

By: Jetton

H.B. No. 118

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to foster parent recruitment.

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

SECTION 1. Section 264.113, Family Code, is amended to read as follows:

Sec. 264.113. FOSTER PARENT RECRUITMENT. (a) In this section, "faith-based organization" means a religious or denominational institution or organization, including an organization operated for religious, educational, or charitable purposes and operated, supervised, or controlled, in whole or in part, by or in connection with a religious organization.

(b) The department shall develop a foster parent recruitment program to educate residents of this state about the foster care system and the need for foster parents.

(b-1) As part of the foster parent recruitment program, the department shall recruit and retain foster parents from faith-based organizations. ~~The [As part of the program, the]~~ department shall:

(1) collaborate with faith-based organizations to inform prospective foster parents about the department's need for foster parents, the requirements for becoming a foster parent, and any other aspect of the foster care program that is necessary to recruit foster parents;

(2) provide training for prospective foster parents recruited under this section; and

1 (3) identify and recommend ways in which faith-based
2 organizations may support persons as they are recruited, are
3 trained, and serve as foster parents.

4 (c) The department shall work with OneStar Foundation to
5 expand the foster parent recruitment program [~~described by~~
6 ~~Subsection (b)~~] to increase the number of foster families available
7 for the department and its private providers. In cooperation with
8 the department, OneStar Foundation may provide training and
9 technical assistance to establish networks and services in
10 faith-based organizations based on best practices for supporting
11 prospective and current foster families.

12 (d) The department shall work with the Health and Human
13 Services Commission [~~Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative~~
14 ~~Services~~] to recruit foster parents and adoptive parents who have
15 skills, training, or experience suitable to care for children with
16 hearing impairments.

17 (e) The department shall collaborate with foster and
18 adoptive parents to develop and implement a foster parent
19 recruitment plan. The plan must:

20 (1) identify geographic areas in this state in need of
21 foster parents using risk stratification modeling or risk
22 assessments of geographic areas with higher occurrences of child
23 abuse and neglect or child fatalities;

24 (2) use data analysis, social media, partnerships with
25 faith-based and volunteer organizations, and other recruitment
26 strategies, including targeted and child-focused recruitment;

27 (3) identify the number of available foster parents

1 for children with increased needs for therapy or treatment in order
2 to expand the use of therapeutic or treatment foster care for
3 children in those placements;

4 (4) require the provision of:

5 (A) quality customer service to prospective
6 foster and adoptive parents and to foster and adoptive parents; and

7 (B) assistance to prospective foster parents
8 with the certification and placement process;

9 (5) include strategies for increasing the number of
10 kinship providers;

11 (6) include strategies to ensure that children in
12 foster care are not required to transfer schools after entering
13 foster care, unless transferring is in the child's best interest;
14 and

15 (7) include programs to support foster and adoptive
16 families, including programs that provide training, respite care,
17 and peer assistance.

18 SECTION 2. This Act takes effect on the 91st day after the
19 last day of the legislative session.