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By: **Chairman, Judiciary Committee (By Request - Departmental - Human Resources)**

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Committee Report: Favorable  
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CHAPTER 49

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Child in Need of Assistance Proceedings - Permanency Plan Review**  
3 **Hearings**

4 FOR the purpose of requiring a court, at a hearing to review a permanency plan for a  
5 certain child in a child in need of assistance proceeding, to document in its order  
6 whether reasonable efforts have been made to finalize the permanency plan that  
7 is in effect; and generally relating to permanency plan review hearings.

8 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,  
9 Article - Courts and Judicial Proceedings  
10 Section 3-823  
11 Annotated Code of Maryland  
12 (2002 Replacement Volume)

13 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF  
14 MARYLAND, That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

15 **Article - Courts and Judicial Proceedings**

16 3-823.

17 (a) In this section, "out-of-home placement" has the meaning stated in §  
18 5-501 of the Family Law Article.

19 (b) (1) The court shall hold a permanency planning hearing:

1 (i) No later than 11 months after a child in a CINA proceeding  
2 enters an out-of-home placement to determine the permanency plan for the child  
3 committed under § 3-819(b) of this subtitle; or

4 (ii) Within 30 days after the court finds that reasonable efforts to  
5 reunify a child with the child's parent or guardian are not required based on a finding  
6 that a circumstance enumerated in § 3-812 of this subtitle has occurred.

7 (2) For purposes of this section, a child shall be considered to have  
8 entered an out-of-home placement 30 days after the child is placed into an  
9 out-of-home placement.

10 (3) If all parties agree, a permanency planning hearing may be held on  
11 the same day as the reasonable efforts hearing.

12 (c) (1) On the written request of a party or on its own motion, the court may  
13 schedule a hearing at any earlier time to determine a permanency plan or to review  
14 the implementation of a permanency plan for any child committed under § 3-819 of  
15 this subtitle.

16 (2) A written request for review shall state the reason for the request  
17 and each issue to be raised.

18 (d) At least 10 days before the permanency planning hearing, the local  
19 department shall provide all parties and the court with a copy of the local  
20 department's permanency plan for the child.

21 (e) At a permanency planning hearing, the court shall:

22 (1) Determine the child's permanency plan, which may be:

23 (i) Reunification with the parent or guardian;

24 (ii) Placement with a relative for:

25 1. Adoption; or

26 2. Custody and guardianship;

27 (iii) Adoption by a nonrelative;

28 (iv) Guardianship by a nonrelative;

29 (v) Continuation in a specified placement on a permanent basis  
30 because of the child's special needs or circumstances;

31 (vi) Continuation in placement for a specified period because of the  
32 child's special needs or circumstances; or

33 (vii) Independent living; and

1 (2) For a child who has attained the age of 16, determine the services  
2 needed to assist the child to make the transition from placement to independent  
3 living.

4 (f) The court may not order a child to be continued in a placement under  
5 subsection (e)(1)(v) or (vi) of this section unless the court finds that the person or  
6 agency to which the child is committed has documented a compelling reason for  
7 determining that it would not be in the best interest of the child to:

8 (1) Return home;

9 (2) Be referred for termination of parental rights; or

10 (3) Be placed for adoption or guardianship with a specified and  
11 appropriate relative or legal guardian willing to care for the child.

12 (g) In the case of a child for whom the court determines that the plan should  
13 be changed to adoption under subsection (e)(1)(iii) of this section, the court shall:

14 (1) Order the local department to file a petition for guardianship in  
15 accordance with Title 5, Subtitle 3 of the Family Law Article within 30 days or, if the  
16 local department does not support the plan, within 60 days; and

17 (2) Schedule a TPR hearing instead of the next 6-month review hearing.

18 (h) (1) (i) Except as provided in subparagraphs (ii) and (iii) of this  
19 paragraph, the court shall conduct a hearing to review the permanency plan at least  
20 every 6 months until commitment is rescinded.

21 (ii) The court shall conduct a review hearing every 12 months after  
22 the court determines that the child shall be continued in out-of-home placement with  
23 a specific caregiver who agrees to care for the child on a permanent basis.

24 (iii) 1. Unless the court finds good cause, a case shall be  
25 terminated after the court grants custody and guardianship of the child to a relative  
26 or other individual.

27 2. If the court finds good cause not to terminate a case, the  
28 court shall conduct a review hearing every 12 months until the case is terminated.

29 (2) At the review hearing, the court shall:

30 (i) Determine the continuing necessity for and appropriateness of  
31 the commitment;

32 (ii) Determine [the extent of compliance] AND DOCUMENT IN ITS  
33 ORDER WHETHER REASONABLE EFFORTS HAVE BEEN MADE TO FINALIZE [with] the  
34 permanency plan THAT IS IN EFFECT;

35 (iii) Determine the extent of progress that has been made toward  
36 alleviating or mitigating the causes necessitating commitment;

1 (iv) Project a reasonable date by which a child in placement may be  
2 returned home, placed in a preadoptive home, or placed under a legal guardianship;

3 (v) Evaluate the safety of the child and take necessary measures to  
4 protect the child; and

5 (vi) Change the permanency plan if a change in the permanency  
6 plan would be in the child's best interest.

7 (3) Every reasonable effort shall be made to effectuate a permanent  
8 placement for the child within 24 months after the date of initial placement.

9 (i) (1) In this subsection, "preadoptive parent" means an individual whom a  
10 child placement agency, as defined in § 5-301 of the Family Law Article, approves to  
11 adopt a child who has been placed in the individual's home for adoption before the  
12 final decree of adoption.

13 (2) If practicable, the local department shall give at least 7 days' notice  
14 before any hearing conducted under this section to the child's foster parent,  
15 preadoptive parent, or relative providing care for the child.

16 (3) The foster parent, preadoptive parent, relative, or an attorney for the  
17 foster parent, preadoptive parent, or relative shall be given an opportunity to be  
18 heard at the hearing.

19 (4) The foster parent, preadoptive parent, relative, or attorney may not  
20 be considered to be a party solely on the basis of the right to notice and opportunity to  
21 be heard provided under this subsection.

22 (j) At a review hearing under this section, the court shall consider any written  
23 report of a local out-of-home placement review board required under § 5-545 of the  
24 Family Law Article.

25 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take  
26 effect October 1, 2003.