SENATE BILL 1315

AN ACT

AMENDING SECTION 8-514.03, ARIZONA REVISED STATUTES, AS AMENDED BY LAWS 2018, CHAPTER 153, SECTION 3; REPEALING SECTION 8-514.03, ARIZONA REVISED STATUTES, AS AMENDED BY LAWS 2018, CHAPTER 110, SECTION 2; RELATING TO CHILD WELFARE AND PLACEMENT.

(TEXT OF BILL BEGINS ON NEXT PAGE)
Be it enacted by the Legislature of the State of Arizona:

Section 1. Section 8-514.03, Arizona Revised Statutes, as amended by Laws 2018, chapter 153, section 3, is amended to read:

8-514.03. Kinship foster care; requirements; investigation; stipend

A. The department shall establish kinship foster care services for a child who has been removed from the child's home and who is in the custody of the department. The placement of a child who is in the custody of the department shall be determined by the best interests of the child. THE PROGRAM SHALL PROMOTE THE PLACEMENT OF THE CHILD WITH THE CHILD'S RELATIVE OR A PERSON WITH A SIGNIFICANT RELATIONSHIP WITH THE CHILD FOR KINSHIP FOSTER CARE.

B. A kinship foster care parent applicant who is not a licensed foster care parent shall be at least eighteen years of age. The applicant and each member of the applicant's household who is at least eighteen years of age shall submit a full set of fingerprints to the department of child safety for the purpose of obtaining a state and federal criminal records check pursuant to section 41-1750 and Public Law 92-544. The department of public safety may exchange this fingerprint data with the federal bureau of investigation. The department of child safety shall determine if the applicant is able to meet the child's health and safety needs by conducting one or more home visits and interviewing the applicant. The department of child safety may interview other household members, review the applicant's personal and professional references and conduct department of child safety central registry checks.

C. If the department determines that a kinship foster care placement is not in the best interest of the child, the department shall provide written notification to the applicant within fifteen business days. The notice shall include the specific reason for denial, the applicant's right to appeal and the process for reviewing the decision.

D. A kinship foster care parent may be eligible to receive the following financial services for the child:

1. Full foster care benefits, including payment if the kinship foster care parent becomes a licensed foster care home.

2. Temporary assistance for needy families cash for a child only case and supplemental financial support.

E. The department shall establish procedures for child welfare workers to inform kinship foster care families about available financial and nonfinancial services and eligibility requirements and shall assist the families in completing the necessary application.

F. If a family declines to apply for financial services, the family shall sign a statement indicating that the family declined services. The statement does not prevent the family from making application in the future. The worker shall provide a copy of the statement to the family.
G. The department shall provide nonfinancial services for a kinship foster care parent through existing means or referral. Nonfinancial services may include:

1. Family assessment.
2. Case management.
3. Child day care.
4. Housing search and relocation.
5. Parenting skills training.
6. Supportive intervention and guidance counseling.
7. Transportation.
8. Emergency services.
10. Respite services.
11. Additional services that the department determines are necessary to meet the needs of the child and family.

H. The department of child safety shall evaluate biannually the performance of the kinship foster care program. On or before November 1, the department shall submit a report to the speaker of the house of representatives, the president of the senate and the governor and shall provide a copy of this report to the secretary of state. The report shall contain the following information:

1. The demographics and number of children placed with relative caregivers.
2. The demographics of kinship foster caregivers.
3. The number of relative children per kinship foster care family.
4. The department's success at maintaining kinship foster care placements.
5. The type of services provided to kinship foster care families.
6. The cost of services provided to kinship foster care families compared to the cost of out of home placements.
7. Recommendations regarding program improvement.

H. THE DEPARTMENT SHALL PROVIDE A KINSHIP FOSTER CARE PARENT WITH A STIPEND OF $250 PER MONTH FOR EACH CHILD PLACED WITH THE FOSTER CARE PARENT.

Sec. 2. Repeal
Section 8-514.03, Arizona Revised Statutes, as amended by Laws 2018, chapter 110, section 2, is repealed.