

SENATE BILL No. 52

DIGEST OF INTRODUCED BILL

Citations Affected: IC 31-17-5.

Synopsis: Grandparent visitation. Provides that a grandparent who has had a demonstrable history of meaningful contact with a child may seek visitation rights. Allows a parent, guardian, or custodian to submit a confidential statement regarding the parent's, guardian's, or custodian's concerns about a grandparent's visitation. Requires the court to review a confidential statement submitted in camera and seal the record to protect the parties' privacy. Requires a petition for custody to include certain information. Makes conforming changes.

Effective: July 1, 2026.

Clark

December 8, 2025, read first time and referred to Committee on Judiciary.



Second Regular Session of the 124th General Assembly (2026)

PRINTING CODE. Amendments: Whenever an existing statute (or a section of the Indiana Constitution) is being amended, the text of the existing provision will appear in this style type, additions will appear in **this style type**, and deletions will appear in ~~this style type~~.

Additions: Whenever a new statutory provision is being enacted (or a new constitutional provision adopted), the text of the new provision will appear in **this style type**. Also, the word **NEW** will appear in that style type in the introductory clause of each SECTION that adds a new provision to the Indiana Code or the Indiana Constitution.

Conflict reconciliation: Text in a statute in *this style type* or ~~this style type~~ reconciles conflicts between statutes enacted by the 2025 Regular Session of the General Assembly.

SENATE BILL No. 52

A BILL FOR AN ACT to amend the Indiana Code concerning family law and juvenile law.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Indiana:

- 1 SECTION 1. IC 31-17-5-1 IS AMENDED TO READ AS
2 FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2026]: Sec. 1. (a) A child's
3 grandparent may seek visitation rights if:
4 (1) the child's parent is deceased;
5 (2) the marriage of the child's parents has been dissolved in
6 Indiana; ~~or~~
7 (3) subject to subsection (b), the child was born out of wedlock;
8 **or**
9 **(4) the grandparent has had a demonstrable history of**
10 **meaningful contact with the child.**
11 (b) A court may not grant visitation rights to a paternal grandparent
12 of a child who is born out of wedlock under subsection (a)(3) if the
13 child's father has not established paternity in relation to the child.
14 SECTION 2. IC 31-17-5-1.5 IS ADDED TO THE INDIANA CODE
15 AS A **NEW** SECTION TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE JULY
16 1, 2026]: **Sec. 1.5. (a) A child's:**
17 **(1) parent;**



1 (2) guardian; or
 2 (3) custodian;
 3 may submit a confidential statement to the court outlining
 4 concerns regarding a grandparent's petition, including any history
 5 of abuse, neglect, or any other factor relevant to the child's
 6 well-being.

7 (b) If a statement is submitted under subsection (a), the court
 8 shall:

9 (1) review a statement submitted under subsection (a) in
 10 camera; and

11 (2) seal the record to protect the parties' privacy.

12 SECTION 3. IC 31-17-5-3, AS AMENDED BY P.L.16-2017,
 13 SECTION 1, IS AMENDED TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE
 14 JULY 1, 2026]: Sec. 3. (a) A proceeding for grandparent's visitation
 15 must be commenced by the filing of a petition entitled, "In Re the
 16 visitation of _____". The petition must:

17 (1) be filed by a grandparent entitled to receive visitation rights
 18 under this chapter;

19 (2) be verified; and

20 (3) set forth the following:

21 (A) The names and relationship of:

22 (i) the petitioning grandparent or grandparents;

23 (ii) each child with whom visitation is sought; and

24 (iii) the custodial parent or guardian of each child.

25 (B) The present address of each person named in clause (A).

26 (C) The date of birth of each child with whom visitation is
 27 sought.

28 (D) The status under section 1 of this chapter upon which the
 29 grandparent seeks visitation.

30 **(E) The history of meaningful contact with the child if the**
 31 **petitioning grandparent is seeking visitation under section**
 32 **1(a)(4) of this chapter.**

33 ~~(F)~~ (F) The relief sought.

34 (b) A petition described in subsection (a) must be filed prior to the
 35 date a decree of adoption is entered.

36 SECTION 4. IC 31-17-5-4, AS AMENDED BY P.L.50-2006,
 37 SECTION 8, IS AMENDED TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE
 38 JULY 1, 2026]: Sec. 4. A grandparent seeking visitation rights shall
 39 file a petition requesting reasonable visitation rights:

40 (1) in a circuit, superior, or probate court of the county in which
 41 the child resides in a case described in section 1(a)(1), 1(a)(3),

42 **1(a)(4),** or 10 of this chapter; or



1 (2) in the court having jurisdiction over the dissolution of the
2 parents' marriage in a case described in section 1(a)(2) of this
3 chapter.

