

LEGISLATURE OF NEBRASKA
ONE HUNDRED FIFTH LEGISLATURE
FIRST SESSION

LEGISLATIVE BILL 334

Introduced by Speaker Scheer, 19; at the request of the Governor.

Read first time January 12, 2017

Committee: Health and Human Services

1 A BILL FOR AN ACT relating to children; to amend sections 43-2201,
2 43-2203, 43-2205, and 43-2209, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska;
3 to change provisions relating to family finding; to eliminate a
4 pilot project and provisions relating to appropriations; to
5 harmonize provisions; to repeal the original sections; and to
6 outright repeal sections 43-2204, 43-2206, and 43-2208, Reissue
7 Revised Statutes of Nebraska.
8 Be it enacted by the people of the State of Nebraska,

1 Section 1. Section 43-2201, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is
2 amended to read:

3 43-2201 It is the intent of the Legislature to:

4 (1) Promote kinship care and lifelong connections through the
5 process of family finding when a child has been removed from the legal
6 custody of the child's parents;

7 (2) Prevent recurrence of abuse, neglect, exploitation, or other
8 maltreatment of children;

9 (3) Reduce the length of time children spend in foster care;

10 (4) Reduce multiple placements of children in foster care; and

11 (5) Remain in compliance with the federal Fostering Connections to
12 Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008, Public Law 110-351, ~~;~~ and

13 ~~(6) Create a pilot project for the process of locating and engaging~~
14 ~~family members in the life of a child who is a ward of the state or is~~
15 ~~participating in the bridge to independence program as defined in section~~
16 ~~43-4503, or both, and in need of permanency through a lifelong network of~~
17 ~~support.~~

18 Sec. 2. Section 43-2203, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is
19 amended to read:

20 43-2203 The department, ~~its contracted providers of family finding~~
21 ~~services, and family members of children involved in cases which are part~~
22 ~~of the pilot project created in section 43-2204~~ shall participate in
23 family finding. Family finding is the process of engagement, searching,
24 preparation, planning, decisionmaking, lifetime network creation,
25 healing, and permanency in order to:

26 (1) Search for and identify family members and engage them in
27 planning and decisionmaking;

28 (2) Gain commitments from family members to support a child through
29 nurturing relationships and to support the parent or parents, when
30 appropriate; and

31 (3) Achieve a safe, permanent legal home or lifelong connection for

1 the child, either through reunification or through permanent placement
2 through legal guardianship or adoption.

3 Sec. 3. Section 43-2205, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is
4 amended to read:

5 43-2205 ~~(1) Under the pilot project created under section 43-2204,~~
6 ~~the department shall refer a portion of all cases involving children who~~
7 ~~are wards of the state in foster care or participating in the bridge to~~
8 ~~independence program as defined in section 43-4503, or both, to providers~~
9 ~~of family finding services who or which shall (a) locate family members~~
10 ~~of the children, (b) engage and empower family members, and (c) create an~~
11 ~~individualized plan to achieve a safe, permanent legal home for the~~
12 ~~children when possible.~~

13 ~~(2) The department shall provide administrative oversight of the~~
14 ~~contracts entered into pursuant to the pilot project created under~~
15 ~~section 43-2204.~~

16 ~~(3) A child's departmental case manager, the child's foster parents,~~
17 ~~and the provider of family finding services shall collaborate together to~~
18 ~~maximize success throughout the family finding process.~~

19 ~~(4)~~ The department shall carry out the requirements of the
20 Interstate Compact for the Placement of Children when achieving out-of-
21 state placement of a ward of the court, including prompt submission of
22 required paperwork to ensure that the family finding process moves
23 forward in a timely manner.

24 Sec. 4. Section 43-2209, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is
25 amended to read:

26 43-2209 The department may adopt and promulgate rules and
27 regulations to carry out sections 43-2201 to 43-2207 ~~43-2208~~.

28 Sec. 5. Original sections 43-2201, 43-2203, 43-2205, and 43-2209,
29 Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, are repealed.

30 Sec. 6. The following sections are outright repealed: Sections
31 43-2204, 43-2206, and 43-2208, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska.