

FIRST REGULAR SESSION

SENATE BILL NO. 302

90TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

INTRODUCED BY SENATOR BLAND.

Read 1st time January 19, 1999, and 1,000 copies ordered printed.

L1094.011

TERRY L. SPIELER, Secretary.

AN ACT

To amend chapter 208, RSMo, relating to public assistance by adding thereto two new sections relating to temporary assistance for needy families.

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

Section A. Chapter 208, RSMo, is amended by adding thereto two sections, to be known as sections 208.028 and 208.029, to read as follows:

208.028. As used in this section and section 208.029, the following terms shall mean:

- (1) "Division", the division of family services in the department of social services;
- (2) "Maintenance of effort", state funds appropriated for the aid to families with dependent children (AFDC), emergency assistance, AFDC related child care and the JOBS program;
- (3) "Temporary assistance for needy families", the federal block grant moneys available to the state for public assistance benefits and programs authorized by the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996, and commonly known as "TANF".

208.029. 1. The division of family services in the department of social services shall establish the "Grandparents as Foster Parents Program". The grandparents as foster parents program recognizes that:

- (1) Raising a grandchild differs from when the grandparents raised their own children;
- (2) Caring for a grandchild often places additional financial, social and psychological strain on grandparents with fixed incomes;
- (3) Different parenting skills are necessary when raising a grandchild and many grandparents do not possess such skills, are not aware of how to obtain such skills and

cannot afford access to the services necessary to obtain such skills;

(4) Grandparents, like nonrelative foster parents, need a support structure, including counseling for the grandchild and caretaker, respite care, transportation assistance and child care;

(5) The level of care provided by grandparents does not differ from nonrelative foster care, but reimbursement for such care is substantially less for grandparents; and

(6) Grandparents are often unaware of the cash assistance alternatives to the federal TANF Block Grant funds which are available to support the grandchildren placed in their care.

2. A grandparent shall be eligible to participate in the grandparents as foster parents program if such grandparent:

(1) Is fifty years of age or older;

(2) Is the legal guardian of a grandchild placed in such grandparent's custody;

and

(3) Participates in the training available through the division pursuant to subsection 4 of this section.

3. If there are no grandparents of a child who are willing to participate in the grandparents as foster parents program, the division may include in the program any other close relative who becomes the legal guardian of the child if such relative also meets the requirements of subdivisions (1) and (3) of subsection 2 of this section.

4. The grandparents as foster parents program shall:

(1) Provide reimbursement based on the current foster care payment schedule to eligible grandparents, as defined in subsection 2 of this section, for the care of a grandchild;

(2) Establish program requirements, including, but not limited to, participation in foster parent training, parenting skills training, childhood immunizations and other similar health screenings;

(3) Provide continuing counseling for the child and grandparent;

(4) Provide support services, including, but not limited to, respite care, child care and transportation assistance;

(5) Provide Medicaid services to such child; and

(6) Provide ancillary services, such as child care, respite, transportation assistance and clothing allowances, but not direct financial payments to the participants in the program after such participants complete the training required in subdivision (2) of subsection 4 of this section.

5. Funding for cash benefits and other assistance provided to eligible grandparents shall be made from the state maintenance of effort funds.

6. Grandparents who are either under fifty years of age, or are fifty years of age

or older and refuse to participate in the training pursuant to subsection 2 of this section, may apply to the division for foster care reimbursement and assistance. Such cash and noncash assistance shall be funded through the TANF funds. Any work participation and time limit requirements pursuant to the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 shall apply to all such persons.

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