

CHAPTER 69**(HB 16)**

AN ACT relating to adoption of children.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Kentucky:

Section 1. KRS 199.011 is amended to read as follows:

As used in this chapter, unless the context otherwise requires:

- (1) "Secretary" means the secretary for families and children;
- (2) "Cabinet" means the Cabinet for Families and Children;
- (3) "Department" means the Department for Community Based Services;
- (4) "Child" means any person who has not reached his eighteenth birthday;
- (5) "Adult adopted person" means any adopted person who is twenty-one (21) years of age or older;
- (6) "Child-caring facility" means any institution or group home, including institutions and group homes that are publicly operated, providing residential care on a twenty-four (24) hour basis to children, not related by blood, adoption, or marriage to the person maintaining the facility, other than an institution or group home certified by an appropriate agency as operated primarily for educational or medical purposes, or a residential program operated or contracted by the Department of Juvenile Justice that maintains accreditation, or obtains accreditation within two (2) years of opening from a nationally recognized accrediting organization;
- (7) "Child-placing agency" means any agency licensed by the cabinet which supervises the placement of children in foster family homes or child-caring facilities, or which places children for adoption;
- (8) "Adoption worker" means an employee of the cabinet so designated by the secretary for families and children, a social worker employed by a county or city who has been approved by the cabinet to handle, under its supervision, adoption placement services to children, or a social worker employed by or under contract to a child-placing adoption agency;
- (9) "Foster family home" means a private home in which children are placed for foster family care under supervision of the cabinet or of a licensed child-placing agency;
- (10) "Group home" means a homelike facility, excluding Department of Juvenile Justice operated or contracted facilities, for not more than eight (8) foster children, not adjacent to or part of an institutional campus, operated by a sponsoring agency for children who may participate in community activities and use community resources;
- (11) "Institution" means a child-caring facility providing care or maintenance for nine (9) or more children;
- (12) "Family rehabilitation home" means a child-caring facility for appropriate families and comprising not more than twelve (12) children and two (2) staff persons;
- (13) "Placement services" means those social services customarily provided by a licensed child-placing or a public agency which are necessary for the arrangement and placement of children in foster family homes, child-placing facilities, or adoptive homes. Placement

services are provided through a licensed child-placing or a public agency for children who cannot be cared for by their biological parents and who need and can benefit from new and permanent family ties established through legal adoption. Licensed child-placing agencies and public agencies have a responsibility to act in the best interests of children, biological parents, and adoptive parents by providing social services to all the parties involved in an adoption; and

- (14) "Voluntary and informed consent" means that at the time of the execution of the consent the consenting person was fully informed of the legal effect of the consent, that the consenting person was not given or promised anything of value except those expenses allowable under KRS 199.590(6), that the consenting person was not coerced in any way to execute the consent, and that the consent was voluntarily and knowingly given. If at the time of the execution of the consent the consenting person was represented by independent legal counsel, there shall be a presumption that the consent was voluntary and informed.~~[- In the event the person was not represented by independent legal counsel,]~~ The consent shall be in writing, signed and sworn to by the consenting person and include the following:
- (a) Date, time, and place of the execution of the consent;
 - (b) Name of the child, if any, to be adopted and the date and place of the child's birth;
 - (c) Consenting person's relationship to the child;
 - (d) Identity of the proposed adoptive parents or a statement that the consenting person does not desire to know the identification of the proposed adoptive parents;
 - (e) A statement that the consenting person understands that the consent will be final and irrevocable ***under this paragraph unless withdrawn under this paragraph.***
 1. ***If placement approval by the secretary is required, the voluntary and informed consent shall become final and irrevocable twenty (20) days after the later of the placement approval or the execution of the voluntary and informed consent. This consent may be withdrawn only by written notification sent to the proposed adoptive parent or the attorney for the proposed adoptive parent on or before the twentieth day by certified or registered mail and also by first class mail.***
 2. ***If placement approval by the secretary is not required, the voluntary and informed consent shall become final and irrevocable twenty (20) days after the execution of the voluntary and informed consent. This consent may be withdrawn only by written notification sent to the proposed adoptive parent or the attorney for the proposed adoptive parent on or before the twentieth day by certified or registered mail and also by first class mail***~~*[twenty (20) days after the execution of the consent if the placement was previously approved, if approval of the placement is required];*~~
 - (f) Disposition of the child if the adoption is not adjudged;
 - (g) A statement that the consenting person has received a completed and signed copy of the consent at the time of the execution of the consent;
 - (h)~~[- A statement that the consenting person understands that the consent may only be withdrawn by written notification sent by certified or registered mail addressed to~~

~~either the attorney for the consenting person or to the attorney for the adoptive parents, within thirty (30) days following the execution of the consent;~~

- ~~(i)~~ Name and address of the person who prepared the consent, name and address of the person who reviewed and explained the consent to the consenting person, and a verified statement from the consenting person that the consent has been reviewed with and fully explained to the consenting person; and
- ~~(i)~~ Total amount of the consenting person's legal fees, if any, for any purpose related to the execution of the consent and the source of payment of the legal fees.

Section 2. KRS 199.500 is amended to read as follows:

- (1) An adoption shall not be granted without the voluntary and informed consent, *as defined in Section 1 of this Act*, of the living parent or parents of a child born in lawful wedlock or the mother of the child born out of wedlock, or the father of the child born out of wedlock if paternity is established in a legal action or if an affidavit is filed stating that the affiant is the father of the child, except that the consent of the living parent or parents shall not be required if:
 - (a) The parent or parents have been adjudged mentally disabled and the judgment shall have been in effect for not less than one (1) year prior to the filing of the petition for adoption;
 - (b) The parental rights of the parents have been terminated under KRS Chapter 625;
 - (c) The living parents are divorced and the parental rights of one (1) parent have been terminated under KRS Chapter 625 and consent has been given by the parent having custody and control of the child; or
 - (d) The biological parent has not established parental rights as required by KRS 625.065.
- (2) A minor parent who is a party defendant may consent to an adoption but a guardian ad litem for the parent shall be appointed.
- (3) In the case of a child twelve (12) years of age or older, the consent of the child shall be given in court. The court in its discretion may waive this requirement.
- (4) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection (1) of this section, an adoption may be granted without the consent of the biological living parents of a child if it is pleaded and proved as a part of the adoption proceedings that any of the provisions of KRS 625.090 exist with respect to the child.
- (5) An adoption shall not be granted or a consent for adoption be held valid if the consent for adoption is given prior to seventy-two (72) hours after the birth of the child. A voluntary and informed consent may be taken at seventy-two (72) hours after the birth of the child and shall become final and irrevocable *under paragraphs (a) and (b) of this subsection*.
 - (a) *If placement approval by the secretary is required, the voluntary and informed consent shall become final and irrevocable twenty (20) days after the later of the placement approval or the execution of the voluntary and informed consent.*
 - (b) *If placement approval by the secretary is not required, the voluntary and informed consent shall become final and irrevocable twenty (20) days after the execution of the voluntary and informed consent*~~twenty (20) days after either the interstate or the intrastate placement approval by the secretary of the Cabinet for Families and~~

~~Children, or twenty (20) days after the execution of the consent if placement approval was given prior to the signing of the consent, if approval is required].~~

Approved March 15, 2001