

By: J. Johnson of Harris

H.B. No. 575

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

1 AN ACT
2 relating to the Department of Family and Protective Services
3 enrolling certain foster children in the Preparation for Adult
4 Living Program.

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

6 SECTION 1. Section 264.121(a), Family Code, is amended to
7 read as follows:

8 (a) The department shall address the unique challenges
9 facing foster children in the conservatorship of the department who
10 must transition to independent living by:

11 (1) expanding efforts to improve transition planning
12 and increasing the availability of transitional family group
13 decision-making to all youth age 14 or older in the department's
14 permanent managing conservatorship, including enrolling all ~~the~~
15 youth who have been in the department's conservatorship for at
16 least four years after the youth's 10th birthday in the Preparation
17 for Adult Living Program ~~[before the age of 16]~~;

18 (2) coordinating with the commission to obtain
19 authority, to the extent allowed by federal law, the state Medicaid
20 plan, the Title IV-E state plan, and any waiver or amendment to
21 either plan, necessary to:

22 (A) extend foster care eligibility and
23 transition services for youth up to age 21 and develop policy to
24 permit eligible youth to return to foster care as necessary to

1 achieve the goals of the Transitional Living Services Program; and

2 (B) extend Medicaid coverage for foster care
3 youth and former foster care youth up to age 21 with a single
4 application at the time the youth leaves foster care; and

5 (3) entering into cooperative agreements with the
6 Texas Workforce Commission and local workforce development boards
7 to further the objectives of the Preparation for Adult Living
8 Program. The department, the Texas Workforce Commission, and the
9 local workforce development boards shall ensure that services are
10 prioritized and targeted to meet the needs of foster care and former
11 foster care children and that such services will include, where
12 feasible, referrals for short-term stays for youth needing housing.

13 SECTION 2. This Act takes effect September 1, 2021.