

By: Rose, Raymond, Muñoz, Jr.

H.B. No. 3614

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to caseworker visitation standards for certain child protective services caseworkers.

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

SECTION 1. Subchapter B, Chapter 264, Family Code, is amended by adding Section 264.105 to read as follows:

Sec. 264.105. IN-PERSON VISITS WITH FOSTER CHILDREN. (a)

The department shall conduct an in-person meeting at least once each month with each child in the conservatorship of the department and document the results of the meeting in the child's case file.

Each monthly meeting must include:

(1) a complete assessment of the child's safety, including an assessment of the child's placement;

(2) if the child is verbal, an interview with the child conducted individually, separately, and privately from the caregiver and other children;

(3) a discussion of the forms of discipline used in the placement; and

(4) a review of the child's medical, mental health, dental, and educational progress and needs.

(b) The department shall update the department's automated case tracking and information management system to allow caseworkers to record each meeting with a child as described by Subsection (a)(2).

1 (c) If the department fails to meet with a child during a
2 month, the department shall document in the child's case file the
3 reason for the failure.

4 (d) If the monthly meeting required by Subsection (a) is not
5 conducted by the primary caseworker assigned to a child protective
6 services case, the caseworker shall communicate with the child at
7 least once each month by telephone, video conference, or another
8 developmentally appropriate form of communication.

9 (e) The department shall ensure that each child protective
10 services caseworker receives training regarding the visitation
11 requirements of this section.

12 (f) Not later than the 30th day following the last day of
13 each calendar quarter, the department shall submit to the
14 lieutenant governor, speaker of the house of representatives, and
15 chairs of the standing committees of the senate and house of
16 representatives having primary jurisdiction over child protection
17 issues a report on:

18 (1) the total number of caseworker visits with
19 children in the department's conservatorship that caseworkers were
20 required to make each month of the calendar quarter;

21 (2) the total number of caseworker visits with
22 children in the department's conservatorship that caseworkers
23 actually made each month of the calendar quarter, including
24 face-to-face visits and visits conducted by other means as
25 authorized under Subsection (d); and

26 (3) the number of visits caseworkers made each month
27 as a percentage of the number of visits caseworkers were required to

1 make during that month.

2 SECTION 2. This Act takes effect September 1, 2019.