

SENATE BILL NO. 467

BY SENATOR LONG

1 AN ACT

2 To amend and reenact R.S. 46:285, relative to required training for child protection and
3 foster care workers; to provide for deemed status for certain training; and to provide
4 for related matters.

5 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

6 Section 1. R.S. 46:285 is hereby amended and reenacted to read as follows:

7 §285. Required training for child protection and foster care workers

8 A. No employee of the Department of Social Services, office of community
9 services, ~~hired for the position of child protection caseworker or supervisor or foster~~
10 ~~care caseworker or supervisor~~ with direct responsibility for cases dealing with
11 families and children after January 1, 1984, shall exercise responsibility for any
12 cases until that employee has completed a training program consisting of at least
13 thirty-two hours of instruction, addressing such appropriate topics as:

14 (1) Causes and effects of child abuse and neglect.

15 (2) Legal aspects of child protection and foster care including the legal duties
16 of the representatives, which may consist of various methods of informing such
17 representatives of such duties, in order to protect the constitutional and statutory
18 rights and safety of children and families from the initial time of contact during
19 investigation through treatment.

20 (3) Treatment of abused and neglected children.

21 (4) Treatment of abusive and neglectful parents.

22 (5) Permanency planning for children.

23 (6) Training to ensure that workers are knowledgeable in best practices for
24 promoting collaboration with families and that they are fully aware of the extent and
25 the limits of their legal authority and the legal rights of parents in carrying out such
26 investigations. Training shall include legal duties of workers to protect the
27 constitutional and statutory rights of children and families from the initial time of

1 contact during investigation through treatment.

2 (~~7~~) B. All representatives or employees of the Department of Social Services
3 shall, at the initial time of contact with the individual subject to a child abuse and
4 neglect investigation, advise the individual of the specific complaints or allegations
5 made against the individual in a manner that is consistent with laws protecting the
6 rights of the informant.

7 C. Any employee hired on or after July 1, 2010, who has graduated from
8 a Council on Social Work Education accredited program of social work
9 certifying that the employee has completed course work and demonstrated
10 competency in the core areas of effective child welfare practice, including
11 successful completion of a child welfare specific internship, shall be deemed to
12 have met the thirty-two hour training requirement specified in Subsection A of
13 this Section and may begin exercising responsibility for cases under agency
14 supervision. The Department of Social Services in partnership with the
15 Louisiana University Child Welfare Workforce Alliance shall define the core
16 competencies, which shall include but not be limited to the competencies set
17 forth in Subsection A of this Section, of effective child welfare practice. The
18 Department of Social Services shall be specifically authorized to promulgate
19 rules and regulations, pursuant to the Administrative Procedure Act, which
20 may be necessary to effect the provisions of this Section.

21 ~~B. D.~~ Within six months following the commencement of responsibility for
22 cases, each such employee designated in Subsection A of this Section shall complete
23 a training program consisting of thirty-two hours of job related instruction in
24 addition to the training required in Subsection A.

25 ~~C. E.~~ Notwithstanding the provisions of Subsections A and ~~B D~~ of this
26 Section, employees of the office of community services shall be permitted to
27 exercise responsibility for cases on an emergency basis prior to the completion of
28 required training if the unavailability of these employees pending such training
29 would result in the agency's inability to meet the needs of abused or neglected
30 children or to satisfy legal mandates, provided that appropriate training may not be

1 delayed beyond sixty days.

2 ~~D.~~ F. Within the second and third full year of employment, each child
3 protection caseworker and supervisor or foster care caseworker or supervisor as
4 designated in Subsection A of this Section, shall receive thirty-two hours of in-
5 service training annually, relevant to providing child welfare services.

6 ~~E.~~ G. Following completion of three full years of child welfare casework
7 experience, each employee as designated in Subsection A of this Section, shall
8 receive at least twenty hours of in-service training annually, relevant to providing
9 child welfare services.

10 ~~F.~~ H. The Department of Social Services shall provide such training through
11 its own personnel, partnerships with universities, or by contracting with outside
12 persons or agencies.

13 ~~G.~~ I. The Department of Social Services may continue incentive pay
14 schedules established by the Department of State Civil Service to compensate social
15 work personnel with selected graduate degrees at a higher rate than other persons
16 without such specialized advanced degrees as provided by the Department of State
17 Civil Service and the State Civil Service Commission.

18 Section 2. This Act shall become effective upon signature by the governor or, if not
19 signed by the governor, upon expiration of the time for bills to become law without signature
20 by the governor, as provided by Article III, Section 18 of the Constitution of Louisiana. If
21 vetoed by the governor and subsequently approved by the legislature, this Act shall become
22 effective on the day following such approval.

PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF LOUISIANA

APPROVED: _____