

Tenn. Code Ann. § 37-1-901

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Tennessee Code Table of Contents PAW- ET TABLE OF CONTENTS Title 37
Juveniles Chapter 1 Juvenile Courts and Proceedings Part 9 Tennessee Zero to Three
Court Initiative

37-1-901. Short title.

This part shall be known and may be cited as the "Tennessee Zero to Three Court Initiative."

History

Acts 2017, ch. 366, § 1.

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37-1-902. Legislative intent — Goals of zero to three court programs.

(a) The general assembly recognizes that a critical need exists in this state for child and family programs to reduce the incidence of child abuse, neglect, and endangerment, minimize the effects of childhood trauma on small children, and provide stability to parents and children within the state. It is the intent of the general assembly by this part to create an initiative to facilitate the implementation of new and the continuation of existing zero to three court programs.

(b) The goals of the zero to three court programs created under this part include the following:

(1) To reduce time to permanency of children thirty-six (36) months of age or younger by surrounding at-risk families with support services;

(2) To reduce incidences of repeat maltreatment among children thirty-six (36) months of age or younger;

(3) To reduce the long-term and short-term effects of traumatic experiences occurring when a child is thirty-six (36) months of age or younger on a child's brain development;

(4) To promote public safety through these reductions;

(5) To increase the personal, familial, and societal accountability of families; and

(6) To promote effective interaction and the use of resources among both public and private state and local child and family service agencies, state and local mental health agencies, and community agencies.

It is the intent of the general assembly that in appropriate circumstances vetted, trained, and approved safe baby court volunteers be utilized to the fullest extent possible.

(c) As used in this part, "zero to three court program" and "safe baby court" means any court program created within this state that seeks to accomplish the goals stated in subsection (b) and that is

established by a judge with jurisdiction over juvenile court matters. Except as provided in § 37-1-906, a safe baby court has the same powers as the court that created it.

History

Acts 2017, ch. 366, § 1; 2019, ch. 383, §§ 1, 2.

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37-1-903. Establishment of zero to three court programs and safe baby court programs — Location — Administration.

(a)

(1) On January 1, 2018, there are established five (5) zero to three court programs throughout this state. These courts shall be in addition to any zero to three court programs already established in the state.

(2) On January 1, 2020, there are established five (5) safe baby courts throughout this state. These courts are in addition to other zero to three court programs and safe baby courts established in this state prior to May 10, 2019. The establishment of additional safe baby courts is authorized as funding permits.

(b)

(1) The administrative office of the courts, in consultation with the department of children's services, the department of mental health and substance abuse services, and the council of juvenile and family court judges, shall determine the location of each program.

(2) The department of children's services, in consultation with the administrative office of the courts, the department of mental health and substance abuse services, and the council of juvenile and family court judges shall establish at least one (1) program within each of the three (3) grand divisions and shall seek to serve both rural and urban populations.

(3) The administrative office of the courts, the council of juvenile and family court judges, the department of children's services, and the department of mental health and substance abuse services are authorized to collaborate for the purpose of developing a strategy for safe baby court programs to expand services into adjacent counties where the judges of the juvenile courts of each county agree to

share resources and the department of children's services has the staffing and resource capacity to provide coverage of safe baby courts in the adjacent counties.

(c) The department of children's services, in consultation with the administrative office of the courts, council of juvenile and family court judges, and the department of mental health and substance abuse services, shall administer the zero to three court programs by:

(1) Defining, developing, and gathering outcome measures for zero to three court programs relating to the goals stated in § 37-1-902;

(2) Collecting and compiling safe baby court program data, including annual reports from each zero to three court program and safe baby court. The department of children's services shall create and disseminate an annual report to the director of the administrative office of the courts, the commissioner of the department of mental health and substance abuse services, the council of juvenile and family court judges, and the chairs of the civil justice committee of the house of representatives and the judiciary committee of the senate. The annual report must summarize the results of the programs' operations during the previous calendar year, including data on outcomes achieved in safe baby courts compared to the outcomes achieved by other courts exercising similar jurisdiction, any cost savings associated with the achievement of the goals stated in § 37-1-902, and program feedback from safe baby court judges. Each zero to three court program and safe baby court established on or before January 1, 2018, shall submit program data and an annual report as described in this subdivision (c)(2) to the department of children's services, the department of mental health and substance abuse services, the administrative office of the courts, and the council of juvenile and family court judges by February 1 of each year. Each safe baby court established on January 1, 2020, shall submit program data and an annual report as described in this subdivision (c)(2) to the department of children's services, the department of mental health and substance abuse services, the administrative office of the courts, and the council of juvenile and family court judges by February 1, 2021, and each following February 1;

(3) Sponsoring and coordinating state zero to three court training for the juvenile court judges and staff who will administer the programs; and

(4) Developing standards of operation, including procedures and protocols, for zero to three court programs prior to the creation, establishment, and commencement of the programs on January 1, 2018.

History

Acts 2017, ch. 366, § 1; 2019, ch. 345, § 37; 2019, ch. 383, §§ 3-5; 2021, ch. 64, § 27.

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37-1-904. No right to participate in zero to three court program established.

Nothing contained in this part shall confer a right or an expectation of a right of participation in a zero to three court program to a person within the juvenile court system.

History

Acts 2017, ch. 366, § 1.

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Tenn. Code Ann. § 37-1-905

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37-1-905. No limitation on ability to create and maintain zero to three court program.

Nothing in this part shall be construed to limit the ability of any jurisdiction to create and maintain a zero to three court program that strives to accomplish the goals set forth in § 37-1-902.

History

Acts 2017, ch. 366, § 1.

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37-1-906. Referral of juvenile court matter to safe baby court program.

A juvenile court matter that meets the safe baby court program criteria may be referred to a safe baby court program at any time during the pendency of the proceeding. If a matter is transferred to a safe baby court program, any permanency plan already in place must be scheduled for a review hearing by the court within thirty (30) days of the transfer to safe baby court.

History

Acts 2019, ch. 383, § 6.

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37-1-907. Application for grants not precluded.

This part does not preclude the ability of a safe baby court to apply for and receive matching monetary grants in addition to funds allotted to safe baby court programs from the department of children's services, the department of mental health and substance abuse services, and the administrative office of the courts.

History

Acts 2019, ch. 383, § 7.

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37-1-908. Termination of participation in safe baby court program.

A party's participation in a safe baby court program may be terminated at the discretion of the court if the party fails to comply with the program requirements.

History

Acts 2019, ch. 383, § 8.

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37-1-909. Safe baby court advisory committee.

To assist in the development of rules and regulations and to ensure that the views of the safe baby court community are appropriately communicated to the commissioner of children's services, the director of the administrative office of the courts, and the commissioner of mental health and substance abuse services, there is created a safe baby court advisory committee. The committee members shall be named by the director of the administrative office of the courts, the commissioner of children's services, and the commissioner of mental health and substance abuse services. The commissioner of children's services will chair the committee. The committee shall strive to develop non-regulatory strategies to address issues related to the operation of safe baby courts and to facilitate necessary changes. The members of the committee serve as volunteers and shall not be paid or reimbursed for time served as committee members.

History

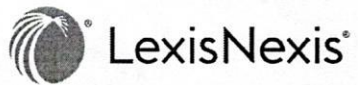
Acts 2019, ch. 383, § 9.

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37-1-910. [Repealed]

History

Acts 2019, ch. 383, § 11; repealed by Acts 2024, ch. 638, § 1, effective April 4, 2024.

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