

## Article - Family Law

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§5-525.2.

(a) (1) A local department shall place together siblings who are in an out-of-home placement under § 5-525 of this subtitle if:

- (i) it is in the best interests of the siblings to be placed together; and
- (ii) placement of the siblings together does not conflict with a specific health or safety regulation.

(2) If placement of the siblings together conflicts with a specific health or safety regulation, the local department may place the siblings together if the local department makes a written finding describing how placement of the siblings together serves the best interests of the siblings.

(b) (1) Any siblings who are separated due to a foster care or adoptive placement may petition a court, including a juvenile court with jurisdiction over one or more of the siblings, for reasonable sibling visitation rights.

(2) If a petitioner under this subsection petitions a court to issue a visitation decree or to amend an order, the court:

- (i) may hold a hearing to determine whether visitation is in the best interest of the children;
- (ii) shall weigh the relative interests of each child and base its decision on the best interests of the children promoting the greatest welfare and least harm to the children; and
- (iii) may issue an appropriate order or decree.

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