



OHIO LEGISLATIVE SERVICE COMMISSION

Bill Analysis

Amy L. Archer

H.B. 126

132nd General Assembly
(As Introduced)

Reps. Boyd and Rezabek, Seitz, Ramos, Boggs, Ashford, K. Smith, O'Brien, Kent, Lepore-Hagan, Craig, Antonio, Miller, Reece, Boccieri, Sykes, Howse

BILL SUMMARY

- Requires, rather than permits as is the case under current law, the Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) to establish a statewide program of kinship care navigators.
- Requires the Director of ODJFS to divide the state into as few as 5 or as many as 12 regions for the statewide program of kinship care navigators, based upon the population, number of kinship caregivers, expertise of navigators, and any other relevant factor.
- Requires each kinship care navigator region to provide information and referral services and assistance in obtaining support services for kinship caregivers within its region.
- Requires the Director, not later than one year after the bill's effective date, to amend the state Title IV-A plan in order to provide federal funding for the kinship care navigators.
- Requires ODJFS to pay the full nonfederal share for the program and provides that a county department of job and family services or public children services agency is not responsible for the cost of the program.
- Requires the Director to adopt rules to implement the statewide kinship care navigator program not later than one year after the bill's effective date.

CONTENT AND OPERATION

Mandatory kinship navigator program

The bill *requires* the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) to establish a statewide program of kinship care navigators. The program is permissive under current law. Under continuing law, unchanged by the bill, navigators assist kinship caregivers who are seeking information regarding, or assistance obtaining, services and benefits available at the state and local level that address the needs of those caregivers residing in each county.¹

A "kinship caregiver" is defined under continuing law as any of the following adults caring for a child in place of the parents: grandparents (up to "great-great-great"), siblings, aunts, uncles, nephews, and nieces (up to "great-grand"), first cousins and first cousins once removed, stepparents and stepsiblings, spouses and former spouses of the above individuals, a legal guardian of the child, or a legal custodian of the child.²

Regions

The bill requires the Director of ODJFS to divide the state into regions for the statewide program of kinship care navigators. There may be as few as 5, but not more than 12, regions. In establishing the regions, the Director must take the following into consideration:

- The population size;
- The estimated number of kinship caregivers;
- The expertise of kinship navigators;
- Any other factor the Director deems relevant.³

Services provided

The bill requires each kinship care navigator region to provide information and referral services and assistance in obtaining support services for kinship caregivers

¹ R.C. 5101.851.

² R.C. 5101.85.

³ R.C. 5101.852.



within its region.⁴ Under continuing law, kinship care navigators provide information and referral services and assistance obtaining support services including the following:

- Publicly funded child care;
- Respite care;
- Training related to caring for special needs children;
- A toll-free telephone number that may be called to obtain basic information about the rights of, and services available to, kinship caregivers;
- Legal services.⁵

Funding

State plan

The bill requires the Director, not later than one year after the bill's effective date, to submit an amendment to the state's Title IV-A plan required by federal law in order for the state to receive federal funds for certain programs it operates under Title IV-A. Specifically, the amendment to the state plan is to provide for federal payment under Title IV-A to kinship care navigators.⁶

The bill also adds the kinship navigator program to the state list of Title IV-A programs. As such, ODJFS will include the kinship navigator program in ongoing state plans.⁷

No local share

The bill requires ODJFS to pay the full nonfederal share for the kinship caregiver program. No county department of job and family services or public children services agency will be responsible for the program's cost.⁸

⁴ R.C. 5101.853.

⁵ R.C. 5101.851.

⁶ R.C. 5101.855(A).

⁷ R.C. 5101.80.

⁸ R.C. 5101.855(B).



Rules

The bill requires ODJFS to adopt rules to implement the kinship care navigators program not later than one year after the bill's effective date.⁹

HISTORY

ACTION	DATE
Introduced	03-14-17

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⁹ R.C. 5101.854.

