
SENATE BILL No. 171

AM017107 has been incorporated into January 21, 2026 printing.

Synopsis: Family and children matters.

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SB 171—LS 6404/DI 148



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Reprinted
January 21, 2026

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.

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SENATE BILL No. 171

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 31-19-2.5-3, AS AMENDED BY P.L.203-2021,
2 SECTION 5, IS AMENDED TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE
3 UPON PASSAGE]: Sec. 3. (a) Except as provided in section 4 of this
4 chapter, notice must be given to:
5 (1) a person whose consent to adoption is required under
6 IC 31-19-9-1;
7 (2) a putative father who is entitled to notice under IC 31-19-4;
8 (3) a grandparent described in IC 31-19-4.5-1(3) of a child
9 sought to be adopted;
10 (4) a licensed child placing agency of which the child is a ward;
11 (5) if the child is the subject of an open or pending child in need
12 of services proceeding under IC 31-34, the local office of the
13 department of child services in the county in which the child in
14 need of services proceeding was filed; and
15 (6) if the child is a subject of an open or pending juvenile
16 delinquency proceeding under IC 31-37, the entity, facility, or
17 individual of which the child is a ward.

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1 (b) Proof of notice to those under subsection (a) shall be filed with
2 the court in the adoption proceeding before the final adoption hearing
3 can be scheduled.

4 (c) Failure to provide notice under this section shall require setting
5 aside the adoption decree if challenged by an entity or individual who
6 did not receive notice as required by this section. An adoption decree
7 may be challenged under this subsection for a period of not more than
8 forty-five (45) days after the date the adoption decree is entered.

9 (d) **If notice is provided to the local office of the department of**
10 **child services under subsection (a)(5), the local office of the**
11 **department of child services shall provide notice to the court in**
12 **which the child in need of services proceeding is open or pending.**
13 **Notice under this subsection:**

14 (1) **is solely for the purpose of allowing the court to notify the**
15 **parties:**

- 16 (A) **that an adoption petition has been filed; and**
- 17 (B) **of the cause number and name of the petitioner for**
18 **the adoption petition; and**

19 (2) **must be provided to the court not later than seven (7)**
20 **business days after the local office of the department of child**
21 **services receives notice under subsection (a)(5).**

22 SECTION 2. IC 31-19-9-2, AS AMENDED BY P.L.89-2023,
23 SECTION 3, IS AMENDED TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE
24 UPON PASSAGE]: Sec. 2. (a) The consent to adoption may be
25 executed or acknowledged at any time after the birth of the child, either
26 in the presence of:

- 27 (1) the court, in person or by video conferencing;
- 28 (2) **an attorney, in person or by video conferencing;**
- 29 ~~(2)~~ (3) a notary public or other person authorized to take
30 acknowledgments; or
- 31 ~~(3)~~ (4) an authorized agent of:
 - 32 (A) the department; or
 - 33 (B) a licensed child placing agency.

34 (b) The child's mother may not execute a consent to adoption
35 before the birth of the child.

36 (c) The child's father may execute a consent to adoption before the
37 birth of the child if the consent to adoption:

- 38 (1) is in writing;
- 39 (2) is signed by the child's father in the presence of a notary
40 public; and
- 41 (3) contains an acknowledgment that:
 - 42 (A) the consent to adoption is irrevocable; and

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1 (B) the child's father will not receive notice of the adoption
2 proceedings.

3 (d) A child's father who consents to the adoption of the child under
4 subsection (c) may not challenge or contest the child's adoption.

5 (e) Except as provided in subsection (f) or (g), a person who
6 executes a written consent to the adoption of a child may not execute
7 a second or subsequent written consent to have another person adopt
8 the child unless one (1) or more of the following apply:

9 (1) Each original petitioner provides a written statement that the
10 petitioner is not adopting the child.

11 (2) The person consenting to the adoption has been permitted to
12 withdraw the first consent to adoption under IC 31-19-10.

13 (3) The court dismisses the petition for adoption filed by the
14 original petitioner or petitioners for adoption based upon a
15 showing, by clear and convincing evidence, that it is not in the
16 best interests of the child that the petition for adoption be
17 granted.

18 (4) The court denies the petition to adopt the child filed by the
19 original petitioner or petitioners for adoption.

20 (f) The department may execute more than one (1) written consent
21 to the adoption of a child if the department determines that the
22 execution of more than one (1) written consent is in the best interests
23 of the child.

24 (g) The parents of a child who is a ward of the department may
25 execute a second or subsequent consent if:

26 (1) the court with jurisdiction over the child in need of services
27 determines that adoption by the person to whom consents were
28 originally signed is not in the child's best interest; or

29 (2) if the child's placement with the person who has petitioned or
30 intends to petition to adopt the child is disrupted.

31 SECTION 3. IC 31-19-16-2, AS AMENDED BY P.L.128-2012,
32 SECTION 57, IS AMENDED TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE
33 UPON PASSAGE]:

34 Sec. 2. A court may grant postadoption contact privileges if:

35 (1) the court determines that the best interests of the child would
36 be served by granting postadoption contact privileges;

37 (2) the child is at least ~~two (2) years~~ **twelve (12) months** of age
38 and the court finds that there is a significant emotional
39 attachment between the child and the birth parent;

40 (3) each adoptive parent consents to the granting of postadoption
41 contact privileges;

42 (4) the adoptive parents and the birth parents:

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1 (A) execute a postadoption contact agreement; and
 2 (B) file the agreement with the court;
 3 (5) the licensed child placing agency sponsoring the adoption
 4 and the child's court appointed special advocate or guardian ad
 5 litem appointed under IC 31-32-3 recommends to the court the
 6 postadoption contact agreement, or if there is no licensed child
 7 placing agency sponsoring the adoption, the local office or other
 8 agency that prepared an adoption report under IC 31-19-8-5 is
 9 informed of the contents of the postadoption contact agreement
 10 and comments on the agreement in the agency's report to the
 11 court;

12 (6) consent to postadoption contact is obtained from the child if
 13 the child is at least twelve (12) years of age; and

14 (7) the postadoption contact agreement is approved by the court.

15 SECTION 4. IC 31-19-16-9, AS AMENDED BY P.L.113-2017,
 16 SECTION 13, IS AMENDED TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE
 17 UPON PASSAGE]:

18 Sec. 9. Postadoption contact privileges are permissible without court
 19 approval in an adoption of a child who is less than ~~two (2) years~~ **twelve**
 20 **(12) months** of age upon the agreement of the adoptive parents and a
 21 birth parent. However, postadoption contact privileges under this
 22 section may not include visitation. A postadoption contact agreement
 23 under this section:

- 24 (1) is not enforceable;
 25 (2) may include contact through photographs, written and verbal
 26 updates, and other forms of communication;
 27 (3) does not have to be in writing; and
 28 (4) does not affect the:
 29 (A) validity of a:
 30 (i) consent to an adoption; or
 31 (ii) waiver of notice; or
 32 (B) finality of the adoption.

33 SECTION 5. IC 31-19-19-4, AS AMENDED BY P.L.186-2025,
 34 SECTION 152, IS AMENDED TO READ AS FOLLOWS
 35 [EFFECTIVE UPON PASSAGE]: Sec. 4. All papers, records, and
 36 information pertaining to the adoption, whether part of:

- 37 (1) the permanent record of the court; or
 38 (2) a file in:
 39 (A) the division of vital records;
 40 (B) the department or local office;
 41 (C) a licensed child placing agency; or
 42 (D) a professional health care provider (as defined in

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1 IC 34-6-2.1-165);
 2 are confidential and may be disclosed only in accordance with
 3 **IC 31-19-2.5-3**, IC 31-19-17, this chapter, or IC 31-19-20 through
 4 IC 31-19-25.5.

5 SECTION 6. IC 31-34-4-2, AS AMENDED BY P.L.186-2025,
 6 SECTION 159, IS AMENDED TO READ AS FOLLOWS
 7 [EFFECTIVE UPON PASSAGE]: Sec. 2. (a) If a child alleged to be a
 8 child in need of services is taken into custody under an order of the
 9 court under this chapter and the court orders out-of-home placement,
 10 the department is responsible for that placement and care and must
 11 consider placing the child with a:

- 12 (1) suitable and willing relative; or
 13 (2) de facto custodian;

14 before considering any other out-of-home placement.

15 (b) The department shall consider placing a child described in
 16 subsection (a) with a relative related by blood, marriage, or adoption
 17 before considering any other placement of the child.

18 (c) Before the department places a child in need of services with
 19 a relative or a de facto custodian, the department shall complete an
 20 evaluation based on a home visit of the relative's home.

21 (d) Except as provided in subsection (f), before placing a child in
 22 need of services in an out-of-home placement, the department shall
 23 conduct a criminal history check of each person who is currently
 24 residing in the location designated as the out-of-home placement.

25 (e) Except as provided in subsection (g), the department may not
 26 make an out-of-home placement if a person described in subsection (d)
 27 has:

- 28 (1) committed an act resulting in a substantiated report of child
 29 abuse or neglect; or
 30 (2) been convicted of a nonwaivable offense, as defined in
 31 IC 31-9-2-84.8 or had a juvenile adjudication for an act that
 32 would be a nonwaivable offense, as defined in IC 31-9-2-84.8 if
 33 committed by an adult.

34 (f) The department is not required to conduct a criminal history
 35 check under subsection (d) if the department makes an out-of-home
 36 placement to an entity or a facility that is not a residence (as defined in
 37 IC 3-5-2.1-90) or that is licensed by the state.

38 (g) A court may order or the department may approve an
 39 out-of-home placement if:

- 40 (1) a person described in subsection (d) has:
 41 (A) committed an act resulting in a substantiated report of
 42 child abuse or neglect;

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- 1 (B) been convicted of:
- 2 (i) battery (IC 35-42-2-1);
- 3 (ii) criminal recklessness (IC 35-42-2-2) as a felony;
- 4 (iii) criminal confinement (IC 35-42-3-3) as a felony;
- 5 (iv) arson (IC 35-43-1-1) as a felony;
- 6 (v) nonsupport of a dependent child (IC 35-46-1-5);
- 7 (vi) operating a motorboat while intoxicated
- 8 (IC 35-46-9-6) as a felony;
- 9 (vii) a felony involving a weapon under IC 35-47;
- 10 (viii) a felony relating to controlled substances under
- 11 IC 35-48-4; or
- 12 (ix) a felony under IC 9-30-5;

13 if the conviction did not occur within the past five (5) years;

14 or

15 (C) had a juvenile adjudication for a nonwaivable offense,

16 as defined in IC 31-9-2-84.8 that, if committed by an adult,

17 would be a felony; and

18 (2) the person's commission of the offense, delinquent act, or act

19 of abuse or neglect described in subdivision (1) is not relevant

20 to the person's present ability to care for a child, and the

21 placement is in the best interest of the child.

22 However, a court or the department shall not make an out-of-home

23 placement if the person has been convicted of a nonwaivable offense,

24 as defined in IC 31-9-2-84.8 that is not specifically excluded under

25 subdivision (1)(B).

26 (h) In considering the placement under subsection (g), the court or

27 the department shall consider the following:

- 28 (1) The length of time since the person committed the offense,
- 29 delinquent act, or abuse or neglect.
- 30 (2) The severity of the offense, delinquent act, or abuse or
- 31 neglect.
- 32 (3) Evidence of the person's rehabilitation, including the person's
- 33 cooperation with a treatment plan, if applicable.

34 **(i) In considering any out-of-home placement, the department**

35 **shall consider the following to determine whether a particular**

36 **out-of-home placement is in the child's best interest:**

- 37 **(1) The caregiver is interested in providing permanence for**
- 38 **the child if reunification efforts ultimately fail.**
- 39 **(2) The expressed wishes of the child's birth parent and the**
- 40 **child, if applicable, unless the wishes are contrary to law,**
- 41 **child safety, or stability.**
- 42 **(3) The relationship of the caregiver with the child and the**

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- 1 **child's family.**
- 2 **(4) The proximity of the placement home to the birth**
- 3 **parents' home and the child's current school or school**
- 4 **district.**
- 5 **(5) The strengths and parenting style of the caregiver in**
- 6 **relation to the child's behavior and needs.**
- 7 **(6) The caregiver's willingness to interact with the birth**
- 8 **family, unless the caregiver has safety concerns.**
- 9 **(7) The caregiver's ability and willingness to accept**
- 10 **placement of the child and any of the child's siblings.**
- 11 **(8) If any sibling will be placed separately, the caregiver's**
- 12 **ability and willingness to provide or assist in maintaining**
- 13 **frequent visitation or other ongoing contact between the**
- 14 **child and the child's siblings.**
- 15 **(9) The child's fit with the family with regard to age, gender,**
- 16 **and sibling relationships.**
- 17 **(10) If the child has chronic behavioral health needs:**
- 18 **(A) whether the child's behavior will place other**
- 19 **children in the home at risk; and**
- 20 **(B) the caregiver's ability to provide the necessary level**
- 21 **of supervision to prevent harm to the child or others by**
- 22 **the child.**
- 23 **(11) Whether placement in the home would comply with the**
- 24 **placement preferences prescribed by federal law.**
- 25 SECTION 7. IC 31-34-6-2, AS AMENDED BY P.L.123-2014,
- 26 SECTION 22, IS AMENDED TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE
- 27 UPON PASSAGE]:
- 28 Sec. 2. (a) A juvenile court or the department shall consider placing a
- 29 child alleged to be a child in need of services with a suitable and
- 30 willing relative or de facto custodian of the child before considering
- 31 any other placement for the child.
- 32 (b) A juvenile court or the department shall consider placing a
- 33 child described in subsection (a) with a relative related by blood,
- 34 marriage, or adoption before considering any other placement of the
- 35 child.
- 36 (c) Before a child is placed with a relative or de facto custodian,
- 37 a home evaluation and background checks described in IC 31-34-4-2
- 38 are required.
- 39 (d) **A placement with whom a child has resided for at least**
- 40 **twelve (12) months, consecutively or nonconsecutively, is presumed**
- 41 **to be an individual who has a significant relationship with the**
- 42 **child.**

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1 SECTION 8. IC 31-34-18-2, AS AMENDED BY P.L.210-2019,
2 SECTION 9, IS AMENDED TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE
3 UPON PASSAGE]:

4 Sec. 2. (a) In addition to providing the court with a recommendation for
5 the care, treatment, or rehabilitation of the child, the person preparing
6 the report shall consider the necessity, nature, and extent of the
7 participation by a parent, guardian, or custodian in a program of care,
8 treatment, or rehabilitation for the child.

9 (b) If the department or caseworker believes that an out-of-home
10 placement would be appropriate for a child in need of services, the
11 department or caseworker shall:

12 (1) exercise due diligence to identify all adult relatives of the
13 child and adult siblings; and

14 (2) consider whether the child should be placed with the child's
15 suitable and willing blood or adoptive relative caretaker,
16 including a grandparent, an aunt, an uncle, or an adult sibling,
17 before considering other out-of-home placements for the child.

18 **(c) In considering any out-of-home placement, the department**
19 **shall consider the following to determine whether a particular**
20 **out-of-home placement is in the child's best interest:**

21 **(1) The caregiver is interested in providing permanence for**
22 **the child if reunification efforts ultimately fail.**

23 **(2) The expressed wishes of the child's birth parent and the**
24 **child, if applicable, unless the wishes are contrary to law,**
25 **child safety, or stability.**

26 **(3) The relationship of the caregiver with the child and the**
27 **child's family.**

28 **(4) The proximity of the placement home to the birth**
29 **parents' home and the child's current school or school**
30 **district.**

31 **(5) The strengths and parenting style of the caregiver in**
32 **relation to the child's behavior and needs.**

33 **(6) The caregiver's willingness to interact with the birth**
34 **family, unless the caregiver has safety concerns.**

35 **(7) The caregiver's ability and willingness to accept**
36 **placement of the child and any of the child's siblings.**

37 **(8) If any sibling will be placed separately, the caregiver's**
38 **ability and willingness to provide or assist in maintaining**
39 **frequent visitation or other ongoing contact between the**
40 **child and the child's siblings.**

41 **(9) The child's fit with the family with regard to age, gender,**
42 **and sibling relationships.**

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- 1 **(10) If the child has chronic behavioral health needs:**
- 2 **(A) whether the child's behavior will place other**
- 3 **children in the home at risk; and**
- 4 **(B) the caregiver's ability to provide the necessary level**
- 5 **of supervision to prevent harm to the child or others by**
- 6 **the child.**
- 7 **(11) Whether placement in the home would comply with the**
- 8 **placement preferences prescribed by federal law.**
- 9 SECTION 9. IC 31-34-19-6, AS AMENDED BY P.L.65-2023,
- 10 SECTION 2, IS AMENDED TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE
- 11 UPON PASSAGE]:
- 12 Sec. 6. (a) If consistent with the safety of the community and the best
- 13 interest of the child, the juvenile court shall enter a dispositional decree
- 14 that:
- 15 (1) is:
- 16 (A) in the least restrictive (most family like) and most
- 17 appropriate setting available; and
- 18 (B) close to the parents' home, consistent with the best
- 19 interest and special needs of the child;
- 20 (2) least interferes with family autonomy;
- 21 (3) is least disruptive of family life;
- 22 (4) imposes the least restraint on the freedom of the child and the
- 23 child's parent, guardian, or custodian;
- 24 (5) provides a reasonable opportunity for participation by the
- 25 child's parent, guardian, or custodian; and
- 26 (6) provides a reasonable opportunity for the child's parent who:
- 27 (A) is incarcerated; and
- 28 (B) has maintained a meaningful role in the child's life;
- 29 to maintain a relationship with the child.
- 30 (b) In determining whether reunification of a child with a parent,
- 31 guardian, or custodian from whom the child has been removed is in the
- 32 child's best interest, a court shall do the following:
- 33 (1) The court shall determine whether reunifying the child with
- 34 the parent, guardian, or custodian will result in separation of the
- 35 child from a sibling of the child.
- 36 (2) If the court determines under subdivision (1) that reunifying
- 37 the child with the parent, guardian, or custodian will result in
- 38 separation of the child from a sibling of the child, the court shall
- 39 consider whether separating the child from the child's sibling is
- 40 in the child's best interest.
- 41 **(c) If a dispositional decree is entered under this section, the**
- 42 **court shall write a formal order with the court's findings and**

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1 **conclusions, including any specific factors used to determine the**
2 **child's best interest.**

3 SECTION 10. IC 31-34-19-10, AS AMENDED BY P.L.66-2015,
4 SECTION 8, IS AMENDED TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE
5 UPON PASSAGE]: Sec. 10. (a) The juvenile court shall accompany the
6 court's dispositional decree with written findings and conclusions upon
7 the record concerning the following:

8 (1) The needs of the child for care, treatment, rehabilitation, or
9 placement, **including any specific factors used to determine**
10 **the child's best interest.**

11 (2) The need for participation by the parent, guardian, or
12 custodian in the plan of care for the child.

13 (3) Efforts made, if the child is a child in need of services, to:
14 (A) prevent the child's removal from; or
15 (B) reunite the child with;
16 the child's parent, guardian, or custodian in accordance with
17 federal law.

18 (4) Family services that were offered and provided to:
19 (A) a child in need of services; or
20 (B) the child's parent, guardian, or custodian;
21 in accordance with federal law.

22 (5) The court's reasons for the disposition.

23 (6) Whether the child is a dual status child under IC 31-41.

24 (b) The juvenile court may incorporate a finding or conclusion
25 from a predispositional report as a written finding or conclusion upon
26 the record in the court's dispositional decree.

27 SECTION 11. IC 31-34-21-11 IS AMENDED TO READ AS
28 FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE UPON PASSAGE]: Sec. 11. (a) When the
29 juvenile court finds that the objectives of the dispositional decree have
30 been met, the court shall discharge the child and the child's parent,
31 guardian, or custodian.

32 **(b) The objectives of the dispositional decree are not**
33 **considered met solely because a court is prohibited from changing**
34 **a child's placement under IC 31-34-23-6(g).**

35 **(c) If a child's placement has been stayed under**
36 **IC 31-34-23-6(g), the court may not consider:**

37 **(1) the existence of a pending adoption; or**

38 **(2) any pending matters or hearings in the adoption;**
39 **to determine whether the objectives of the dispositional decree**
40 **have been met under subsection (a).**

41 SECTION 12. IC 31-34-23-6, AS AMENDED BY P.L.105-2022,
42 SECTION 46, IS AMENDED TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE

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1 UPON PASSAGE]: Sec. 6. (a) Except as provided in section 3 of this
 2 chapter, before changing a child's out-of-home placement, the
 3 department **or any other party seeking a change in placement** shall
 4 file a motion requesting a change in placement if the child:
 5 (1) has been in the same out-of-home placement for at least ~~one~~
 6 ~~(1) year;~~ **twelve (12) months, consecutively or**
 7 **nonconsecutively;** and
 8 (2) is in:
 9 (A) a foster family home; or
 10 (B) the care of a relative.
 11 (b) The person with whom the child is placed may:
 12 (1) indicate in writing that the person:
 13 (A) does not intend to contest the change of placement
 14 under subsection (a); and
 15 (B) waives the right to request a hearing under subsection
 16 (f); and
 17 (2) provide the writing to:
 18 (A) the department; or
 19 (B) the court.
 20 (c) **Except as provided in subsection (i), if the department any**
 21 **party** files the motion described in subsection (a), the ~~department~~
 22 **party** shall give notice to all persons affected. The ~~department's~~
 23 **party's** notice must state that the person affected may file a written
 24 objection not later than ~~ten (10)~~ **fifteen (15)** days after service of the
 25 ~~department's~~ notice.
 26 (d) If a writing described in subsection (b)(1) is provided to the
 27 department before the department files the motion described in
 28 subsection (a), the department may file the writing with the motion
 29 requesting a change in placement.
 30 (e) ~~If the court receives the writing described in subsection (b), the~~
 31 ~~court may rule on the department's motion without delay. If the motion~~
 32 **filed by a party alleges substantiated exigent circumstances (as**
 33 **defined in IC 31-9-2-44.1) or the court receives the writing**
 34 **described in subsection (b), the court may rule on the party's**
 35 **motion without delay.**
 36 (f) If the person affected files a timely objection to the
 37 ~~department's party's~~ motion requesting a change in out-of-home
 38 placement, the juvenile court shall hold a hearing on the question.
 39 (g) **Except as provided in subsection (e), if:**
 40 **(1) a child is the subject of an adoption petition filed under**
 41 **IC 31-19-2;**
 42 **(2) the adoption petitioner is the current placement for the**

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- 1 **child; and**
 2 **(3) the adoption petitioner has been the child's placement for**
 3 **at least twelve (12) months, consecutively or**
 4 **nonconsecutively;**
 5 **the court shall not change the child's placement until the adoption**
 6 **petition under IC 31-19-2 has been ruled on.**
 7 ~~(g)~~ **(h)** The ~~department~~ party must show that the change in
 8 out-of-home placement is in the best interests of the child.
 9 **(i) If the party seeking a change of placement is a:**
 10 **(1) parent (as defined in IC 31-9-2-88(a));**
 11 **(2) guardian ad litem (as defined in IC 31-9-2-50); or**
 12 **(3) court appointed special advocate;**
 13 **the party must provide notice under subsection (c) to the**
 14 **department. The department shall provide notice of the motion**
 15 **requesting a change of placement to the child's out-of-home**
 16 **placement. The department's notice must state that the person**
 17 **affected may file a written objection not later than fifteen (15) days**
 18 **after service of the department's notice.**
 19 SECTION 13. IC 31-35-2-8, AS AMENDED BY P.L.128-2012,
 20 SECTION 173, IS AMENDED TO READ AS FOLLOWS
 21 [EFFECTIVE UPON PASSAGE]: Sec. 8. (a) Except as provided in
 22 section 4.5(d) of this chapter, if the court finds that the allegations in
 23 a petition described in section 4 of this chapter are true, the court shall
 24 terminate the parent-child relationship.
 25 (b) If the court does not find that the allegations in the petition are
 26 true, the court shall dismiss the petition.
 27 (c) The court shall ~~enter~~ **write a formal order with:**
 28 **(1) findings of fact that support the entry of the conclusions**
 29 **required by subsections (a) and (b); and**
 30 **(2) any specific factors used to determine the child's best**
 31 **interest.**
 32 SECTION 14. **An emergency is declared for this act.**

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