

LEGISLATURE OF NEBRASKA  
ONE HUNDRED SIXTH LEGISLATURE  
FIRST SESSION

**LEGISLATIVE BILL 219**

Introduced by Wishart, 27.

Read first time January 14, 2019

Committee:

- 1 A BILL FOR AN ACT relating to children; to amend sections 43-1311.03 and  
2 43-4708, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, and section 43-4704,  
3 Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement, 2018; to provide  
4 requirements for foster care transition proposals and provision of  
5 materials relating to acquiring a driver's license; to provide for a  
6 child in foster care to obtain a driver's license and provide  
7 immunity from liability for caregivers; and to repeal the original  
8 sections.
- 9 Be it enacted by the people of the State of Nebraska,

1 Section 1. Section 43-1311.03, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska,  
2 is amended to read:

3 43-1311.03 (1) When a child placed in foster care turns fourteen  
4 years of age or enters foster care and is at least fourteen years of age,  
5 a written independent living transition proposal shall be developed by  
6 the Department of Health and Human Services at the direction and  
7 involvement of the child to prepare for the transition from foster care  
8 to successful adulthood. Any revision or addition to such proposal shall  
9 also be made in consultation with the child. The transition proposal  
10 shall be personalized based on the child's needs and shall describe the  
11 services needed for the child to transition to a successful adulthood as  
12 provided in the Nebraska Strengthening Families Act. The transition  
13 proposal shall include, but not be limited to, the following needs and  
14 the services needed for the child to transition to a successful adulthood  
15 as provided in the Nebraska Strengthening Families Act:

16 (a) Education;

17 (b) Employment services and other workforce support;

18 (c) Health and health care coverage, including the child's potential  
19 eligibility for medicaid coverage under the federal Patient Protection  
20 and Affordable Care Act, 42 U.S.C. 1396a(a)(10)(A)(i)(IX), as such act  
21 and section existed on January 1, 2013;

22 (d) Behavioral health treatment and support needs and access to such  
23 treatment and support;

24 (e) Financial assistance, including education on credit card  
25 financing, banking, and other services;

26 (f) Housing;

27 (g) Relationship development and permanent connections;~~and~~

28 (h) Adult services, if the needs assessment indicates that the child  
29 is reasonably likely to need or be eligible for services or other support  
30 from the adult services system; and -

31 (i) Information, planning, and assistance to obtain a driver's

1 license as allowed under state law and consistent with subdivision (9)(b)  
2 (iv) of this section, including, but not limited to, providing the child  
3 with a copy of a driver's manual, identifying driver safety courses and  
4 resources to access a driver safety course, and identifying potential  
5 means by which to access a motor vehicle for such purposes.

6 (2) The transition proposal shall be developed and frequently  
7 reviewed by the department in collaboration with the child's transition  
8 team. The transition team shall be comprised of the child, the child's  
9 caseworker, the child's guardian ad litem, individuals selected by the  
10 child, and individuals who have knowledge of services available to the  
11 child. As provided in the Nebraska Strengthening Families Act, one of the  
12 individuals selected by the child may be designated as the child's  
13 advisor and, as necessary, advocate for the child with respect to the  
14 application of the reasonable and prudent parent standard and for the  
15 child on normalcy activities. The department may reject an individual  
16 selected by the child to be a member of the team if the department has  
17 good cause to believe the individual would not act in the best interests  
18 of the child.

19 (3) The transition proposal shall be considered a working document  
20 and shall be, at the least, updated for and reviewed at every permanency  
21 or review hearing by the court. The court shall determine whether the  
22 transition proposal includes the services needed to assist the child to  
23 make the transition from foster care to a successful adulthood.

24 (4) The transition proposal shall document what efforts were made to  
25 involve and engage the child in the development of the transition  
26 proposal and any revisions or additions to the transition proposal. As  
27 provided in the Nebraska Strengthening Families Act, the court shall ask  
28 the child, in an age or developmentally appropriate manner, about his or  
29 her involvement in the development of the transition proposal and any  
30 revisions or additions to such proposal. As provided in the Nebraska  
31 Strengthening Families Act, the court shall make a finding as to the

1 child's involvement in the development of the transition proposal and any  
2 revisions or additions to such proposal.

3 (5) The final transition proposal prior to the child's leaving  
4 foster care shall specifically identify how the need for housing will be  
5 addressed.

6 (6) If the child is interested in pursuing higher education, the  
7 transition proposal shall provide for the process in applying for any  
8 applicable state, federal, or private aid.

9 (7) The department shall provide without cost a copy of any consumer  
10 report as defined in 15 U.S.C. 1681a(d), as such section existed on  
11 January 1, 2016, pertaining to the child each year until the child is  
12 discharged from care and assistance, including when feasible, from the  
13 child's guardian ad litem, in interpreting and resolving any inaccuracies  
14 in the report as provided in the Nebraska Strengthening Families Act.

15 (8) A child adjudicated to be a juvenile described in subdivision  
16 (3)(a) of section 43-247 and who is in an out-of-home placement shall  
17 receive information regarding the Young Adult Bridge to Independence Act  
18 and the bridge to independence program available under the act. The  
19 department shall create a clear and developmentally appropriate written  
20 notice discussing the rights of eligible young adults to participate in  
21 the program. The notice shall include information about eligibility and  
22 requirements to participate in the program, the extended services and  
23 support that young adults are eligible to receive under the program, and  
24 how young adults can be a part of the program. The notice shall also  
25 include information about the young adult's right to request a client-  
26 directed attorney to represent the young adult pursuant to section  
27 43-4510 and the benefits and role of an attorney. The department shall  
28 disseminate this information to all children who were adjudicated to be a  
29 juvenile described in subdivision (3)(a) of section 43-247 and who are in  
30 an out-of-home placement at sixteen years of age and yearly thereafter  
31 until nineteen years of age, and not later than ninety days prior to the

1 child's last court review before attaining nineteen years of age or being  
2 discharged from foster care to independent living. In addition to  
3 providing the written notice, not later than ninety days prior to the  
4 child's last court review before attaining nineteen years of age or being  
5 discharged from foster care to independent living, a representative of  
6 the department shall explain the information contained in the notice to  
7 the child in person and the timeline necessary to avoid a lapse in  
8 services and support.

9 (9)(a) The department shall provide the child with the documents,  
10 information, records, and other materials described in subdivision (9)(b)  
11 of this section, (i) if the child is leaving foster care, on ~~(9) On~~ or  
12 before the date the child reaches eighteen or nineteen years of age or  
13 twenty-one years of age if the child participates in the bridge to  
14 independence program, and (ii) at the age or as otherwise prescribed in  
15 subdivision (9)(b) of this section. ~~if the child is leaving foster care,~~  
16 the

17 (b) The department shall provide the child with:

18 (i) On or before the date the child reaches fourteen years of age,  
19 or as soon as possible after the child enters foster care for a child who  
20 enters foster care after attaining the age of fourteen years, and again  
21 prior to leaving foster care, a ~~(a)~~ A certified copy of the child's birth  
22 certificate and facilitate securing a federal social security card if  
23 ~~when~~ the child is eligible for such card;

24 (ii) ~~(b)~~ Health insurance information and all documentation required  
25 for enrollment in medicaid coverage for former foster care children as  
26 available under the federal Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act,  
27 42 U.S.C. 1396a(a)(10)(A)(i)(IX), as such act and section existed on  
28 January 1, 2013;

29 (iii) ~~(c)~~ A copy of the child's medical records;

30 (iv) ~~(d)~~ A driver's license or identification card issued by a state  
31 in accordance with the requirements of section 202 of the REAL ID Act of

1 2005, as such act and section existed on January 1, 2016, and when  
2 requested by a child fourteen years of age or older, all documents  
3 necessary to obtain such license or card;

4 (v) ~~(e)~~ A copy of the child's educational records;

5 (vi) ~~(f)~~ A credit report check;

6 (vii) ~~(g)~~ Contact information, with permission, for family members,  
7 including siblings, with whom the child can maintain a safe and  
8 appropriate relationship, and other supportive adults;

9 (viii) ~~(h)~~ A list of local community resources, including, but not  
10 limited to, support groups, health clinics, mental and behavioral health  
11 and substance abuse treatment services and support, pregnancy and  
12 parenting resources, and employment and housing agencies;

13 (ix) ~~(i)~~ Written information, including, but not limited to, contact  
14 information, for disability resources or benefits that may assist the  
15 child as an adult, specifically including information regarding state  
16 programs established pursuant to 42 U.S.C. 677, as such section existed  
17 on January 1, 2016, and disability benefits, including supplemental  
18 security income pursuant to 42 U.S.C. 1382 et seq., as such sections  
19 existed on January 1, 2016, or social security disability insurance  
20 pursuant to 42 U.S.C. 423, as such section existed on January 1, 2016, if  
21 the child may be eligible as an adult;

22 (x) ~~(j)~~ An application for public assistance and information on how  
23 to access the system to determine public assistance eligibility;

24 (xi) ~~(k)~~ A letter prepared by the department that verifies the  
25 child's name and date of birth, dates the child was in foster care, and  
26 whether the child was in foster care on his or her eighteenth,  
27 nineteenth, or twenty-first birthday and enrolled in medicaid while in  
28 foster care;

29 (xii) ~~(l)~~ Written information about the child's Indian heritage or  
30 tribal connection, if any; and

31 (xiii) ~~(m)~~ Written information on how to access personal documents

1 in the future.

2 (c) All fees associated with securing the certified copy of the  
3 child's birth certificate or obtaining a driver's ~~an operator's~~ license  
4 or a state identification card shall be waived by the state.

5 (d) The transition proposal shall document that the child was  
6 provided all of the documents listed in this subsection. The court shall  
7 make a finding as to whether the child has received the documents as part  
8 of the independence hearing as provided in subdivision (2)(d) of section  
9 43-285.

10 Sec. 2. Section 43-4704, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement,  
11 2018, is amended to read:

12 43-4704 (1) Every child placed by the department in a foster family  
13 home or child-care institution shall be entitled to access to reasonable  
14 opportunities to participate in age or developmentally appropriate  
15 extracurricular, enrichment, cultural, and social activities.

16 (2) A child in foster care shall not be required, by virtue of his  
17 or her status as a child in foster care, to meet any more requirements  
18 for a driver's license under the Motor Vehicle Operator's License Act  
19 than any other child applying for the same license.

20 Sec. 3. Section 43-4708, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is  
21 amended to read:

22 43-4708 (1) A caregiver is not liable for harm caused to a child  
23 who participates in an activity approved by the caregiver or by a child  
24 who participates in an activity approved by a caregiver if the caregiver  
25 has acted in accordance with the reasonable and prudent parent standard.

26 (2) A caregiver of a child in foster care who obtains a driver's  
27 license as described in subsection (9) of section 43-1311.03 is not  
28 liable for harm caused to the child or by the child, for actions arising  
29 from the child learning to drive or driving a motor vehicle, if the  
30 caregiver has acted in accordance with the reasonable and prudent parent  
31 standard.

1           (3) This section may not be interpreted as removing or limiting any  
2 existing liability protection afforded by law.

3           Sec. 4. Original sections 43-1311.03 and 43-4708, Reissue Revised  
4 Statutes of Nebraska, and section 43-4704, Revised Statutes Cumulative  
5 Supplement, 2018, are repealed.