

FIRST REGULAR SESSION
SENATE COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE FOR

SENATE BILL NO. 160

99TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Reported from the Committee on Seniors, Families and Children, February 16, 2017, with recommendation that the Senate Committee Substitute do pass.

0346S.02C

ADRIANE D. CROUSE, Secretary.

AN ACT

To amend chapter 210, RSMo, by adding thereto one new section relating to the foster care bill of rights.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Missouri, as follows:

Section A. Chapter 210, RSMo, is amended by adding thereto one new
2 section, to be known as section 210.564, to read as follows:

210.564. 1. This section shall be known and may be cited as the
2 "Foster Care Bill of Rights".

3 2. The children's division shall provide every school-aged foster
4 child and his or her foster parent with an age-appropriate orientation
5 and explanation of the foster care bill of rights. Any children's division
6 office, residential care facility, child placing agency, or other agency
7 involved in the care and placement of foster children shall post the
8 foster care bill of rights in the office, facility, or agency. The children's
9 division shall also make the foster care bill of rights readily available
10 and easily accessible online.

11 3. The foster care bill of rights shall be as follows:

12 (1) In all circumstances, the best interests of the child shall be
13 the first priority of the children's division;

14 (2) Recognizing the importance of familial stability in foster care
15 and adoption placement, it shall be the practice of the children's
16 division to support the reunification of the child with the child's
17 parents or legal guardian when the children's division determines that
18 doing so is in the best interests of the child;

19 (3) When restoration of care and custody is not appropriate or
20 possible, the children's division shall attempt to place the child with

21 suitable relatives in accordance with section 210.565;

22 (4) The children's division shall further support familial stability
23 by ensuring continuity of foster placement, except in instances where
24 cause for a change in a child's placement is reasonably found;

25 (5) The children's division shall work with each child in state
26 custody to develop both a permanency plan and a case plan. These
27 plans shall be developed within twelve months of a child's entrance
28 into state custody. The permanency plan shall include the child's
29 immediate and long-term placement goals, while the case plan shall
30 address a child's specific medical and emotional needs;

31 (6) Recognizing the value of familial relationships in foster care
32 and adoption settings, it shall be the practice of the children's division
33 to support regular visitation and communication between siblings in
34 state custody, and between children in state custody and their parents
35 and relatives, where not otherwise prohibited or against a child's best
36 interests; and

37 (7) The children's division shall support all children twelve years
38 of age or older in state custody to attend any hearings pertaining to the
39 child's placement, custody, or care, provided that the child is willing
40 and able to attend such hearings.

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