

1 AN ACT relating to the foster care system.

2 WHEREAS, the Commonwealth has a responsibility to protect the safety and well-  
3 being of children in the foster care system; and

4 WHEREAS, repeated placement changes and inappropriate temporary housing,  
5 including the use of cars, offices, and hotel rooms, lead to severe emotional,  
6 psychological, and developmental harm; and

7 WHEREAS, stable, long-term placements increase the likelihood of successful  
8 outcomes for foster children, including higher educational attainment, improved mental  
9 health, and reduced homelessness; and

10 WHEREAS, a lack of sufficient placement options may lead to harmful and  
11 unstable temporary placements; and

12 WHEREAS, prioritizing kinship care, foster families, and group homes will create a  
13 safer, more supportive environment for foster children; and

14 WHEREAS, the ability to track a foster child's locations in real time ensures the  
15 foster child's safety and prevents instances of a child going missing while in custody;

16 NOW, THEREFORE,

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

18 ➔SECTION 1. A NEW SECTION OF KRS CHAPTER 199 IS CREATED TO  
19 READ AS FOLLOWS:

20 *(1) A child in foster care shall not be housed in the following conditions, except in*  
21 *emergency situations not exceeding twenty-four (24) hours:*

22 *(a) Vehicles, including but not limited to cars, vans, and buses;*

23 *(b) State or cabinet offices; or*

24 *(c) Hotels, motels, or short-term rentals.*

25 *(2) A child in foster care shall be placed in one (1) of the following:*

26 *(a) A fictive kin placement;*

27 *(b) A kinship care placement;*

1 (c) A licensed foster family home; or

2 (d) A Licensed child-caring facility.

3 (3) A child in foster care shall not be moved more than two (2) times in a twelve (12)  
 4 month period unless extenuating circumstances such as safety concerns or  
 5 reunification efforts necessitate the change.

6 (4) An employee of the cabinet shall provide a written explanation for any placement  
 7 change beyond the initial placement to the secretary, and the placement change  
 8 shall be approved by the secretary.

9 (5) The department shall promulgate administrative regulations in accordance KRS  
 10 Chapter 13A to implement this section and to minimize placement disruptions  
 11 and prioritize stability .

12 ➔Section 2. KRS 620.320 is amended to read as follows:

13 The duties of the State Citizen Foster Care Review Board shall be to:

14 (1) Establish, approve, and provide training programs for local citizen foster care  
 15 review board members;

16 (2) Review and coordinate the activities of local citizen foster care review boards;

17 (3) Establish reporting procedures to be followed by the local citizen foster care review  
 18 boards and publish an annual written report compiling data reported by local foster  
 19 care review boards which shall include statistics relating, at a minimum, to the  
 20 following:

21 (a) Barriers to permanency identified in reviews;

22 (b) The number of children moved more than ~~two[three]~~ ~~(2)[(3)]~~ times within a  
 23 ~~twelve[six]~~ ~~(12)[(6)]~~ month period;

24 (c) The average length of time in care;

25 (d) Local solutions reported to meet identified barriers; and

26 (e) The total number and frequency of reviews;

27 (4) Publish an annual written report on the effectiveness of such local citizen foster

1 care review boards; and

- 2 (5) Evaluate and make annual recommendations to the Supreme Court, the Legislative  
3 Research Commission for referral to the Interim Joint Committee on Families  
4 and Children, and the Governor regarding:
- 5 (a) Laws of the Commonwealth;
- 6 (b) Practices, policies, and procedures within the Commonwealth affecting  
7 permanence for children in out-of-home placement and the investigation of  
8 allegations of abuse and neglect;
- 9 (c) The findings of the local citizen foster care review board community forums  
10 conducted pursuant to KRS 620.270; and
- 11 (d) The effectiveness or lack thereof and reasons therefor of local citizen foster  
12 care review of children in the custody of the cabinet in bringing about  
13 permanence for the Commonwealth's children.