

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

Senate Research Center  
89R9185 KRM-F

S.B. 1590  
By: Hancock  
Health & Human Services  
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As Filed

### **AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT**

In almost every adoptive placement, it is necessary to search the Paternity Registry, through the Department of State Health Services' (DSHS) Vital Statistics, before terminating parental rights and finalizing the adoption. However, many individuals are experiencing delays of more than six weeks for the Paternity Registry to process search requests, due to an outdated system that relies on paper operation.

This paper operation results in many unnecessary delays, because it relies on antiquated equipment and processes. As one example, search requests are required to be mailed, and the only form of payment accepted is a check or money order. Additionally, staff at DSHS is unable to simultaneously look at the same child or identify prior search requests.

S.B. 1590 amends the Texas Family Code to require DSHS's Vital Statistics Unit to establish an electronic process for stakeholders involved in adoptions to request a paternity verification.

As proposed, S.B. 1590 amends current law relating to duties of the vital statistics unit of the Department of State Health Services in relation to certain suits affecting the parent-child relationship, including in regard to the electronic transmission of certain information.

### **RULEMAKING AUTHORITY**

Rulemaking authority is expressly granted to the executive commissioner of the Health and Human Services Commission in SECTION 3 of this bill.

### **SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS**

SECTION 1. Amends Section 155.101, Family Code, by amending Subsection (b) and adding Subsection (e), as follows:

(b) Requires the vital statistics unit, on the request, rather than written request, of the Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS), the court, an attorney, or a party, to take certain actions.

(e) Requires the vital statistics unit to establish an electronic process through which DFPS, the court, an attorney, or a party may request information under Section 155.101 (Request for Identification of Court of Continuing, Exclusive Jurisdiction).

SECTION 2. Amends Section 160.422, Family Code, by amending Subsections (a) and (b) and adding Subsection (a-1), as follows:

(a) Requires the vital statistics unit, not later than the 10th day after the date a request is received from an individual, a court, or an agency listed in Section 160.412(b) (relating to providing that information contained in the registry is confidential and is authorized to be released on request only to certain persons or entities), to furnish a certificate of the results of a search of the registry. Makes nonsubstantive changes.

(a-1) Requires the vital statistics unit to establish an electronic process through which an individual, a court, or an agency listed in Section 160.412(b) is authorized to request information under Section 160.422 (Certificate of Search of Registry).

(b) Requires that the certificate of the results of a search include a digitized or written signature, rather than be signed, on behalf of the unit and state certain information.

SECTION 3. Requires the executive commissioner of the Health and Human Services Commission, as soon as practicable after the effective date of this Act, to adopt rules necessary to implement the changes in law made by this Act.

SECTION 4. Makes application of this Act prospective to January 1, 2026.

SECTION 5. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2025.