

STATE OF NEW YORK

1835

2017-2018 Regular Sessions

IN SENATE

January 11, 2017

Introduced by Sens. KENNEDY, AVELLA, BRESLIN, DILAN -- read twice and ordered printed, and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Social Services

AN ACT to amend the social services law, in relation to requiring child protective services to document home visits with photographs

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

1 Section 1. This act shall be known and may be cited as "Marchella
2 Pierce's Law".

3 § 2. Subdivision 3 of section 421 of the social services law, as
4 amended by chapter 718 of the laws of 1986, paragraph (a) as amended by
5 chapter 110 of the laws of 1989 and the closing paragraph as amended by
6 chapter 320 of the laws of 1990, is amended to read as follows:

7 3. promulgate regulations setting forth requirements for the perform-
8 ance by local social services departments of the duties and powers
9 imposed and conferred upon them by the provisions of this title and of
10 article ten of the family court act. Such regulations shall establish
11 uniform requirements for the investigation of reports of child abuse or
12 maltreatment under this title. The department shall also issue guide-
13 lines which shall set forth the circumstances or conditions under which:

14 (a) personal contact shall be made with the child named in the report
15 and any other children in the same household, including interviewing
16 such child or children absent the subject of the report whenever possi-
17 ble and appropriate;

18 (b) photographs of visible physical injuries or trauma of children who
19 may be the victims of abuse or maltreatment shall be taken or arranged
20 for;

21 (c) medical examination of a child who may be a victim of abuse or
22 maltreatment and documentation of findings of such examination, shall be
23 required.

EXPLANATION--Matter in italics (underscored) is new; matter in brackets
[-] is old law to be omitted.

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1 The department shall promulgate regulations to establish standards for
2 intervention, criteria for case closings, criteria for determining
3 whether or not to initiate a child protective proceeding, and criteria
4 for the formulation of treatment plans and for the delivery of child
5 protective services including specification of the services to be clas-
6 sified as child protective services, which shall also apply to any soci-
7 ety for the prevention of cruelty to children which has entered into a
8 currently valid contract with a local department of social services to
9 investigate child abuse or maltreatment reports. The department shall
10 promulgate regulations establishing minimum standards and practices for
11 the delivery of child protective services in connection with monitoring
12 and supervising respondents and their families as ordered by a family
13 court pursuant to section ten hundred thirty-nine and paragraphs (i),
14 (iii), (iv) and (v) of subdivision (a) of section ten hundred fifty-two
15 of the family court act. The department shall require that every case-
16 worker, child protective services employee or any person acting pursuant
17 to a contract for services with a local social services department who
18 has contact with a child as part of a treatment plan or supervision and
19 monitoring, document each such contact with a photograph taken of the
20 child during such visit or contact. Such photograph shall be part of the
21 confidential case record for such child and shall be subject to periodic
22 review by the supervisor of the case. Such photograph must be of suffi-
23 cient quality to clearly identify the child, and contain accurate data
24 with regard to the time and date of the photograph. Where the parent or
25 legal guardian of the child objects to the caseworker taking a photo-
26 graph of the child during the visit, the caseworker shall provide a
27 form, supplied by the caseworker's agency of employment, stating that
28 the caseworker conducted the visit with the child and verified the well
29 being of the child. Such form shall be signed and dated by both the
30 child's parent or legal guardian and the caseworker at each visit where
31 a photograph is not taken. Such regulations shall also require local
32 child protective services to comply with notification requirements of
33 the family court act in connection with such monitoring and supervisory
34 responsibilities.

35 § 3. Section 372 of the social services law is amended by adding a new
36 subdivision 4-c to read as follows:

37 4-c. The records maintained pursuant to this section by any casework-
38 er, child protective services employee or authorized agency as defined
39 in section three hundred seventy-one of this title who has contact with
40 a foster child as part of a treatment plan or supervision and monitor-
41 ing, shall document each such contact with a photograph taken of the
42 child during such visit or contact consistent with the requirements set
43 forth in subdivision three of section four hundred twenty-one of this
44 article.

45 § 4. This act shall take effect immediately.