
42 U.S. Code § 629h

Entitlement funding for State courts to assess and improve handling of proceedings relating to foster care and adoption

(a) In general

The Secretary shall make grants, in accordance with this section, to the highest State courts in States participating in the program under part E of this subchapter, for the purpose of enabling such courts—

(1) to conduct assessments, in accordance with such requirements as the Secretary shall publish, of the role, responsibilities, and effectiveness of State courts in carrying out State laws requiring proceedings (conducted by or under the supervision of the courts)—

(A) that implement this part and part E of this subchapter;

(B) that determine the advisability or appropriateness of foster care placement;

(C) that determine whether to terminate parental rights;

(D) that determine whether to approve the adoption or other permanent placement of a child;^[1]

(E) that determine the best strategy to use to expedite the interstate placement of children, including—

(i) requiring courts in different States to cooperate in the sharing of information;

(ii) authorizing courts to obtain information and testimony from agencies and parties in other States without requiring interstate travel by the agencies and parties; and

(iii) permitting the participation of parents, children, other necessary parties, and attorneys in cases involving interstate placement without requiring their interstate travel; and^[2]

(2) to implement improvements the highest state^[3] courts deem necessary as a result of the assessments, including—

(A) to provide for the safety, well-being, and permanence of children in foster care in a timely and complete manner, as set forth in the Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997 (Public Law 105–89), including the requirements in the Act related to concurrent planning;

(B) to implement a corrective action plan, as necessary, resulting from reviews of child and family service programs under section 1320a–2a of this title; and

(C) to increase and improve engagement of the entire family in court processes relating to child welfare, family preservation, family reunification, and adoption, including by training judges, attorneys, and other legal personnel.

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