 26 return is in the best interest of the child, and whether it] is
- 27 contrary to the welfare of the child [for the child to return home].

- 1 (d) This section does not prohibit the court from rendering
- 2 an order under Section 263.403.
- 3 SECTION 11. Subchapter E, Chapter 263, Family Code, is
- 4 amended by adding Section 263.4011 to read as follows:
- 5 Sec. 263.4011. RENDERING FINAL ORDER; EXTENSION. (a) On
- 6 timely commencement of the trial on the merits required by Section
- 7 <u>263.401</u>, the court shall render a final order not later than the
- 8 90th day after the date the trial commences.
- 9 (b) The 90-day period for rendering a final order under
- 10 Subsection (a) is not tolled for any recess during the trial.
- 11 <u>(c)</u> If the court finds that extraordinary circumstances
- 12 necessitate extending the 90-day period under Subsection (a), the
- 13 court may grant one extension of that date for not longer than 30
- 14 days. The court shall render a written order:
- 15 (1) specifying the grounds on which the extension is
- 16 granted; and
- 17 (2) requiring a final order to be rendered not later
- 18 than the 30th day after the date the extension is granted.
- 19 (d) Except as provided by Section 263.401, if the court does
- 20 not render a final order before the dismissal date provided by this
- 21 section, the court's jurisdiction over the suit is terminated and
- 22 the suit is automatically dismissed without a court order.
- SECTION 12. Section 263.404(a), Family Code, is amended to
- 24 read as follows:
- 25 (a) The court may render a final order appointing the
- 26 department as managing conservator of the child without terminating
- 27 the rights of the parent of the child if the court finds that:

- 1 (1) appointment of a parent as managing conservator
- 2 would not be in the best interest of the child because the
- 3 appointment would significantly impair the child's physical health
- 4 or emotional development; [and]
- 5 (2) it would not be in the best interest of the child
- 6 to appoint a relative of the child or another person as managing
- 7 conservator; and
- 8 (3) if the child has previously been in the
- 9 <u>conservatorship of the department, there is sufficient</u> evidence to
- 10 demonstrate that termination of parental rights to the child is not
- 11 possible or not in the child's best interest.
- 12 SECTION 13. Section 264.203, Family Code, is amended to
- 13 read as follows:
- 14 Sec. 264.203. REQUIRED PARTICIPATION. (a) The department
- 15 may file a suit requesting [Except as provided by Subsection (d),
- 16 the court to render a temporary [on request of the department may]
- 17 order requiring the parent, managing conservator, guardian, or
- 18 other member of the [subject] child's household to:
- 19 (1) participate in the services for which the
- 20 department makes a referral or services the department provides or
- 21 purchases for:
- 22 (A) alleviating the effects of the abuse or
- 23 neglect that has occurred; or
- 24 (B) reducing a continuing danger to the physical
- 25 health or safety of the child caused by an act or failure to act of
- 26 the parent, managing conservator, guardian, or other member of the
- 27 child's household [the reasonable likelihood that the child may be

- 1 abused or neglected in the immediate or foreseeable future]; and
- 2 (2) permit the child and any siblings of the child to 3 receive the services.
- 4 (b) A suit requesting an order under this section may be
  5 filed in a court with jurisdiction to hear the suit in the county in
  6 which the child resides [The department may request the court to
  7 order the parent, managing conservator, guardian, or other member
  8 of the child's household to participate in the services whether the
- 10 (c) Except as otherwise provided by this subchapter, the

  11 suit is governed by the Texas Rules of Civil Procedure applicable to

  12 the filing of an original lawsuit [If the person ordered to

  13 participate in the services fails to follow the court's order, the

  14 court may impose appropriate sanctions in order to protect the

shild resides in the home or has been removed from the home].

- 15 health and safety of the child, including the removal of the child
- 16 as specified by Chapter 262].

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- 17 (d) The petition shall be supported by a sworn affidavit by
- 18 <u>a person based on personal knowledge and stating facts sufficient</u>
- 19 to support a finding that:
- 20 (1) the child has been a victim of abuse or neglect or
- 21 is at substantial risk of abuse or neglect; and
- 22 (2) there is a continuing danger to the physical
- 23 health or safety of the child caused by an act or failure to act of
- 24 the parent, managing conservator, guardian, or other member of the
- 25 child's household unless that person participates in services
- 26 requested by the department [If the court does not order the person
- 27 to participate, the court in writing shall specify the reasons for

- 1 not ordering participation].
- 2 (e) In a suit filed under this section, the court may render
- 3 a temporary restraining order as provided by Section 105.001.
- 4 (f) The court shall hold a hearing on the petition not later
- 5 than the 14th day after the date the petition is filed unless the
- 6 court finds good cause for extending that date for not more than 14
- 7 days.
- 8 (g) The court shall appoint an attorney ad litem to
- 9 represent the interests of the child immediately after the filing
- 10 but before the hearing to ensure adequate representation of the
- 11 child. The attorney ad litem for the child shall have the powers
- 12 and duties of an attorney ad litem for a child under Chapter 107.
- (h) The court shall appoint an attorney ad litem to
- 14 represent the interests of a parent for whom participation in
- 15 services is being requested immediately after the filing but before
- 16 the hearing to ensure adequate representation of the parent. The
- 17 attorney ad litem for the parent shall have the powers and duties of
- 18 an attorney ad litem for a parent under Section 107.0131.
- 19 (i) Before commencement of the hearing, the court shall
- 20 inform each parent of:
- 21 (1) the parent's right to be represented by an
- 22 attorney; and
- 23 (2) for a parent who is indigent and appears in
- 24 opposition to the motion, the parent's right to a court-appointed
- 25 attorney.
- 26 (j) If a parent claims indigence, the court shall require
- 27 the parent to complete and file with the court an affidavit of

- 1 indigence. The court may consider additional evidence to determine
- 2 whether the parent is indigent, including evidence relating to the
- 3 parent's income, source of income, assets, property ownership,
- 4 benefits paid in accordance with a federal, state, or local public
- 5 assistance program, outstanding obligations, and necessary
- 6 expenses and the number and ages of the parent's dependents. If the
- 7 court determines the parent is indigent, the attorney ad litem
- 8 appointed to represent the interests of the parent may continue the
- 9 representation. If the court determines the parent is not
- 10 indigent, the court shall discharge the attorney ad litem from the
- 11 appointment after the hearing and shall order the parent to pay the
- 12 cost of the attorney ad litem representation.
- 13 (k) The court may, for good cause shown, postpone any
- 14 subsequent proceedings for not more than seven days after the date
- 15 of the attorney ad litem's discharge to allow the parent to hire an
- 16 attorney or to provide the parent's attorney time to prepare for the
- 17 subsequent proceeding.
- 18 (1) An order may not be rendered under this section except
- 19 after notice and hearing.
- 20 (m) At the conclusion of the hearing, the court shall deny
- 21 the petition unless the court finds by a preponderance of evidence
- 22 that:
- 23 (1) abuse or neglect has occurred or there is a
- 24 continuing danger to the physical health or safety of the child
- 25 caused by an act or failure to act of the person entitled to
- 26 possession; and
- 27 (2) services to the family are necessary to ensure the

- 1 safety of the child.
- 2 (n) If the court finds sufficient evidence under Subsection
- 3 (m), the court shall:
- 4 (1) state its findings in the order;
- 5 (2) make appropriate temporary orders under Chapter
- 6 105 necessary to ensure the safety of the child; and
- 7 (3) order the participation in specific services
- 8 narrowly tailored to address the findings made by the court under
- 9 Subsection (m).
- 10 (o) Not later than the 90th day after the date the court
- 11 renders an order under this section, the court shall hold a status
- 12 hearing to review the status of each party and the child and the
- 13 services provided, purchased, or referred for the family. The
- 14 court shall set subsequent review hearings every 90 days to review
- 15 the continued need for the order.
- (p) An order rendered under this section expires on the
- 17 180th day after the date the order is signed unless it is renewed as
- 18 provided by Subsection (q).
- 19 (q) The court may renew an order rendered under this section
- 20 on a showing by the department of a continuing need for the order,
- 21 after notice and hearing. The order may be renewed only one time
- 22 for not longer than 180 days.
- 23 <u>(r) At any time, a party affected by the order may request</u>
- 24 the court to terminate the order. The court shall terminate the
- 25 order on a finding that there is no longer a need for the order.
- SECTION 14. Section 262.201(a-5), Family Code, is repealed.
- 27 SECTION 15. The changes in law made by this Act apply only

- 1 to a suit filed by the Department of Family and Protective Services
- 2 on or after the effective date of this Act. A suit filed by the
- 3 department before that date is governed by the law in effect on the
- 4 date the suit was filed, and the former law is continued in effect
- 5 for that purpose.
- 6 SECTION 16. To the extent of any conflict, this Act prevails
- 7 over another Act of the 86th Legislature, Regular Session, 2019,
- 8 relating to nonsubstantive additions to and corrections in enacted
- 9 codes.
- 10 SECTION 17. This Act takes effect October 1, 2019.