

House File 1003 - Introduced

HOUSE FILE 1003
BY COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

(SUCCESSOR TO HF 638)
(SUCCESSOR TO HSB 146)

A BILL FOR

1 An Act relating to child placements.

2 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF IOWA:

unofficial

1 Section 1. Section 232.84, subsection 2, Code 2025, is
2 amended to read as follows:

3 2. a. Unless the custody of a child is transferred from
4 one of the child's parents to another parent of the child,
5 within thirty days after the entry of an order under this
6 chapter removing a child from the custody of a parent or parents
7 of the child, the department shall exercise due diligence in
8 identifying and providing notice to the child's grandparents,
9 aunts, uncles, adult siblings, parents of the child's siblings,
10 and adult relatives suggested by the child's parents, subject to
11 exceptions due to the presence of family or domestic violence.

12 b. The department shall employ dedicated staff at the
13 department's central office for the sole purpose of exercising
14 the department's due diligence requirements under paragraph "a".

15 Sec. 2. Section 232.102, subsection 1, paragraph c, Code
16 2025, is amended to read as follows:

17 c. (1) A court shall not order placement of a child in a
18 category identified in paragraph "a", subparagraph (2), (3), (4),
19 or (5) without a specific finding that placement with an adult
20 relative is not in the child's best interests and providing
21 reasons for the court's finding.

22 (2) Notwithstanding any provision under this subsection to
23 the contrary, if the court finds, during the dispositional
24 hearing, that the child has been placed with an individual
25 licensed under chapter 237 to provide foster care for at least
26 nine months immediately preceding the dispositional hearing,
27 the court shall not order placement of a child in a category
28 identified in paragraph "a", subparagraph (1), (2), or (3),
29 without a specific finding that such placement is in the child's
30 best interests and providing reasons for the court's findings.

31 EXPLANATION

32 The inclusion of this explanation does not constitute agreement with
33 the explanation's substance by the members of the general assembly.

34 This bill relates to child placements.

35 Under current law, the department of health and human services

1 (HHS) is required to exercise due diligence in identifying
2 and providing notice to certain relatives of a child when the
3 child has been removed from the child's parent's custody. The
4 bill requires HHS to employ dedicated staff at HHS's central
5 office for the sole purpose of exercising HHS's due diligence
6 requirements related to identifying and providing notice to
7 certain relatives of children removed from parental custody.

8 Under current law, after a dispositional hearing for a child
9 in need of assistance proceeding, if a court determines that
10 placing a child's custody with either of the child's parents
11 is not in the child's best interests, the court must transfer
12 the child's custody to HHS for placement with certain persons
13 as prioritized in Code section 232.102(1)(a) (transfer of legal
14 custody of child and placement). If a child was placed with
15 a licensed foster parent for at least nine months immediately
16 preceding the dispositional hearing, the bill prohibits the court
17 from placing the child with a different individual unless the
18 court makes a specific finding that placement with the different
19 individual is in the child's best interests, and the court
20 provides reasons for the finding.