

(l) the transportation of unprocessed dairy products in bulk within an area having a 100-mile radius from the home post office of the person providing the transportation;

(m) the transportation of agricultural, horticultural, dairy, livestock, or other farm products within an area having a ~~25-mile~~ 100-mile radius from the person's home post office and the carrier may transport other commodities within the ~~25-mile~~ 100-mile radius if the destination of each haul is a farm;

(n) passenger transportation service that is not charter service and that is under contract to and with operating assistance from the department or the metropolitan council;

(o) the transportation of newspapers, as defined in section 331A.01, subdivision 5, telephone books, handbills, circulars, or pamphlets in a vehicle with a gross vehicle weight of 10,000 pounds or less; and

(p) transportation of potatoes from the field of production, or a storage site owned or otherwise controlled by the producer, to the first place of processing.

The exemptions provided in this section apply to a person only while the person is exclusively engaged in exempt transportation.

#### Sec. 10. APPROPRIATION.

\$15,775,000 is appropriated from the trunk highway fund to the commissioner of administration to complete renovation and life safety improvements to the transportation building in the capitol complex. This is the final state appropriation for this project.

#### Sec. 11. EFFECTIVE DATE.

Sections 3 and 4 are effective the day following final enactment.

Presented to the governor April 10, 1998

Signed by the governor April 20, 1998, 11:30 a.m.

### CHAPTER 406—H.F.No. 2985

*An act relating to children; providing for child welfare reform; restricting release of certain information; establishing citizen review panels; clarifying jurisdiction; establishing programs for concurrent planning for permanent placement; defining terms; imposing duties; expanding certain case plans; providing for consideration of domestic abuse in child protection risk assessments; authorizing rulemaking; providing for sharing of certain data; changing records retention requirements; requiring review and audits; requiring task forces and a plan; amending Minnesota Statutes 1996, sections 144.226, subdivision 3; 245A.035, subdivision 4; 256.01, subdivision 12, and by adding a subdivision; 257.42; 257.43; 259.24, subdivision 1; 259.37, subdivision 2; 259.67, subdivision 1; 260.011, subdivision 2; 260.141, by adding a subdivision; 260.172, subdivision 1; 260.191, subdivision 1e; 260.221, as amended; and 626.556, subdivision 10, and by adding subdivisions; Minnesota Statutes 1997 Supplement, sections 144.218, subdivision 2; 144.226, subdivision 4; 245A.03, subdivision 2; 245A.04, subdivisions 3b and 3d; 256.82, subdivision 2; 256F.05, subdivision 8; 257.071, subdivision 1d; 257.85, subdivisions 3 and 5; 259.22, subdivision 4; 259.47, subdivision 3; 259.58; 259.60, subdivision 2; 260.012; 260.015, subdivisions 2a and 29; 260.161, subdi-*

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*vision 2; 260.191, subdivisions 1, 1a, 3a, and 3b; 260.241, subdivision 3; and 626.556, subdivisions 10e and 11c; proposing coding for new law in Minnesota Statutes, chapter 257.*

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MINNESOTA:

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## ARTICLE 1

### ADOPTION AND SAFE FAMILIES

Section 1. Minnesota Statutes 1997 Supplement, section 144.218, subdivision 2, is amended to read:

Subd. 2. **ADOPTION OF FOREIGN PERSONS.** In proceedings for the adoption of a person who was born in a foreign country, the court, upon evidence presented by the commissioner of human services from information secured at the port of entry, or upon evidence from other reliable sources, may make findings of fact as to the date and place of birth and parentage. Upon receipt of certified copies of the court findings and the order or decree of adoption or a certified copy of a decree issued under section 259.60, the state registrar shall register a birth certificate in the new name of the adopted person. The certified copies of the court findings and the order ~~or~~ decree of adoption, or decree issued under section 259.60 are confidential, pursuant to section 13.02, subdivision 3, and shall not be disclosed except pursuant to court order or section 144.1761. The birth certificate shall state the place of birth as specifically as possible, and that the certificate is not evidence of United States citizenship.

Sec. 2. Minnesota Statutes 1996, section 144.226, subdivision 3, is amended to read:

Subd. 3. **BIRTH CERTIFICATE COPY SURCHARGE.** In addition to any fee prescribed under subdivision 1, there shall be a surcharge of \$3 for each certified copy of a birth certificate, and for a certification that the record cannot be found. The local or state registrar shall forward this amount to the commissioner of finance for deposit into the account for the children's trust fund for the prevention of child abuse established under section 119A.12. This surcharge shall not be charged under those circumstances in which no fee for a certified copy of a birth certificate is permitted under subdivision 1, paragraph (a). Upon certification by the commissioner of finance that the assets in that fund exceed \$20,000,000, this surcharge shall be discontinued.

Sec. 3. Minnesota Statutes 1997 Supplement, section 144.226, subdivision 4, is amended to read:

Subd. 4. **VITAL RECORDS SURCHARGE.** In addition to any fee prescribed under subdivision 1, there is a nonrefundable surcharge of \$3 for each certified and noncertified birth or death record, and for a certification that the record cannot be found. The local or state registrar shall forward this amount to the state treasurer to be deposited into the state government special revenue fund. This surcharge shall not be charged under those circumstances in which no fee for a birth or death record is permitted under subdivision 1, paragraph (a). This surcharge requirement expires June 30, 2002.

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Sec. 4. Minnesota Statutes 1997 Supplement, section 245A.03, subdivision 2, is amended to read:

Subd. 2. **EXCLUSION FROM LICENSURE.** Sections 245A.01 to 245A.16 do not apply to:

(1) residential or nonresidential programs that are provided to a person by an individual who is related unless the residential program is a child foster care placement made by a local social services agency or a licensed child-placing agency, except as provided in subdivision 2a;

(2) nonresidential programs that are provided by an unrelated individual to persons from a single related family;

(3) residential or nonresidential programs that are provided to adults who do not abuse chemicals or who do not have a chemical dependency, a mental illness, mental retardation or a related condition, a functional impairment, or a physical handicap;

(4) sheltered workshops or work activity programs that are certified by the commissioner of economic security;

(5) programs for children enrolled in kindergarten to the 12th grade and prekindergarten special education in a school as defined in section 120.101, subdivision 4, and programs serving children in combined special education and regular prekindergarten programs that are operated or assisted by the commissioner of children, families, and learning;

(6) nonresidential programs primarily for children that provide care or supervision, without charge for ten or fewer days a year, and for periods of less than three hours a day while the child's parent or legal guardian is in the same building as the nonresidential program or present within another building that is directly contiguous to the building in which the nonresidential program is located;

(7) nursing homes or hospitals licensed by the commissioner of health except as specified under section 245A.02;

(8) board and lodge facilities licensed by the commissioner of health that provide services for five or more persons whose primary diagnosis is mental illness who have refused an appropriate residential program offered by a county agency. This exclusion expires on July 1, 1990;

(9) homes providing programs for persons placed there by a licensed agency for legal adoption, unless the adoption is not completed within two years;

(10) programs licensed by the commissioner of corrections;

(11) recreation programs for children or adults that operate for fewer than 40 calendar days in a calendar year or programs operated by a park and recreation board of a city of the first class whose primary purpose is to provide social and recreational activities to school age children, provided the program is approved by the park and recreation board;

(12) programs operated by a school as defined in section 120.101, subdivision 4, whose primary purpose is to provide child care to school-age children, provided the program is approved by the district's school board;

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(13) Head Start nonresidential programs which operate for less than 31 days in each calendar year;

(14) noncertified boarding care homes unless they provide services for five or more persons whose primary diagnosis is mental illness or mental retardation;

(15) nonresidential programs for nonhandicapped children provided for a cumulative total of less than 30 days in any 12-month period;

(16) residential programs for persons with mental illness, that are located in hospitals, until the commissioner adopts appropriate rules;

(17) the religious instruction of school-age children; Sabbath or Sunday schools; or the congregate care of children by a church, congregation, or religious society during the period used by the church, congregation, or religious society for its regular worship;

(18) camps licensed by the commissioner of health under Minnesota Rules, chapter 4630;

(19) mental health outpatient services for adults with mental illness or children with emotional disturbance;

(20) residential programs serving school-age children whose sole purpose is cultural or educational exchange, until the commissioner adopts appropriate rules;

(21) unrelated individuals who provide out-of-home respite care services to persons with mental retardation or related conditions from a single related family for no more than 90 days in a 12-month period and the respite care services are for the temporary relief of the person's family or legal representative;

(22) respite care services provided as a home and community-based service to a person with mental retardation or a related condition, in the person's primary residence;

(23) community support services programs as defined in section 245.462, subdivision 6, and family community support services as defined in section 245.4871, subdivision 17;

(24) the placement of a child by a birth parent or legal guardian in a preadoptive home for purposes of adoption as authorized by section 259.47; or

(25) settings registered under chapter 144D which provide home care services licensed by the commissioner of health to fewer than seven adults.

For purposes of clause (6), a building is directly contiguous to a building in which a nonresidential program is located if it shares a common wall with the building in which the nonresidential program is located or is attached to that building by skyway, tunnel, atrium, or common roof.

Sec. 5. Minnesota Statutes 1996, section 245A.035, subdivision 4, is amended to read:

Subd. 4. **APPLICANT STUDY.** When the county agency has received the information required by section 245A.04, subdivision 3, paragraph (b), the county agency shall begin an applicant study according to the procedures in section 245A.04, subdivision 3. The commissioner may issue an emergency license upon recommendation of the

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county agency once the initial inspection has been successfully completed and the information necessary to begin the applicant background study has been provided. If the county agency does not recommend that the emergency license be granted, the agency shall notify the relative in writing that the agency is recommending denial to the commissioner; shall remove any child who has been placed in the home prior to licensure; and shall inform the relative in writing of the procedure to request review pursuant to subdivision 6. An emergency license shall be effective until a child foster care license is granted or denied, but shall in no case remain in effect more than ~~90~~ 120 days from the date of placement.

Sec. 6. Minnesota Statutes 1997 Supplement, section 245A.04, subdivision 3b, is amended to read:

Subd. 3b. **RECONSIDERATION OF DISQUALIFICATION.** (a) The individual who is the subject of the disqualification may request a reconsideration of the disqualification.

The individual must submit the request for reconsideration to the commissioner in writing. A request for reconsideration for an individual who has been sent a notice of disqualification under subdivision 3a, paragraph (b), clause (1) or (2), must be submitted within 30 calendar days of the disqualified individual's receipt of the notice of disqualification. A request for reconsideration for an individual who has been sent a notice of disqualification under subdivision 3a, paragraph (b), clause (3), must be submitted within 15 calendar days of the disqualified individual's receipt of the notice of disqualification. Removal of a disqualified individual from direct contact shall be ordered if the individual does not request reconsideration within the prescribed time, and for an individual who submits a timely request for reconsideration, if the disqualification is not set aside. The individual must present information showing that:

(1) the information the commissioner relied upon is incorrect or inaccurate. If the basis of a reconsideration request is that a maltreatment determination or disposition under section 626.556 or 626.557 is incorrect, and the commissioner has issued a final order in an appeal of that determination or disposition under section 256.045, the commissioner's order is conclusive on the issue of maltreatment; or

(2) the subject of the study does not pose a risk of harm to any person served by the applicant or license holder.

(b) The commissioner may set aside the disqualification under this section if the commissioner finds that the information the commissioner relied upon is incorrect or the individual does not pose a risk of harm to any person served by the applicant or license holder. In determining that an individual does not pose a risk of harm, the commissioner shall consider the consequences of the event or events that lead to disqualification, whether there is more than one disqualifying event, the vulnerability of the victim at the time of the event, the time elapsed without a repeat of the same or similar event, documentation of successful completion by the individual studied of training or rehabilitation pertinent to the event, and any other information relevant to reconsideration. In reviewing a disqualification under this section, the commissioner shall give preeminent weight to the safety of each person to be served by the license holder or applicant over the interests of the license holder or applicant.

(c) Unless the information the commissioner relied on in disqualifying an individual is incorrect, the commissioner may not set aside the disqualification of an individual in

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connection with a license to provide family day care for children, foster care for children in the provider's own home, or foster care or day care services for adults in the provider's own home if:

(1) less than ten years have passed since the discharge of the sentence imposed for the offense; and the individual has been convicted of a violation of any offense listed in sections 609.20 (manslaughter in the first degree), 609.205 (manslaughter in the second degree), criminal vehicular homicide under 609.21 (criminal vehicular homicide and injury), 609.215 (aiding suicide or aiding attempted suicide), felony violations under 609.221 to 609.2231 (assault in the first, second, third, or fourth degree), 609.713 (terroristic threats), 609.235 (use of drugs to injure or to facilitate crime), 609.24 (simple robbery), 609.245 (aggravated robbery), 609.25 (kidnapping), 609.255 (false imprisonment), 609.561 or 609.562 (arson in the first or second degree), 609.71 (riot), burglary in the first or second degree under 609.582 (burglary), 609.66 (dangerous weapon), 609.665 (spring guns), 609.67 (machine guns and short-barreled shotguns), 609.749 (harassment; stalking), 152.021 or 152.022 (controlled substance crime in the first or second degree), 152.023, subdivision 1, clause (3) or (4), or subdivision 2, clause (4) (controlled substance crime in the third degree), 152.024, subdivision 1, clause (2), (3), or (4) (controlled substance crime in the fourth degree), 609.224, subdivision 2, paragraph (c) (fifth-degree assault by a caregiver against a vulnerable adult), 609.228 (great bodily harm caused by distribution of drugs), 609.23 (mistreatment of persons confined), 609.231 (mistreatment of residents or patients), 609.2325 (criminal abuse of a vulnerable adult), 609.233 (criminal neglect of a vulnerable adult), 609.2335 (financial exploitation of a vulnerable adult), 609.234 (failure to report), 609.265 (abduction), 609.2664 to 609.2665 (manslaughter of an unborn child in the first or second degree), 609.267 to 609.2672 (assault of an unborn child in the first, second, or third degree), 609.268 (injury or death of an unborn child in the commission of a crime), 617.293 (disseminating or displaying harmful material to minors), 609.378 (neglect or endangerment of a child), a gross misdemeanor offense under 609.377 (malicious punishment of a child), 609.72, subdivision 3 (disorderly conduct against a vulnerable adult); or an attempt or conspiracy to commit any of these offenses, as each of these offenses is defined in Minnesota Statutes; or an offense in any other state, the elements of which are substantially similar to the elements of any of the foregoing offenses;

(2) regardless of how much time has passed since the discharge of the sentence imposed for the offense, the individual was convicted of a violation of any offense listed in sections 609.185 to 609.195 (murder in the first, second, or third degree), 609.2661 to 609.2663 (murder of an unborn child in the first, second, or third degree), a felony offense under 609.377 (malicious punishment of a child), 609.322 (solicitation, inducement, and promotion of prostitution), 609.323 (receiving profit derived from prostitution), 609.342 to 609.345 (criminal sexual conduct in the first, second, third, or fourth degree), 609.352 (solicitation of children to engage in sexual conduct), 617.246 (use of minors in a sexual performance), 617.247 (possession of pictorial representations of a minor), 609.365 (incest), a felony offense under sections 609.2242 and 609.2243 (domestic assault), a felony offense of spousal abuse, a felony offense of child abuse or neglect, a felony offense of a crime against children, or an attempt or conspiracy to commit any of these offenses as defined in Minnesota Statutes, or an offense in any other state, the elements of which are substantially similar to any of the foregoing offenses;

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(3) within the seven years preceding the study, the individual committed an act that constitutes maltreatment of a child under section 626.556, subdivision 10e, and that resulted in substantial bodily harm as defined in section 609.02, subdivision 7a, or substantial mental or emotional harm as supported by competent psychological or psychiatric evidence; or

(4) within the seven years preceding the study, the individual was determined under section 626.557 to be the perpetrator of a substantiated incident of maltreatment of a vulnerable adult that resulted in substantial bodily harm as defined in section 609.02, subdivision 7a, or substantial mental or emotional harm as supported by competent psychological or psychiatric evidence.

In the case of any ground for disqualification under clauses (1) to (4), if the act was committed by an individual other than the applicant or license holder residing in the applicant's or license holder's home, the applicant or license holder may seek reconsideration when the individual who committed the act no longer resides in the home.

The disqualification periods provided under clauses (1), (3), and (4) are the minimum applicable disqualification periods. The commissioner may determine that an individual should continue to be disqualified from licensure because the license holder or applicant poses a risk of harm to a person served by that individual after the minimum disqualification period has passed.

(d) The commissioner shall respond in writing or by electronic transmission to all reconsideration requests for which the basis for the request is that the information relied upon by the commissioner to disqualify is incorrect or inaccurate within 30 working days of receipt of a request and all relevant information. If the basis for the request is that the individual does not pose a risk of harm, the commissioner shall respond to the request within 15 working days after receiving the request for reconsideration and all relevant information. If the disqualification is set aside, the commissioner shall notify the applicant or license holder in writing or by electronic transmission of the decision.

(e) Except as provided in subdivision 3c, the commissioner's decision to disqualify an individual, including the decision to grant or deny a rescission or set aside a disqualification under this section, is the final administrative agency action and shall not be subject to further review in a contested case under chapter 14 involving a negative licensing appeal taken in response to the disqualification or involving an accuracy and completeness appeal under section 13.04.

Sec. 7. Minnesota Statutes 1997 Supplement, section 245A.04, subdivision 3d, is amended to read:

Subd. 3d. **DISQUALIFICATION.** When a background study completed under subdivision 3 shows any of the following: a conviction of one or more crimes listed in clauses (1) to (4); the individual has admitted to or a preponderance of the evidence indicates the individual has committed an act or acts that meet the definition of any of the crimes listed in clauses (1) to (4); or an administrative determination listed under clause (4), the individual shall be disqualified from any position allowing direct contact with persons receiving services from the license holder:

(1) regardless of how much time has passed since the discharge of the sentence imposed for the offense, and unless otherwise specified, regardless of the level of the con-

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viction, the individual was convicted of any of the following offenses: sections 609.185 (murder in the first degree); 609.19 (murder in the second degree); 609.195 (murder in the third degree); 609.2661 (murder of an unborn child in the first degree); 609.2662 (murder of an unborn child in the second degree); 609.2663 (murder of an unborn child in the third degree); 609.322 (solicitation, inducement, and promotion of prostitution); 609.323 (receiving profit derived from prostitution); 609.342 (criminal sexual conduct in the first degree); 609.343 (criminal sexual conduct in the second degree); 609.344 (criminal sexual conduct in the third degree); 609.345 (criminal sexual conduct in the fourth degree); 609.352 (solicitation of children to engage in sexual conduct); 609.365 (incest); felony offense under 609.377 (malicious punishment of a child); 617.246 (use of minors in sexual performance prohibited); 617.247 (possession of pictorial representations of minors); a felony offense under sections 609.2242 and 609.2243 (domestic assault), a felony offense of spousal abuse, a felony offense of child abuse or neglect, a felony offense of a crime against children; or attempt or conspiracy to commit any of these offenses as defined in Minnesota Statutes, or an offense in any other state or country, where the elements are substantially similar to any of the offenses listed in this clause;

(2) if less than 15 years have passed since the discharge of the sentence imposed for the offense; and the individual has received a felony conviction for a violation of any of these offenses: sections 609.20 (manslaughter in the first degree); 609.205 (manslaughter in the second degree); 609.21 (criminal vehicular homicide and injury); 609.215 (suicide); 609.221 to 609.2231 (assault in the first, second, third, or fourth degree); repeat offenses under 609.224 (assault in the fifth degree); ~~609.2242 and 609.2243 (domestic assault; sentencing; repeat domestic assault)~~; repeat offenses under 609.3451 (criminal sexual conduct in the fifth degree); 609.713 (terroristic threats); 609.235 (use of drugs to injure or facilitate crime); 609.24 (simple robbery); 609.245 (aggravated robbery); 609.25 (kidnapping); 609.255 (false imprisonment); 609.561 (arson in the first degree); 609.562 (arson in the second degree); 609.563 (arson in the third degree); repeat offenses under 617.23 (indecent exposure; penalties); repeat offenses under 617.241 (obscene materials and performances; distribution and exhibition prohibited; penalty); 609.71 (riot); 609.66 (dangerous weapons); 609.67 (machine guns and short-barreled shotguns); 609.749 (harassment; stalking; penalties); 609.228 (great bodily harm caused by distribution of drugs); 609.2325 (criminal abuse of a vulnerable adult); 609.2664 (manslaughter of an unborn child in the first degree); 609.2665 (manslaughter of an unborn child in the second degree); 609.267 (assault of an unborn child in the first degree); 609.2671 (assault of an unborn child in the second degree); 609.268 (injury or death of an unborn child in the commission of a crime); 609.378 (neglect or endangerment of a child); 609.324, subdivision 1 (other prohibited acts); 609.52 (theft); 609.2335 (financial exploitation of a vulnerable adult); 609.521 (possession of shoplifting gear); 609.582 (burglary); 609.625 (aggravated forgery); 609.63 (forgery); 609.631 (check forgery; offering a forged check); 609.635 (obtaining signature by false pretense); 609.27 (coercion); 609.275 (attempt to coerce); 609.687 (adulteration); 260.221 (grounds for termination of parental rights); and chapter 152 (drugs; controlled substance). An attempt or conspiracy to commit any of these offenses, as each of these offenses is defined in Minnesota Statutes; or an offense in any other state or country, the elements of which are substantially similar to the elements of the offenses in this clause. If the individual studied is convicted of one of the felonies listed in this clause, but the sentence is a gross misdemeanor or misdemeanor disposition, the look-back period for the conviction is the peri-

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od applicable to the disposition, that is the period for gross misdemeanors or misdemeanors;

(3) If less than ten years have passed since the discharge or the sentence imposed for the offense; and the individual has received a gross misdemeanor conviction for a violation of any of the following offenses: sections 609.224 (assault in the fifth degree); 609.2242 and 609.2243 (domestic assault); violation of an order for protection under 518B.01, subdivision 14; 609.3451 (criminal sexual conduct in the fifth degree); repeat offenses under 609.746 (interference with privacy); repeat offenses under 617.23 (indecent exposure); 617.241 (obscene materials and performances); 617.243 (interference, distribution); 617.293 (harmful materials; dissemination and display to minors prohibited); 609.71 (riot); 609.66 (dangerous weapons); 609.749 (harassment; stalking; penalties); 609.224, paragraph (c) (assault in the fifth degree by a caregiver against a vulnerable adult); 609.23 (mistreatment of persons confined); 609.231 (mistreatment of residents or patients); 609.2325 (criminal abuse of a vulnerable adult); 609.233 (criminal neglect of a vulnerable adult); 609.2335 (financial exploitation of a vulnerable adult); 609.234 (failure to report maltreatment of a vulnerable adult); 609.72, subdivision 3 (disorderly conduct against a vulnerable adult); 609.265 (abduction); 609.378 (neglect or endangerment of a child); 609.377 (malicious punishment of a child); 609.324, subdivision 1a (other prohibited acts; minor engaged in prostitution); 609.33 (disorderly house); 609.52 (theft); 609.582 (burglary); 609.631 (check forgery; offering a forged check); 609.275 (attempt to coerce); or an attempt or conspiracy to commit any of these offenses, as each of these offenses is defined in Minnesota Statutes; or an offense in any other state or county, the elements of which are substantially similar to the elements of any of the offenses listed in this clause. If the defendant is convicted of one of the gross misdemeanors listed in this clause, but the sentence is a misdemeanor disposition, the look-back period for the conviction is the period applicable to misdemeanors;

(4) If less than seven years have passed since the discharge of the sentence imposed for the offense; and the individual has received a misdemeanor conviction for a violation of any of the following offenses: sections 609.224 (assault in the fifth degree); 609.2242 (domestic assault); violation of an order for protection under 518B.01 (Domestic Abuse Act); violation of an order for protection under 609.232 (protective order authorized; penalties); 609.746 (interference with privacy); 609.79 (obscene or harassing phone calls); 609.795 (letter, telegram, or package; opening; harassment); 617.23 (indecent exposure; penalties); 609.2672 (assault of an unborn child in the third degree); 617.293 (harmful materials; dissemination and display to minors prohibited); 609.66 (dangerous weapons); 609.665 (spring guns); 609.2335 (financial exploitation of a vulnerable adult); 609.234 (failure to report maltreatment of a vulnerable adult); 609.27 (coercion); or an attempt or conspiracy to commit any of these offenses, as each of these offenses is defined in Minnesota Statutes; or an offense in any other state or county, the elements of which are substantially similar to the elements of any of the offenses listed in this clause; failure to make reports under section 626.556, subdivision 3, or 626.557, subdivision 3, for incidents in which: (i) the final disposition under section 626.556 or 626.557 was substantiated maltreatment; and (ii) the maltreatment was recurring or serious; or substantiated serious or recurring maltreatment of a minor under section 626.556 or of a vulnerable adult under section 626.557 for which there is a preponderance of evidence that the maltreatment occurred, and that the subject was responsible for the maltreatment. For the purposes of this section, serious maltreatment

means sexual abuse; maltreatment resulting in death; or maltreatment resulting in serious injury or harm which reasonably requires the care of a physician whether or not the care of a physician was sought, ~~including;~~ or abuse resulting in serious injury. For purposes of this section, abuse resulting in serious injury means: bruises, bites, skin laceration or tissue damage; fractures; dislocations; evidence of internal injuries; head injuries with loss of consciousness; extensive second-degree or third-degree burns and other burns for which complications are present; extensive second-degree or third-degree frostbite, and others for which complications are present; irreversible mobility or avulsion of teeth; injuries to the eyeball; ingestion of foreign substances and objects that are harmful; near drowning; and heat exhaustion or sunstroke. For purposes of this section, "care of a physician" is treatment received or ordered by a physician, but does not include diagnostic testing, assessment, or observation. For the purposes of this section, recurring maltreatment means more than one incident of maltreatment for which there is a preponderance of evidence that the maltreatment occurred, and that the subject was responsible for the maltreatment.

Sec. 8. Minnesota Statutes 1996, section 256.01, subdivision 12, is amended to read:

Subd. 12. **CHILD MORTALITY REVIEW PANEL.** (a) The commissioner shall establish a child mortality review panel ~~for reviewing to review~~ deaths of children in Minnesota, including deaths attributed to maltreatment or in which maltreatment may be a contributing cause and to review near fatalities as defined in section 626.556, subdivision 11d. The commissioners of health, children, families, and learning, and public safety and the attorney general shall each designate a representative to the child mortality review panel. Other panel members shall be appointed by the commissioner, including a board-certified pathologist and a physician who is a coroner or a medical examiner. The purpose of the panel shall be to make recommendations to the state and to county agencies for improving the child protection system, including modifications in statute, rule, policy, and procedure.

(b) The commissioner may require a county agency to establish a local child mortality review panel. The commissioner may establish procedures for conducting local reviews and may require that all professionals with knowledge of a child mortality case participate in the local review. In this section, "professional" means a person licensed to perform or a person performing a specific service in the child protective service system. "Professional" includes law enforcement personnel, social service agency attorneys, educators, and social service, health care, and mental health care providers.

(c) If the commissioner of human services has reason to believe that a child's death was caused by maltreatment or that maltreatment was a contributing cause, the commissioner has access to not public data under chapter 13 maintained by state agencies, statewide systems, or political subdivisions that are related to the child's death or circumstances surrounding the care of the child. The commissioner shall also have access to records of private hospitals as necessary to carry out the duties prescribed by this section. Access to data under this paragraph is limited to police investigative data; autopsy records and coroner or medical examiner investigative data; hospital, public health, or other medical records of the child; hospital and other medical records of the child's parent that relate to prenatal care; and records created by social service agencies that provided services to the child or family within three years preceding the child's death. A state agency, statewide system, or political subdivision shall provide the data upon request of

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the commissioner. Not public data may be shared with members of the state or local child mortality review panel in connection with an individual case.

(d) Notwithstanding the data's classification in the possession of any other agency, data acquired by a local or state child mortality review panel in the exercise of its duties is protected nonpublic or confidential data as defined in section 13.02, but may be disclosed as necessary to carry out the purposes of the review panel. The data is not subject to subpoena or discovery. The commissioner may disclose conclusions of the review panel, but shall not disclose data that was classified as confidential or private data on decedents, under section 13.10, or private, confidential, or protected nonpublic data in the disseminating agency, except that the commissioner may disclose local social service agency data as provided in section 626.556, subdivision 11d, on individual cases involving a fatality or near fatality of a person served by the local social service agency prior to the date of death.

(e) A person attending a child mortality review panel meeting shall not disclose what transpired at the meeting, except to carry out the purposes of the mortality review panel. The proceedings and records of the mortality review panel are protected nonpublic data as defined in section 13.02, subdivision 13, and are not subject to discovery or introduction into evidence in a civil or criminal action against a professional, the state or a county agency, arising out of the matters the panel is reviewing. Information, documents, and records otherwise available from other sources are not immune from discovery or use in a civil or criminal action solely because they were presented during proceedings of the review panel. A person who presented information before the review panel or who is a member of the panel shall not be prevented from testifying about matters within the person's knowledge. However, in a civil or criminal proceeding a person shall not be questioned about the person's presentation of information to the review panel or opinions formed by the person as a result of the review meetings.

Sec. 9. Minnesota Statutes 1996, section 256.01, is amended by adding a subdivision to read:

Subd. 15. CITIZEN REVIEW PANELS. (a) The commissioner shall establish a minimum of three citizen review panels to examine the policies and procedures of state and local welfare agencies to evaluate the extent to which the agencies are effectively discharging their child protection responsibilities. Local social service agencies shall cooperate and work with the citizen review panels. Where appropriate, the panels may examine specific cases to evaluate the effectiveness of child protection activities. The panels must examine the extent to which the state and local agencies are meeting the requirements of the federal Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act and the Reporting of Maltreatment of Minors Act. The commissioner may authorize mortality review panels or child protection teams to carry out the duties of a citizen review panel if membership meets or is expanded to meet the requirements of this section.

(b) The panel membership must include volunteers who broadly represent the community in which the panel is established, including members who have expertise in the prevention and treatment of child abuse and neglect, child protection advocates, and representatives of the councils of color and ombudsperson for families.

(c) A citizen review panel has access to the following data for specific case review under this paragraph: police investigative data; autopsy records and coroner or medical

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examiner investigative data; hospital, public health, or other medical records of the child; hospital and other medical records of the child's parent that relate to prenatal care; records created by social service agencies that provided services to the child or family; and personnel data related to an employee's performance in discharging child protection responsibilities. A state agency, statewide system, or political subdivision shall provide the data upon request of the commissioner. Not public data may be shared with members of the state or local citizen review panel in connection with an individual case.

(d) Notwithstanding the data's classification in the possession of any other agency, data acquired by a local or state citizen review panel in the exercise of its duties are protected nonpublic or confidential data as defined in section 13.02, but may be disclosed as necessary to carry out the purposes of the review panel. The data are not subject to subpoena or discovery. The commissioner may disclose conclusions of the review panel, but may not disclose data on individuals that were classified as confidential or private data on individuals in the possession of the state agency, statewide system, or political subdivision from which the data were received, except that the commissioner may disclose local social service agency data as provided in section 626.556, subdivision 11d, on individual cases involving a fatality or near fatality of a person served by the local social service agency prior to the date of death.

(e) A person attending a citizen review panel meeting may not disclose what transpired at the meeting, except to carry out the purposes of the review panel. The proceedings and records of the review panel are protected nonpublic data as defined in section 13.02, subdivision 13, and are not subject to discovery or introduction into evidence in a civil or criminal action against a professional, the state, or county agency arising out of the matters the panel is reviewing. Information, documents, and records otherwise available from other sources are not immune from discovery or use in a civil or criminal action solely because they were presented during proceedings of the review panel. A person who presented information before the review panel or who is a member of the panel is not prevented from testifying about matters within the person's knowledge. However, in a civil or criminal proceeding, a person must not be questioned about the person's presentation of information to the review panel or opinions formed by the person as a result of the review panel meetings.

Sec. 10. Minnesota Statutes 1997 Supplement, section 256.82, subdivision 2, is amended to read:

Subd. 2. **FOSTER CARE MAINTENANCE PAYMENTS.** Notwithstanding subdivision 1, for the purposes of foster care maintenance payments under title IV-E of the federal Social Security Act, United States Code, title 42, sections 670 to 676, during the period beginning July 1, 1985, and ending December 31, 1985, the county paying the maintenance costs shall be reimbursed for the costs from those federal funds available for that purpose together with an amount of state funds equal to a percentage of the difference between the total cost and the federal funds made available for payment. This percentage shall not exceed the percentage specified in subdivision 1 for the aid to families with dependent children program. In the event that the state appropriation for this purpose is less than the state percentage set in subdivision 1, the reimbursement shall be ratably reduced to the county. Beginning January 1, 1986, for the purpose of foster care maintenance payments under title IV-E of the Social Security Act, United States Code, title 42, sections 670 to 676, the county paying the maintenance costs must be reimbursed for the costs

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from the federal money available for the purpose. Beginning July 1, 1997, for the purposes of determining a child's eligibility under title IV-E of the Social Security Act, the placing agency shall use AFDC requirements in effect on ~~June 1, 1995~~ July 16, 1996.

Sec. 11. Minnesota Statutes 1997 Supplement, section 257.071, subdivision 1d, is amended to read:

Subd. 1d. **RELATIVE SEARCH; NATURE.** (a) Within six months after a child is initially placed in a residential facility, the local social service agency shall identify any relatives of the child and notify them of the need for a foster care home for the child and of the possibility of the need for a permanent out-of-home placement of the child, and. Relatives should also be notified that a decision not to be a placement resource at the beginning of the case may affect the relative's right being considered to have the child placed with that relative later. The relatives must be notified that they must keep the local social service agency informed of their current address in order to receive notice of any that a permanent placement hearing is being sought for the child. A relative who fails to provide a current address to the local social service agency forfeits the right to notice of the possibility of permanent placement.

(b) Unless relieved of this duty by the court because the child is placed with an appropriate relative who wishes to provide a permanent home for the child, when the agency determines that it is necessary to prepare for the permanent placement determination hearing, or in anticipation of filing a termination of parental rights petition, the agency shall send notice to the relatives, any adult with whom the child is currently residing, any adult with whom the child has resided for one year or longer in the past, and any adults who have maintained a relationship or exercised visitation with the child as identified in the agency case plan. The notice must state that a permanent home is sought for the child and that the individuals receiving the notice may indicate to the agency their interest in providing a permanent home. The notice must contain an advisory that if the relative chooses not to be a placement resource at the beginning of the case, this may affect the relative's rights to have the child placed with that relative permanently later on. The notice must state that within 30 days of receipt of the notice an individual receiving the notice must indicate to the agency the individual's interest in providing a permanent home for the child or that the individual may lose the opportunity to be considered for a permanent placement. This notice need not be sent if the child is placed with an appropriate relative who wishes to provide a permanent home for the child.

Sec. 12. Minnesota Statutes 1996, section 257.42, is amended to read:

**257.42 APPROPRIATE PUBLIC AUTHORITY DEFINED.**

The "appropriate public authorities" as used in article 3 of the interstate compact on the placement of children shall, with reference to this state, mean the Minnesota department commissioner of human services and said department. The commissioner of human services or the commissioner's delegate shall receive and act with reference to notices required by said article 3.

Sec. 13. Minnesota Statutes 1996, section 257.43, is amended to read:

**257.43 APPROPRIATE AUTHORITY IN RECEIVING STATE DEFINED.**

As used in paragraph (a) of article 5 of the interstate compact on the placement of children, the phrase "appropriate authority in the receiving state" with reference to this state shall mean the commissioner of human services or the commissioner's delegate.

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Sec. 14. Minnesota Statutes 1997 Supplement, section 257.85, subdivision 3, is amended to read:

Subd. 3. **DEFINITIONS.** For purposes of this section, the terms defined in this subdivision have the meanings given them.

(a) "AFDC or MFIP standard" means the monthly standard of need used to calculate assistance under the AFDC program, the transitional standard used to calculate assistance under the MFIP-S program, or, if neither of those is applicable, the analogous transitional standard used to calculate assistance under the MFIP or MFIP-R programs.

(b) "Local agency" means the local social service agency with legal custody of a child prior to the transfer of permanent legal and physical custody to a relative.

(c) "Permanent legal and physical custody" means permanent legal and physical custody ordered by a Minnesota juvenile court under section 260.191, subdivision 3b.

(d) "Relative" means an individual, other than a parent, who is related to a child by blood, marriage, or adoption.

(e) "Relative custodian" means a relative of a child for whom the relative has permanent legal and physical custody. When siblings, including half-siblings and step-siblings, are placed together in the permanent legal and physical custody of a relative of one of the siblings, the person receiving permanent legal and physical custody of the siblings is considered a relative custodian of all of the siblings for purposes of this section.

(f) "Relative custody assistance agreement" means an agreement entered into between a local agency and the relative of a child who has been or will be awarded permanent legal and physical custody of the child.

(g) "Relative custody assistance payment" means a monthly cash grant made to a relative custodian pursuant to a relative custody assistance agreement and in an amount calculated under subdivision 7.

(h) "Remains in the physical custody of the relative custodian" means that the relative custodian is providing day-to-day care for the child and that the child lives with the relative custodian; absence from the relative custodian's home for a period of more than 120 days raises a presumption that the child no longer remains in the physical custody of the relative custodian.

Sec. 15. Minnesota Statutes 1997 Supplement, section 257.85, subdivision 5, is amended to read:

Subd. 5. **RELATIVE CUSTODY ASSISTANCE AGREEMENT.** (a) A relative custody assistance agreement will not be effective, unless it is signed by the local agency and the relative custodian no later than 30 days after the date of the order establishing permanent legal and physical custody with the relative, except that a local agency may enter into a relative custody assistance agreement with a relative custodian more than 30 days after the date of the order if it certifies that the delay in entering the agreement was through no fault of the relative custodian. There must be a separate agreement for each child for whom the relative custodian is receiving relative custody assistance.

(b) Regardless of when the relative custody assistance agreement is signed by the local agency and relative custodian, the effective date of the agreement shall be ~~the first~~

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day of the month following the date of the order establishing permanent legal and physical custody or the date that the last party signs the agreement, whichever occurs later.

(c) If MFIP-S is not the applicable program for a child at the time that a relative custody assistance agreement is entered on behalf of the child, when MFIP-S becomes the applicable program, if the relative custodian had been receiving custody assistance payments calculated based upon a different program, the amount of relative custody assistance payment under subdivision 7 shall be recalculated under the MFIP-S program.

(d) The relative custody assistance agreement shall be in a form specified by the commissioner and shall include provisions relating to the following:

(1) the responsibilities of all parties to the agreement;

(2) the payment terms, including the financial circumstances of the relative custodian, the needs of the child, the amount and calculation of the relative custody assistance payments, and that the amount of the payments shall be reevaluated annually;

(3) the effective date of the agreement, which shall also be the anniversary date for the purpose of submitting the annual affidavit under subdivision 8;

(4) that failure to submit the affidavit as required by subdivision 8 will be grounds for terminating the agreement;

(5) the agreement's expected duration, which shall not extend beyond the child's eighteenth birthday;

(6) any specific known circumstances that could cause the agreement or payments to be modified, reduced, or terminated and the relative custodian's appeal rights under subdivision 9;

(7) that the relative custodian must notify the local agency within 30 days of any of the following:

(i) a change in the child's status;

(ii) a change in the relationship between the relative custodian and the child;

(iii) a change in composition or level of income of the relative custodian's family;

(iv) a change in eligibility or receipt of benefits under AFDC, MFIP-S, or other assistance program; and

(v) any other change that could affect eligibility for or amount of relative custody assistance;

(8) that failure to provide notice of a change as required by clause (7) will be grounds for terminating the agreement;

(9) that the amount of relative custody assistance is subject to the availability of state funds to reimburse the local agency making the payments;

(10) that the relative custodian may choose to temporarily stop receiving payments under the agreement at any time by providing 30 days' notice to the local agency and may choose to begin receiving payments again by providing the same notice but any payments the relative custodian chooses not to receive are forfeit; and

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(11) that the local agency will continue to be responsible for making relative custody assistance payments under the agreement regardless of the relative custodian's place of residence.

Sec. 16. Minnesota Statutes 1997 Supplement, section 259.22, subdivision 4, is amended to read:

Subd. 4. **TIME FOR FILING PETITION.** A petition shall be filed not later than 24 12 months after a child is placed in a prospective adoptive home. If a petition is not filed by that time, the agency that placed the child, or, in a direct adoptive placement, the agency that is supervising the placement shall file with the district court in the county where the prospective adoptive parent resides a motion for an order and a report recommending one of the following:

(1) that the time for filing a petition be extended because of the child's special needs as defined under title IV-E of the Social Security Act, United States Code, title 42, section 673;

(2) that, based on a written plan for completing filing of the petition, including a specific timeline, to which the prospective adoptive parents have agreed, the time for filing a petition be extended long enough to complete the plan because such an extension is in the best interests of the child and additional time is needed for the child to adjust to the adoptive home; or

(3) that the child be removed from the prospective adoptive home.

The prospective adoptive parent must reimburse an agency for the cost of preparing and filing the motion and report under this section, unless the costs are reimbursed by the commissioner under section 259.67 or 259.73.

Sec. 17. Minnesota Statutes 1996, section 259.24, subdivision 1, is amended to read:

Subdivision 1. **EXCEPTIONS.** No child shall be adopted without the consent of the child's parents and the child's guardian, if there be one, except in the following instances:

(a) Consent shall not be required of a parent not entitled to notice of the proceedings.

(b) Consent shall not be required of a parent who has abandoned the child, or of a parent who has lost custody of the child through a divorce decree or a decree of dissolution, and upon whom notice has been served as required by section 259.49.

(c) Consent shall not be required of a parent whose parental rights to the child have been terminated by a juvenile court or who has lost custody of a child through a final commitment of the juvenile court or through a decree in a prior adoption proceeding.

(d) If there be no parent or guardian qualified to consent to the adoption, the consent may be given by the commissioner.

(e) The commissioner or agency having authority to place a child for adoption pursuant to section 259.25, subdivision 1, shall have the exclusive right to consent to the adoption of such child. The commissioner or agency shall make every effort to place siblings together for adoption. Notwithstanding any rule to the contrary, the commissioner may delegate the right to consent to the adoption or separation of siblings, if it is in the child's best interest, to a local social services agency.

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Sec. 18. Minnesota Statutes 1996, section 259.37, subdivision 2, is amended to read:

**Subd. 2. DISCLOSURE TO BIRTH PARENTS AND ADOPTIVE PARENTS.**

An agency shall provide a disclosure statement written in clear, plain language to be signed by the prospective adoptive parents and birth parents, except that in intercountry adoptions, the signatures of birth parents are not required. The disclosure statement must contain the following information:

(1) fees charged to the adoptive parent, including any policy on sliding scale fees or fee waivers and an itemization of the amount that will be charged for the adoption study, counseling, postplacement services, family of origin searches, birth parent expenses authorized under section 259.55, or any other services;

(2) timeline for the adoptive parent to make fee payments;

(3) likelihood, given the circumstances of the prospective adoptive parent and any specific program to which the prospective adoptive parent is applying, that an adoptive placement may be made and the estimated length of time for making an adoptive placement. These estimates must be based on adoptive placements made with prospective parents in similar circumstances applying to a similar program with the agency during the immediately preceding three to five years. If an agency has not been in operation for at least three years, it must provide summary data based on whatever adoptive placements it has made and may include a statement about the kind of efforts it will make to achieve an adoptive placement, including a timetable it will follow in seeking a child. The estimates must include a statement that the agency cannot guarantee placement of a child or a time by which a child will be placed;

(4) a statement of the services the agency will provide the birth and adoptive parents;

(5) a statement prepared by the commissioner under section 259.39 that explains the child placement and adoption process and the respective legal rights and responsibilities of the birth parent and prospective adoptive parent during the process including a statement that the prospective adoptive parent is responsible for filing an adoption petition not later than 24 12 months after the child is placed in the prospective adoptive home;

(6) a statement regarding any information the agency may have about attorney referral services, or about obtaining assistance with completing legal requirements for an adoption; and

(7) an acknowledgment to be signed by the birth parent and prospective adoptive parent that they have received, read, and had the opportunity to ask questions of the agency about the contents of the disclosure statement.

Sec. 19. Minnesota Statutes 1997 Supplement, section 259.47, subdivision 3, is amended to read:

**Subd. 3. PREADOPTIVE CUSTODY ORDER.** (a) Before a child is placed in a prospective adoptive home by a birth parent or legal guardian, other than an agency, the placement must be approved by the district court in the county where the prospective adoptive parent resides. An order under this subdivision or subdivision 6 shall state that the prospective adoptive parent's right to custody of the child is subject to the birth parent's right to custody until the consents to the child's adoption become irrevocable. At the time of placement, prospective adoptive parents must have for the child qualifying exist-

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ing coverage as defined in section 62L.02, subdivision 24, or other similar comprehensive health care coverage. The preadoptive custody order must include any agreement reached between the prospective adoptive parent and the birth parent regarding authority to make decisions after placement for medical care of the child and responsibility for payment for medical care not provided by the adoptive parent's existing health care coverage. The prospective adoptive parent must meet the residence requirements of section 259.22, subdivision 1, and must file with the court an affidavit of intent to remain a resident of the state for at least three months after the child is placed in the prospective adoptive home. The prospective adoptive parent shall file with the court a notice of intent to file an adoption petition and submit a written motion seeking an order granting temporary preadoptive custody. The notice and motion required under this subdivision may be considered by the court ex parte, without a hearing. The prospective adoptive parent shall serve a copy of the notice and motion upon any parent whose consent is required under section 259.24 or who is named in the affidavit required under paragraph (b) if that person's mailing address is known. The motion may be filed up to 60 days before the placement is to be made and must include:

- (1) the adoption study required under section 259.41;
- (2) affidavits from the birth parents indicating their support of the motion, or, if there is no affidavit from the birth father, an affidavit from the birth mother under paragraph (b);
- (3) an itemized statement of expenses that have been paid and an estimate of expenses that will be paid by the prospective adoptive parents to the birth parents, any agency, attorney, or other party in connection with the prospective adoption;
- (4) the name of counsel for each party, if any;
- (5) a statement that the birth parents:
  - (i) have provided the social and medical history required under section 259.43 to the prospective adoptive parent;
  - (ii) have received the written statement of their legal rights and responsibilities under section 259.39; and
  - (iii) have been notified of their right to receive counseling under subdivision 4; and
- (6) the name of the agency chosen by the adoptive parent to supervise the adoptive placement and complete the postplacement assessment required by section 259.53, subdivision 2.

The court shall review the expense statement submitted under this subdivision to determine whether payments made or to be made by the prospective adoptive parent are lawful and in accordance with section 259.55, subdivision 1.

(b) If the birth mother submits the affidavit required in paragraph (a), clause (2), but the birth father fails to do so, the birth mother must submit an additional affidavit that describes her good faith efforts or efforts made on her behalf to identify and locate the birth father for purposes of securing his consent. In the following circumstances the birth mother may instead submit an affidavit stating on which ground she is exempt from making efforts to identify and locate the father:

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- (1) the child was conceived as the result of incest or rape;
- (2) efforts to locate the father by the affiant or anyone acting on the affiant's behalf could reasonably result in physical harm to the birth mother or child; or
- (3) efforts to locate the father by the affiant or anyone acting on the affiant's behalf could reasonably result in severe emotional distress of the birth mother or child.

A court shall consider the motion for temporary preadoptive custody within 30 days of receiving the motion or by the anticipated placement date stated in the motion, whichever comes sooner.

Sec. 20. Minnesota Statutes 1997 Supplement, section 259.58, is amended to read:

**259.58 COMMUNICATION OR CONTACT AGREEMENTS.**

Adoptive parents and a birth relative may enter an agreement regarding communication with or contact between an adopted minor, adoptive parents, and a birth relative under this section. An agreement may be entered between:

- (1) adoptive parents and a birth parent;
- (2) adoptive parents and a any other birth relative with whom the child resided before being adopted; or
- ~~(2)~~ (3) adoptive parents and any other birth relative if the child is adopted by a birth relative upon the death of both birth parents.

For purposes of this section, "birth relative" means a parent, stepparent, grandparent, brother, sister, uncle, or aunt of a minor adoptee. This relationship may be by blood or marriage. For an Indian child, birth relative includes members of the extended family as defined by the law or custom of the Indian child's tribe or, in the absence of laws or custom, nieces, nephews, or first or second cousins, as provided in the Indian Child Welfare Act, United States Code, title 25, section 1903.

(a) An agreement regarding communication with or contact between minor adoptees, adoptive parents, and a birth relative is not legally enforceable unless the terms of the agreement are contained in a written court order entered in accordance with this section. An order must be sought at the same time a petition for adoption is filed. The court shall not enter a proposed order unless the terms of the order have been approved in writing by the prospective adoptive parents, a birth relative who desires to be a party to the agreement, and, if the child is in the custody of or under the guardianship of an agency, a representative of the agency. An agreement under this section need not disclose the identity of the parties to be legally enforceable. The court shall not enter a proposed order unless the court finds that the communication or contact between the minor adoptee, the adoptive parents, and a birth relative as agreed upon and contained in the proposed order would be in the minor adoptee's best interests.

(b) Failure to comply with the terms of an agreed order regarding communication or contact that has been entered by the court under this section is not grounds for:

- (1) setting aside an adoption decree; or
- (2) revocation of a written consent to an adoption after that consent has become irrevocable.

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(c) An agreed order entered under this section may be enforced by filing a petition or motion with the family court that includes a certified copy of the order granting the communication, contact, or visitation, but only if the petition or motion is accompanied by an affidavit that the parties have mediated or attempted to mediate any dispute under the agreement or that the parties agree to a proposed modification. The prevailing party may be awarded reasonable attorney's fees and costs. The court shall not modify an agreed order under this section unless it finds that the modification is necessary to serve the best interests of the minor adoptee, and:

- (1) the modification is agreed to by the adoptive parent and the birth relative; or
- (2) exceptional circumstances have arisen since the agreed order was entered that justify modification of the order.

Sec. 21. Minnesota Statutes 1997 Supplement, section 259.60, subdivision 2, is amended to read:

Subd. 2. **AMENDED BIRTH CERTIFICATE; PROCEDURE AND ORDER; DECREE RECOGNIZING ADOPTION.** (a) Under the procedures in paragraph (b), a person, whose adoption of a child under the laws of a foreign country is valid in this state under subdivision 1, may petition the district court in the county where the adoptive parent resides for a decree confirming and recognizing the adoption, changing the child's legal name, if requested in the petition, and for authorizing the commissioner of health to issue a new birth certificate for the child under section 144.218, subdivision 2.

(b) A court shall issue the decree and birth certificate described in paragraph (a) upon receipt of the following documents:

(1) a petition by the adoptive parent requesting that the court issue a Minnesota birth certificate, and stating that the adoptive parent completed adoption of the child under the laws of a foreign country and that the adoption is valid in this state under subdivision 1 and requesting that the court issue a decree confirming and recognizing the adoption, changing the child's legal name, if desired, and authorizing the commissioner of health to issue a new birth certificate for the child under section 144.218, subdivision 2. The petition must be in the form of a signed, sworn, and notarized statement;

(2) a copy of the child's original birth certificate, if available;

(3) a copy of the final adoption certificate or equivalent as issued by the foreign jurisdiction;

(4) a copy of the child's passport including the United States visa indicating IR-3 immigration status; and

(5) certified English translations of any of the documents in clauses (2) to (4) that are not written in the English language.

(c) Upon issuing a decree under this section, the court shall forward to the commissioners of health and human services a copy of the decree. The court shall also complete and forward to the commissioner of health the certificate of adoption, unless another form has been specified by the commissioner of health.

Sec. 22. Minnesota Statutes 1996, section 259.67, subdivision 1, is amended to read:

Subdivision 1. **ADOPTION ASSISTANCE.** (a) The commissioner of human services shall enter into an adoption assistance agreement with an adoptive parent or parents

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who adopt a child who meets the eligibility requirements under title IV-E of the Social Security Act, United States Code, title 42, sections 670 to 679a, or who otherwise meets the requirements in subdivision 4.

(b) No child on whose behalf federal title IV-E adoption assistance payments are to be made may be placed in an adoptive home unless a criminal background check under section 259.41, subdivision 3, paragraph (b), has been completed on the prospective adoptive parents and no disqualifying condition exists. A disqualifying condition exists if:

(1) a criminal background check reveals a felony conviction for child abuse; for spousal abuse; for a crime against children (including child pornography); or for a crime involving violence, including rape, sexual assault, or homicide, but not including other physical assault or battery; or

(2) a criminal background check reveals a felony conviction within the past five years for physical assault, battery, or a drug-related offense.

Sec. 23. Minnesota Statutes 1996, section 260.011, subdivision 2, is amended to read:

Subd. 2. (a) The paramount consideration in all proceedings concerning a child alleged or found to be in need of protection or services is the health, safety, and best interests of the child. In proceedings involving an American Indian child, as defined in section 257.351, subdivision 6, the best interests of the child must be determined consistent with sections 257.35 to 257.3579 and the Indian Child Welfare Act, United States Code, title 25, sections 1901 to 1923. The purpose of the laws relating to juvenile courts is to secure for each child alleged or adjudicated in need of protection or services and under the jurisdiction of the court, the care and guidance, preferably in the child's own home, as will best serve the spiritual, emotional, mental, and physical welfare of the child; to provide judicial procedures which protect the welfare of the child; to preserve and strengthen the child's family ties whenever possible and in the child's best interests, removing the child from the custody of parents only when the child's welfare or safety cannot be adequately safeguarded without removal; and, when removal from the child's own family is necessary and in the child's best interests, to secure for the child custody, care and discipline as nearly as possible equivalent to that which should have been given by the parents.

(b) The purpose of the laws relating to termination of parental rights is to ensure that:

(1) reasonable efforts have been made by the social service agency to reunite the child with the child's parents in a placement that is safe and permanent; and

(2) if placement with the parents is not reasonably foreseeable, to secure for the child a safe and permanent placement, preferably with adoptive parents.

Nothing in this section requires reasonable efforts to be made in circumstances where the court has determined that the child has been subjected to egregious harm or the parental rights of the parent to a sibling have been involuntarily terminated.

The paramount consideration in all proceedings for the termination of parental rights is the best interests of the child. In proceedings involving an American Indian child, as defined in section 257.351, subdivision 6, the best interests of the child must be determined consistent with the Indian Child Welfare Act of 1978, United States Code, title 25, section 1901, et seq.

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(c) The purpose of the laws relating to children alleged or adjudicated to be delinquent is to promote the public safety and reduce juvenile delinquency by maintaining the integrity of the substantive law prohibiting certain behavior and by developing individual responsibility for lawful behavior. This purpose should be pursued through means that are fair and just, that recognize the unique characteristics and needs of children, and that give children access to opportunities for personal and social growth.

(d) The laws relating to juvenile courts shall be liberally construed to carry out these purposes.

Sec. 24. Minnesota Statutes 1997 Supplement, section 260.012, is amended to read:

**260.012 DUTY TO ENSURE PLACEMENT PREVENTION AND FAMILY REUNIFICATION; REASONABLE EFFORTS.**

(a) If a child in need of protection or services is under the court's jurisdiction, the court shall ensure that reasonable efforts including culturally appropriate services by the social service agency are made to prevent placement or to eliminate the need for removal and to reunite the child with the child's family at the earliest possible time, consistent with the best interests, safety, and protection of the child. The court may, upon motion and hearing, order the cessation of reasonable efforts if the court finds that provision of services or further services for the purpose of rehabilitation and reunification is futile and therefore unreasonable under the circumstances. In determining reasonable efforts to be made with respect to a child and in making those reasonable efforts, the child's health and safety must be of paramount concern. Reasonable efforts are not required if the court determines that:

(1) a termination of parental rights petition has been filed stating a prima facie case that the parent has subjected the child to egregious harm as defined in section 260.015, subdivision 29, or the parental rights of the parent to a sibling have been terminated involuntarily; or

(2) a determination not to proceed with a termination of parental rights petition on these grounds was made under section 260.221, subdivision 1b, paragraph (b), and a permanency hearing is held within 30 days of the determination.

In the case of an Indian child, in proceedings under sections 260.172, 260.191, and 260.221 the juvenile court must make findings and conclusions consistent with the Indian Child Welfare Act of 1978, United States Code, title 25, section 1901 et seq., as to the provision of active efforts. If a child is under the court's delinquency jurisdiction, it shall be the duty of the court to ensure that reasonable efforts are made to reunite the child with the child's family at the earliest possible time, consistent with the best interests of the child and the safety of the public.

(b) "Reasonable efforts" means the exercise of due diligence by the responsible social service agency to use appropriate and available services to meet the needs of the child and the child's family in order to prevent removal of the child from the child's family; or upon removal, services to eliminate the need for removal and reunite the family. Services may include those listed under section 256F.07, subdivision 3, and other appropriate services available in the community. The social service agency has the burden of demonstrating that it has made reasonable efforts or that provision of services or further services for the purpose of rehabilitation and reunification is futile and therefore unreasonable un-

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der the circumstances. Reunification of a surviving child with a parent is not required if the parent has been convicted of:

(1) a violation of, or an attempt or conspiracy to commit a violation of, sections 609.185 to 609.20; 609.222, subdivision 2; or 609.223 in regard to another child of the parent;

(2) a violation of section 609.222, subdivision 2; or 609.223, in regard to the surviving child; or

(3) a violation of, or an attempt or conspiracy to commit a violation of, United States Code, title 18, section 1111(a) or 1112(a), in regard to another child of the parent.

(c) The juvenile court, in proceedings under sections 260.172, 260.191, and 260.221 shall make findings and conclusions as to the provision of reasonable efforts. When determining whether reasonable efforts have been made, the court shall consider whether services to the child and family were:

- (1) relevant to the safety and protection of the child;
- (2) adequate to meet the needs of the child and family;
- (3) culturally appropriate;
- (4) available and accessible;
- (5) consistent and timely; and
- (6) realistic under the circumstances.

In the alternative, the court may determine that provision of services or further services for the purpose of rehabilitation is futile and therefore unreasonable under the circumstances or that reasonable efforts are not required as provided in paragraph (a).

(d) This section does not prevent out-of-home placement for treatment of a child with a mental disability when the child's diagnostic assessment or individual treatment plan indicates that appropriate and necessary treatment cannot be effectively provided outside of a residential or inpatient treatment program.

(e) If continuation of reasonable efforts described in paragraph (b) is determined to be inconsistent with the permanency plan for the child, reasonable efforts must be made to place the child in a timely manner in accordance with the permanency plan and to complete whatever steps are necessary to finalize the permanency plan for the child.

(f) Reasonable efforts to place a child for adoption or in another permanent placement may be made concurrently with reasonable efforts as described in paragraphs (a) and (b).

Sec. 25. Minnesota Statutes 1997 Supplement, section 260.015, subdivision 2a, is amended to read:

Subd. 2a. **CHILD IN NEED OF PROTECTION OR SERVICES.** "Child in need of protection or services" means a child who is in need of protection or services because the child:

- (1) is abandoned or without parent, guardian, or custodian;

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(2)(i) has been a victim of physical or sexual abuse, (ii) resides with or has resided with a victim of domestic child abuse as defined in subdivision 24, (iii) resides with or would reside with a perpetrator of domestic child abuse or child abuse as defined in subdivision 28, or (iv) is a victim of emotional maltreatment as defined in subdivision 5a;

(3) is without necessary food, clothing, shelter, education, or other required care for the child's physical or mental health or morals because the child's parent, guardian, or custodian is unable or unwilling to provide that care;

(4) is without the special care made necessary by a physical, mental, or emotional condition because the child's parent, guardian, or custodian is unable or unwilling to provide that care;

(5) is medically neglected, which includes, but is not limited to, the withholding of medically indicated treatment from a disabled infant with a life-threatening condition. The term "withholding of medically indicated treatment" means the failure to respond to the infant's life-threatening conditions by providing treatment, including appropriate nutrition, hydration, and medication which, in the treating physician's or physicians' reasonable medical judgment, will be most likely to be effective in ameliorating or correcting all conditions, except that the term does not include the failure to provide treatment other than appropriate nutrition, hydration, or medication to an infant when, in the treating physician's or physicians' reasonable medical judgment:

(i) the infant is chronically and irreversibly comatose;

(ii) the provision of the treatment would merely prolong dying, not be effective in ameliorating or correcting all of the infant's life-threatening conditions, or otherwise be futile in terms of the survival of the infant; or

(iii) the provision of the treatment would be virtually futile in terms of the survival of the infant and the treatment itself under the circumstances would be inhumane;

(6) is one whose parent, guardian, or other custodian for good cause desires to be relieved of the child's care and custody;

(7) has been placed for adoption or care in violation of law;

(8) is without proper parental care because of the emotional, mental, or physical disability, or state of immaturity of the child's parent, guardian, or other custodian;

(9) is one whose behavior, condition, or environment is such as to be injurious or dangerous to the child or others. An injurious or dangerous environment may include, but is not limited to, the exposure of a child to criminal activity in the child's home;

(10) is experiencing growth delays, which may be referred to as failure to thrive, that have been diagnosed by a physician and are due to parental neglect;

(11) has engaged in prostitution as defined in section 609.321, subdivision 9;

~~(10)~~ (12) has committed a delinquent act before becoming ten years old;

~~(11)~~ (13) is a runaway;

~~(12)~~ (14) is an habitual truant;

~~(13)~~ (15) has been found incompetent to proceed or has been found not guilty by reason of mental illness or mental deficiency in connection with a delinquency proceed-

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ing, a certification under section 260.125, an extended jurisdiction juvenile prosecution, or a proceeding involving a juvenile petty offense;

(14) (16) is one whose custodial parent's parental rights to another child have been involuntarily terminated within the past five years; or

(15) (17) has been found by the court to have committed domestic abuse perpetrated by a minor under Laws 1997, chapter 239, article 10, sections 2 to 26, has been ordered excluded from the child's parent's home by an order for protection/minor respondent, and the parent or guardian is either unwilling or unable to provide an alternative safe living arrangement for the child.

Sec. 26. Minnesota Statutes 1997 Supplement, section 260.015, subdivision 29, is amended to read:

Subd. 29. **EGREGIOUS HARM.** "Egregious harm" means the infliction of bodily harm to a child or neglect of a child which demonstrates a grossly inadequate ability to provide minimally adequate parental care. The egregious harm need not have occurred in the state or in the county where a termination of parental rights action is otherwise properly venued. Egregious harm includes, but is not limited to:

(1) conduct towards a child that constitutes a violation of sections 609.185 to 609.21, 609.222, subdivision 2, 609.223, or any other similar law of any other state;

(2) the infliction of "substantial bodily harm" to a child, as defined in section 609.02, subdivision 8;

(3) conduct towards a child that constitutes felony malicious punishment of a child under section 609.377;

(4) conduct towards a child that constitutes felony unreasonable restraint of a child under section 609.255, subdivision 3;

(5) conduct towards a child that constitutes felony neglect or endangerment of a child under section 609.378;

(6) conduct towards a child that constitutes assault under section 609.221, 609.222, or 609.223;

(7) conduct towards a child that constitutes solicitation, inducement, or promotion of prostitution under section 609.322;

(8) conduct towards a child that constitutes receiving profit derived from prostitution under section 609.323; or

(9) conduct toward a child that constitutes a violation of murder or voluntary manslaughter as defined by United States Code, title 18, section 1111(a) or 1112(a); or

(10) conduct toward a child that constitutes aiding or abetting, attempting, conspiring, or soliciting to commit a murder or voluntary manslaughter that constitutes a violation of United States Code, title 18, section 1111(a) or 1112(a).

Sec. 27. Minnesota Statutes 1996, section 260.141, is amended by adding a subdivision to read:

Subd. 4. **NOTICE TO FOSTER PARENTS AND PREADOPTIVE PARENTS AND RELATIVES.** The foster parents, if any, of a child and any preadoptive parent or

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relative providing care for the child must be provided notice of and an opportunity to be heard in any review or hearing to be held with respect to the child. Any other relative may also request, and must be granted, a notice and the opportunity to be heard under this section. This subdivision does not require that a foster parent, preadoptive parent, or relative providing care for the child be made a party to a review or hearing solely on the basis of the notice and opportunity to be heard.

Sec. 28. Minnesota Statutes 1997 Supplement, section 260.161, subdivision 2, is amended to read:

Subd. 2. **PUBLIC INSPECTION OF RECORDS.** ~~Except as otherwise provided in this section, and except for (a) Legal records arising from proceedings or portions of proceedings that are public under section 260.155, subdivision 1, are open to public inspection.~~

(b) The following records from proceedings or portions of proceedings involving a child in need of protection or services that are open to the public as authorized by supreme court order and court rules are accessible to the public unless the court determines that access should be restricted because of the personal nature of the information:

- (1) the summons and petition;
- (2) affidavits of publication and service;
- (3) certificates of representation;
- (4) court orders;
- (5) hearing and trial notices, witness lists, and subpoenas;
- (6) motions and legal memoranda;
- (7) exhibits introduced at hearings or trial that are not inaccessible under paragraph (c); and
- (8) birth certificates.

(c) The following records are not accessible to the public under paragraph (b):

- (1) written, audiotaped, or videotaped information from the social service agency, except to the extent the information appears in the petition, court orders, or other documents that are accessible under paragraph (b);
- (2) child protection intake or screening notes;
- (3) documents identifying reporters of maltreatment, unless the names and other identifying information are redacted;
- (4) guardian ad litem reports;
- (5) victim statements and addresses and telephone numbers;
- (6) documents identifying nonparty witnesses under the age of 18, unless the names and other identifying information are redacted;
- (7) transcripts of testimony taken during closed hearing;

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- (8) fingerprinting materials;
- (9) psychological, psychiatric, and chemical dependency evaluations;
- (10) presentence evaluations of juveniles and probation reports;
- (11) medical records and test results;
- (12) reports issued by sexual predator programs;
- (13) diversion records of juveniles;
- (14) any document which the court, upon its own motion or upon motion of a party, orders inaccessible to serve the best interests of the child; and
- (15) any other records that are not accessible to the public under rules developed by the courts.

In addition, records that are accessible to the public under paragraph (b) become inaccessible to the public if one year has elapsed since either the proceeding was dismissed or the court's jurisdiction over the matter was terminated.

(d) Except as otherwise provided by this section, none of the records of the juvenile court and none of the records relating to an appeal from a nonpublic juvenile court proceeding, except the written appellate opinion, shall be open to public inspection or their contents disclosed except (a) by order of a court, (b) as required by sections 245A.04, 611A.03, 611A.04, 611A.06, and 629.73, or (c) the name of a juvenile who is the subject of a delinquency petition shall be released to the victim of the alleged delinquent act upon the victim's request; unless it reasonably appears that the request is prompted by a desire on the part of the requester to engage in unlawful activities. The records of juvenile probation officers and county home schools are records of the court for the purposes of this subdivision. Court services data relating to delinquent acts that are contained in records of the juvenile court may be released as allowed under section 13.84, subdivision 5a. This subdivision applies to all proceedings under this chapter, including appeals from orders of the juvenile court, except that this subdivision does not apply to proceedings under section 260.255, 260.261, or 260.315 when the proceeding involves an adult defendant. The court shall maintain the confidentiality of adoption files and records in accordance with the provisions of laws relating to adoptions. In juvenile court proceedings any report or social history furnished to the court shall be open to inspection by the attorneys of record and the guardian ad litem a reasonable time before it is used in connection with any proceeding before the court.

(e) When a judge of a juvenile court, or duly authorized agent of the court, determines under a proceeding under this chapter that a child has violated a state or local law, ordinance, or regulation pertaining to the operation of a motor vehicle on streets and highways, except parking violations, the judge or agent shall immediately report the violation to the commissioner of public safety. The report must be made on a form provided by the department of public safety and must contain the information required under section 169.95.

Sec. 29. Minnesota Statutes 1996, section 260.172, subdivision 1, is amended to read:

Subdivision 1. **HEARING AND RELEASE REQUIREMENTS.** (a) If a child was taken into custody under section 260.165, subdivision 1, clause (a) or (c)(2), the

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court shall hold a hearing within 72 hours of the time the child was taken into custody, excluding Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays, to determine whether the child should continue in custody.

(b) In all other cases, the court shall hold a detention hearing:

(1) within 36 hours of the time the child was taken into custody, excluding Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays, if the child is being held at a juvenile secure detention facility or shelter care facility; or

(2) within 24 hours of the time the child was taken into custody, excluding Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays, if the child is being held at an adult jail or municipal lockup.

(c) Unless there is reason to believe that the child would endanger self or others, not return for a court hearing, run away from the child's parent, guardian, or custodian or otherwise not remain in the care or control of the person to whose lawful custody the child is released, or that the child's health or welfare would be immediately endangered, the child shall be released to the custody of a parent, guardian, custodian, or other suitable person, subject to reasonable conditions of release including, but not limited to, a requirement that the child undergo a chemical use assessment as provided in section 260.151, subdivision 1. In determining whether the child's health or welfare would be immediately endangered, the court shall consider whether the child would reside with a perpetrator of domestic child abuse. In a proceeding regarding a child in need of protection or services, the court, before determining whether a child should continue in custody, shall also make a determination, consistent with section 260.012 as to whether reasonable efforts, or in the case of an Indian child, active efforts, according to the Indian Child Welfare Act of 1978, United States Code, title 25, section 1912(d), were made to prevent placement or to reunite the child with the child's family, or that reasonable efforts were not possible. The court shall also determine whether there are available services that would prevent the need for further detention.

If the court finds the social services agency's preventive or reunification efforts have not been reasonable but further preventive or reunification efforts could not permit the child to safely remain at home, the court may nevertheless authorize or continue the removal of the child.

The court may determine at the detention hearing, or at any time prior to an adjudicatory hearing, that reasonable efforts are not required because the facts, if proved, will demonstrate that the parent has subjected the child to egregious harm as defined in section 260.015, subdivision 29, or the parental rights of the parent to a sibling of the child have been terminated involuntarily.

Sec. 30. Minnesota Statutes 1997 Supplement, section 260.191, subdivision 1, is amended to read:

Subdivision 1. **DISPOSITIONS.** (a) If the court finds that the child is in need of protection or services or neglected and in foster care, it shall enter an order making any of the following dispositions of the case:

(1) place the child under the protective supervision of the local social services agency or child-placing agency in the child's own home under conditions prescribed by the court directed to the correction of the child's need for protection or services;

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(2) transfer legal custody to one of the following:

- (i) a child-placing agency; or
- (ii) the local social services agency.

In placing a child whose custody has been transferred under this paragraph, the agencies shall follow the order of preference stated in section 260.181, subdivision 3;

(3) if the child is in need of special treatment and care for reasons of physical or mental health, the court may order the child's parent, guardian, or custodian to provide it. If the parent, guardian, or custodian fails or is unable to provide this treatment or care, the court may order it provided. The court shall not transfer legal custody of the child for the purpose of obtaining special treatment or care solely because the parent is unable to provide the treatment or care. If the court's order for mental health treatment is based on a diagnosis made by a treatment professional, the court may order that the diagnosing professional not provide the treatment to the child if it finds that such an order is in the child's best interests; or

(4) if the court believes that the child has sufficient maturity and judgment and that it is in the best interests of the child, the court may order a child 16 years old or older to be allowed to live independently, either alone or with others as approved by the court under supervision the court considers appropriate, if the county board, after consultation with the court, has specifically authorized this dispositional alternative for a child.

(b) If the child was adjudicated in need of protection or services because the child is a runaway or habitual truant, the court may order any of the following dispositions in addition to or as alternatives to the dispositions authorized under paragraph (a):

(1) counsel the child or the child's parents, guardian, or custodian;

(2) place the child under the supervision of a probation officer or other suitable person in the child's own home under conditions prescribed by the court, including reasonable rules for the child's conduct and the conduct of the parents, guardian, or custodian, designed for the physical, mental, and moral well-being and behavior of the child; or with the consent of the commissioner of corrections, place the child in a group foster care facility which is under the commissioner's management and supervision;

(3) subject to the court's supervision, transfer legal custody of the child to one of the following:

(i) a reputable person of good moral character. No person may receive custody of two or more unrelated children unless licensed to operate a residential program under sections 245A.01 to 245A.16; or

(ii) a county probation officer for placement in a group foster home established under the direction of the juvenile court and licensed pursuant to section 241.021;

(4) require the child to pay a fine of up to \$100. The court shall order payment of the fine in a manner that will not impose undue financial hardship upon the child;

(5) require the child to participate in a community service project;

(6) order the child to undergo a chemical dependency evaluation and, if warranted by the evaluation, order participation by the child in a drug awareness program or an inpatient or outpatient chemical dependency treatment program;

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(7) if the court believes that it is in the best interests of the child and of public safety that the child's driver's license or instruction permit be canceled, the court may order the commissioner of public safety to cancel the child's license or permit for any period up to the child's 18th birthday. If the child does not have a driver's license or permit, the court may order a denial of driving privileges for any period up to the child's 18th birthday. The court shall forward an order issued under this clause to the commissioner, who shall cancel the license or permit or deny driving privileges without a hearing for the period specified by the court. At any time before the expiration of the period of cancellation or denial, the court may, for good cause, order the commissioner of public safety to allow the child to apply for a license or permit, and the commissioner shall so authorize;

(8) order that the child's parent or legal guardian deliver the child to school at the beginning of each school day for a period of time specified by the court; or

(9) require the child to perform any other activities or participate in any other treatment programs deemed appropriate by the court.

To the extent practicable, the court shall enter a disposition order the same day it makes a finding that a child is in need of protection or services or neglected and in foster care, but in no event more than 15 days after the finding unless the court finds that the best interests of the child will be served by granting a delay. If the child was under eight years of age at the time the petition was filed, the disposition order must be entered within ten days of the finding and the court may not grant a delay unless good cause is shown and the court finds the best interests of the child will be served by the delay.

(c) If a child who is 14 years of age or older is adjudicated in need of protection or services because the child is a habitual truant and truancy procedures involving the child were previously dealt with by a school attendance review board or county attorney mediation program under section 260A.06 or 260A.07, the court shall order a cancellation or denial of driving privileges under paragraph (b), clause (7), for any period up to the child's 18th birthday.

(d) In the case of a child adjudicated in need of protection or services because the child has committed domestic abuse and been ordered excluded from the child's parent's home, the court shall dismiss jurisdiction if the court, at any time, finds the parent is able or willing to provide an alternative safe living arrangement for the child, as defined in Laws 1997, chapter 239, article 10, section 2.

Sec. 31. Minnesota Statutes 1997 Supplement, section 260.191, subdivision 1a, is amended to read:

Subd. 1a. **WRITTEN FINDINGS.** Any order for a disposition authorized under this section shall contain written findings of fact to support the disposition ordered, and shall also set forth in writing the following information:

- (a) Why the best interests of the child are served by the disposition ordered;
- (b) What alternative dispositions were considered by the court and why such dispositions were not appropriate in the instant case;
- (c) How the court's disposition complies with the requirements of section 260.181, subdivision 3; and

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(d) Whether reasonable efforts consistent with section 260.012 were made to prevent or eliminate the necessity of the child's removal and to reunify the family after removal. The court's findings must include a brief description of what preventive and reunification efforts were made and why further efforts could not have prevented or eliminated the necessity of removal or that reasonable efforts were not required under section 260.012 or 260.172, subdivision 1.

If the court finds that the social services agency's preventive or reunification efforts have not been reasonable but that further preventive or reunification efforts could not permit the child to safely remain at home, the court may nevertheless authorize or continue the removal of the child.

Sec. 32. Minnesota Statutes 1997 Supplement, section 260.191, subdivision 3a, is amended to read:

Subd. 3a. **COURT REVIEW OF OUT-OF-HOME PLACEMENTS.** (a) If the court places a child in a residential facility, as defined in section 257.071, subdivision 1, the court shall review the out-of-home placement at least every six months to determine whether continued out-of-home placement is necessary and appropriate or whether the child should be returned home. The court shall review agency efforts pursuant to section 257.072, subdivision 1, and order that the efforts continue if the agency has failed to perform the duties under that section. The court shall review the case plan and may modify the case plan as provided under subdivisions 1e and 2. If the court orders continued out-of-home placement, the court shall notify the parents of the provisions of subdivision 3b.

(b) When the court determines that a permanent placement hearing is necessary because there is a likelihood that the child will not return to a parent's care, the court may authorize the agency with custody of the child to send the notice provided in this paragraph to any adult with whom the child is currently residing, any adult with whom the child has resided for one year or longer in the past, any adult who has maintained a relationship or exercised visitation with the child as identified in the agency case plan for the child or demonstrated an interest in the child, and any relative who has provided a current address to the local social service agency. This notice must not be provided to a parent whose parental rights to the child have been terminated under section 260.221, subdivision 1. The notice must state that a permanent home is sought for the child and that individuals receiving the notice may indicate to the agency within 30 days their interest in providing a permanent home section 257.071, subdivision 1d, paragraph (b), or may modify the requirements of the agency under section 257.071, subdivision 1d, paragraph (b), or may completely relieve the responsible social service agency of the requirements of section 257.071, subdivision 1d, paragraph (b), when the child is placed with an appropriate relative who wishes to provide a permanent home for the child. The actions ordered by the court under this section must be consistent with the best interests, safety, and welfare of the child.

Sec. 33. Minnesota Statutes 1997 Supplement, section 260.191, subdivision 3b, is amended to read:

Subd. 3b. **REVIEW OF COURT ORDERED PLACEMENTS; PERMANENT PLACEMENT DETERMINATION.** (a) The court shall conduct a hearing to determine the permanent status of a child not later than 12 months after the child is placed out of the home of the parent, except that if the child was under eight years of age at the time

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the petition was filed, the hearing must be conducted no later than six months after the child is placed out of the home of the parent.

For purposes of this subdivision, the date of the child's placement out of the home of the parent is the earlier of the first court-ordered placement or the first court-approved placement under section 257.071, subdivision 3, of a child who had been in voluntary placement 60 days after the date on which the child has been voluntarily placed out of the home.

For purposes of this subdivision, 12 months is calculated as follows:

(1) during the pendency of a petition alleging that a child is in need of protection or services, all time periods when a child is placed out of the home of the parent are cumulated;

(2) if a child has been placed out of the home of the parent within the previous five years in connection with one or more prior petitions for a child in need of protection or services, the lengths of all prior time periods when the child was placed out of the home within the previous five years and under the current petition, are cumulated. If a child under this clause has been out of the home for 12 months or more, the court, if it is in the best interests of the child, may extend the total time the child may continue out of the home under the current petition up to an additional six months before making a permanency determination.

(b) Not later than ten days prior to this hearing, the responsible social service agency shall file pleadings to establish the basis for the permanent placement determination. Notice of the hearing and copies of the pleadings must be provided pursuant to section 260.141. If a termination of parental rights petition is filed before the date required for the permanency planning determination, no hearing need be conducted under this subdivision. The court shall determine whether the child is to be returned home or, if not, what permanent placement is consistent with the child's best interests. The "best interests of the child" means all relevant factors to be considered and evaluated.

(c) At a hearing under this subdivision, if the child was under eight years of age at the time the petition was filed alleging the child in need of protection or services, the court shall review the progress of the case and the case plan, including the provision of services. The court may order the local social service agency to show cause why it should not file a termination of parental rights petition. Cause may include, but is not limited to, the following conditions:

(1) the parents or guardians have maintained regular contact with the child, the parents are complying with the court-ordered case plan, and the child would benefit from continuing this relationship;

(2) grounds for termination under section 260.221 do not exist; or

(3) the permanent plan for the child is transfer of permanent legal and physical custody to a relative.

(d) If the child is not returned to the home, the dispositions available for permanent placement determination are:

(1) permanent legal and physical custody to a relative in the best interests of the child. In transferring permanent legal and physical custody to a relative, the juvenile

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court shall follow the standards and procedures applicable under chapter 257 or 518. An order establishing permanent legal or physical custody under this subdivision must be filed with the family court. A transfer of legal and physical custody includes responsibility for the protection, education, care, and control of the child and decision making on behalf of the child. The social service agency may petition on behalf of the proposed custodian;

(2) termination of parental rights and adoption; the social service agency shall file a petition for termination of parental rights under section 260.231 and all the requirements of sections 260.221 to 260.245 remain applicable. An adoption completed subsequent to a determination under this subdivision may include an agreement for communication or contact under section 259.58; or

(3) long-term foster care; transfer of legal custody and adoption are preferred permanency options for a child who cannot return home. The court may order a child into long-term foster care only if it finds that neither an award of legal and physical custody to a relative, nor termination of parental rights nor adoption is in the child's best interests. Further, the court may only order long-term foster care for the child under this section if it finds the following:

(i) the child has reached age 12 and reasonable efforts by the responsible social service agency have failed to locate an adoptive family for the child; or

(ii) the child is a sibling of a child described in clause (i) and the siblings have a significant positive relationship and are ordered into the same long-term foster care home; or

(4) foster care for a specified period of time may be ordered only if:

(i) the sole basis for an adjudication that a child is in need of protection or services is that the child is a runaway, is an habitual truant, or committed a delinquent act before age ten; and

(ii) the court finds that foster care for a specified period of time is in the best interests of the child.

~~(d)~~ (e) In ordering a permanent placement of a child, the court must be governed by the best interests of the child, including a review of the relationship between the child and relatives and the child and other important persons with whom the child has resided or had significant contact.

(e) (f) Once a permanent placement determination has been made and permanent placement has been established, further court reviews and dispositional hearings are only necessary if the placement is made under paragraph (e) (d), clause (4), review is otherwise required by federal law, an adoption has not yet been finalized, or there is a disruption of the permanent or long-term placement.

~~(f)~~ (g) An order under this subdivision must include the following detailed findings:

(1) how the child's best interests are served by the order;

(2) the nature and extent of the responsible social service agency's reasonable efforts, or, in the case of an Indian child, active efforts, to reunify the child with the parent or parents;

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(3) the parent's or parents' efforts and ability to use services to correct the conditions which led to the out-of-home placement;

(4) whether the conditions which led to the out-of-home placement have been corrected so that the child can return home; and

(5) if the child cannot be returned home, whether there is a substantial probability of the child being able to return home in the next six months.

(g) (h) An order for permanent legal and physical custody of a child may be modified under sections 518.18 and 518.185. The social service agency is a party to the proceeding and must receive notice. An order for long-term foster care is reviewable upon motion and a showing by the parent of a substantial change in the parent's circumstances such that the parent could provide appropriate care for the child and that removal of the child from the child's permanent placement and the return to the parent's care would be in the best interest of the child.

Sec. 34. Minnesota Statutes 1996, section 260.221, as amended by Laws 1997, chapters 218, sections 10 and 11, and 239, article 6, section 30, is amended to read:

**260.221 GROUND~~S~~ FOR TERMINATION OF PARENTAL RIGHTS.**

Subdivision 1. **VOLUNTARY AND INVOLUNTARY.** The juvenile court may upon petition, terminate all rights of a parent to a child:

(a) with the written consent of a parent who for good cause desires to terminate parental rights; or

(b) if it finds that one or more of the following conditions exist:

(1) that the parent has abandoned the child; ~~or~~

(2) that the parent has substantially, continuously, or repeatedly refused or neglected to comply with the duties imposed upon that parent by the parent and child relationship, including but not limited to providing the child with necessary food, clothing, shelter, education, and other care and control necessary for the child's physical, mental, or emotional health and development, if the parent is physically and financially able, and reasonable efforts by the social service agency have failed to correct the conditions that formed the basis of the petition; ~~or~~

(3) that a parent has been ordered to contribute to the support of the child or financial aid in the child's birth and has continuously failed to do so without good cause. This clause shall not be construed to state a grounds for termination of parental rights of a non-custodial parent if that parent has not been ordered to or cannot financially contribute to the support of the child or aid in the child's birth; ~~or~~

(4) that a parent is palpably unfit to be a party to the parent and child relationship because of a consistent pattern of specific conduct before the child or of specific conditions directly relating to the parent and child relationship either of which are determined by the court to be of a duration or nature that renders the parent unable, for the reasonably foreseeable future, to care appropriately for the ongoing physical, mental, or emotional needs of the child. It is presumed that a parent is palpably unfit to be a party to the parent and child relationship upon a showing that:

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(i) the child was adjudicated in need of protection or services due to circumstances described in section 260.015, subdivision 2a, clause (1), (2), (3), (5), or (8); and

(ii) the parent's parental rights to one or more other children were involuntarily terminated under clause (1), (2), (4), or (7), or under clause (5) if the child was initially determined to be in need of protection or services due to circumstances described in section 260.015, subdivision 2a, clause (1), (2), (3), (5), or (8); or

(5) that following upon a determination of neglect or dependency, or of a child's need for protection or services, reasonable efforts, under the direction of the court, have failed to correct the conditions leading to the determination. It is presumed that reasonable efforts under this clause have failed upon a showing that:

(i) a child has resided out of the parental home under court order for a cumulative period of more than one year within a five-year period following an adjudication of dependency, neglect, need for protection or services under section 260.015, subdivision 2a, clause (1), (2), (3), (6), (8), or (9), or neglected and in foster care, and an order for disposition under section 260.191, including adoption of the case plan required by section 257.071;

(ii) conditions leading to the determination will not be corrected within the reasonably foreseeable future. It is presumed that conditions leading to a child's out-of-home placement will not be corrected in the reasonably foreseeable future upon a showing that the parent or parents have not substantially complied with the court's orders and a reasonable case plan, and the conditions which led to the out-of-home placement have not been corrected; and

(iii) reasonable efforts have been made by the social service agency to rehabilitate the parent and reunite the family.

This clause does not prohibit the termination of parental rights prior to one year after a child has been placed out of the home.

It is also presumed that reasonable efforts have failed under this clause upon a showing that:

(i) the parent has been diagnosed as chemically dependent by a professional certified to make the diagnosis;

(ii) the parent has been required by a case plan to participate in a chemical dependency treatment program;

(iii) the treatment programs offered to the parent were culturally, linguistically, and clinically appropriate;

(iv) the parent has either failed two or more times to successfully complete a treatment program or has refused at two or more separate meetings with a caseworker to participate in a treatment program; and

(v) the parent continues to abuse chemicals.

Provided, that this presumption applies only to parents required by a case plan to participate in a chemical dependency treatment program on or after July 1, 1990; or

(6) that a child has experienced egregious harm in the parent's care which is of a nature, duration, or chronicity that indicates a lack of regard for the child's well-being,

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such that a reasonable person would believe it contrary to the best interest of the child or of any child to be in the parent's care; or

(7) that in the case of a child born to a mother who was not married to the child's father when the child was conceived nor when the child was born the person is not entitled to notice of an adoption hearing under section 259.49 and the person has not registered with the putative fathers' adoption registry under section 259.52; or

(8) that the child is neglected and in foster care; or

(9) that the parent has been convicted of a crime listed in section 260.012, paragraph (b), clauses (1) to (3).

In an action involving an American Indian child, sections 257.35 to 257.3579 and the Indian Child Welfare Act, United States Code, title 25, sections 1901 to 1923, control to the extent that the provisions of this section are inconsistent with those laws.

Subd. 1a. **EVIDENCE OF ABANDONMENT.** For purposes of subdivision 1, paragraph (b), clause (1):

(a) Abandonment is presumed when:

(1) the parent has had no contact with the child on a regular basis and not demonstrated consistent interest in the child's well-being for six months; and

(2) the social service agency has made reasonable efforts to facilitate contact, unless the parent establishes that an extreme financial or physical hardship or treatment for mental disability or chemical dependency or other good cause prevented the parent from making contact with the child. This presumption does not apply to children whose custody has been determined under chapter 257 or 518. ~~The court is not prohibited from finding abandonment in the absence of this presumption; or~~

(2) the child is under two years of age and has been deserted by the parent under circumstances that show an intent not to return to care for the child.

The court is not prohibited from finding abandonment in the absence of the presumptions in clauses (1) and (2).

(b) The following are prima facie evidence of abandonment where adoption proceedings are pending and there has been a showing that the person was not entitled to notice of an adoption proceeding under section 259.49:

(1) failure to register with the putative fathers' adoption registry under section 259.52; or

(2) if the person registered with the putative fathers' adoption registry under section 259.52:

(i) filing a denial of paternity within 30 days of receipt of notice under section 259.52, subdivision 8;

(ii) failing to timely file an intent to claim parental rights with entry of appearance form within 30 days of receipt of notice under section 259.52, subdivision 10; or

(iii) timely filing an intent to claim parental rights with entry of appearance form within 30 days of receipt of notice under section 259.52, subdivision 10, but failing to

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initiate a paternity action within 30 days of receiving the putative fathers' adoption registry notice where there has been no showing of good cause for the delay.

**Subd. 1b. REQUIRED TERMINATION OF PARENTAL RIGHTS.** (a) The county attorney shall file a termination of parental rights petition within 30 days of a child's placement in out-of-home care if the child has been subjected to egregious harm as defined in section 260.015, subdivision 29, is the sibling of another child of the parent who was subjected to egregious harm, or is an abandoned infant as defined in subdivision 1a, paragraph (a), clause (2). The local social services agency shall concurrently identify, recruit, process, and approve an adoptive family for the child. If a termination of parental rights petition has been filed by another party the local social services agency shall be joined as a party to the petition. If criminal charges have been filed against a parent arising out of the conduct alleged to constitute egregious harm, the county attorney shall determine which matter should proceed to trial first, consistent with the best interests of the child and subject to the defendant's right to a speedy trial.

(b) This requirement does not apply if the county attorney determines and files with the court its determination that a transfer of permanent legal and physical custody to a relative is in the best interests of the child or there is a compelling reason documented by the local social services agency that filing the petition would not be in the best interests of the child.

**Subd. 1c. CURRENT FOSTER CARE CHILDREN.** The county attorney shall file a termination of parental rights petition or other permanent placement proceeding under section 260.191, subdivision 3b, for all children determined to be in need of protection or services who are placed in out-of-home care for reasons other than care or treatment of the child's disability, and who are in out-of-home placement on the day following final enactment of this section, and have been in out-of-home care for 15 of the most recent 22 months.

**Subd. 2. ADOPTIVE PARENT.** For purposes of subdivision 1, clause (a), an adoptive parent may not terminate parental rights to an adopted child for a reason that would not apply to a birth parent seeking termination of parental rights to a child under subdivision 1, clause (a).

**Subd. 3. WHEN PRIOR FINDING REQUIRED.** For purposes of subdivision 1, clause (b), no prior judicial finding of dependency, neglect, need for protection or services, or neglected and in foster care is required, except as provided in subdivision 1, clause (b), item (5).

**Subd. 4. BEST INTERESTS OF CHILD PARAMOUNT.** In any proceeding under this section, the best interests of the child must be the paramount consideration, provided that the conditions in subdivision 1, clause (a), or at least one condition in subdivision 1, clause (b), are found by the court. In proceedings involving an American Indian child, as defined in section 257.351, subdivision 6, the best interests of the child must be determined consistent with the Indian Child Welfare Act of 1978, United States Code, title 25, section 1901, et seq. Where the interests of parent and child conflict, the interests of the child are paramount.

**Subd. 5. FINDINGS REGARDING REASONABLE EFFORTS.** In any proceeding under this section, the court shall make specific findings:

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(1) regarding the nature and extent of efforts made by the social service agency to rehabilitate the parent and reunite the family;

(2) that provision of services or further services for the purpose of rehabilitation and reunification is futile and therefore unreasonable under the circumstances; or

(3) that reasonable efforts at reunification are not required because the parent has been convicted of a crime listed in section 260.012, paragraph (b), clauses (1) to (3) as provided under section 260.012.

Sec. 35. Minnesota Statutes 1997 Supplement, section 260.241, subdivision 3, is amended to read:

Subd. 3. **ORDER; RETENTION OF JURISDICTION.** (a) A certified copy of the findings and the order terminating parental rights, and a summary of the court's information concerning the child shall be furnished by the court to the commissioner or the agency to which guardianship is transferred. The orders shall be on a document separate from the findings. The court shall furnish the individual to whom guardianship is transferred a copy of the order terminating parental rights.

(b) The court shall retain jurisdiction in a case where adoption is the intended permanent placement disposition. The guardian ad litem and counsel for the child shall continue on the case until an adoption decree is entered. A hearing must be held every 90 days following termination of parental rights for the court to review progress toward an adoptive placement and the specific recruitment efforts the agency has taken to find an adoptive family or other placement living arrangement for the child and to finalize the adoption or other permanency plan.

(c) The court shall retain jurisdiction in a case where long-term foster care is the permanent disposition. The guardian ad litem and counsel for the child must be dismissed from the case on the effective date of the permanent placement order. However, the foster parent and the child, if of sufficient age, must be informed how they may contact a guardian ad litem if the matter is subsequently returned to court.

Sec. 36. Minnesota Statutes 1996, section 626.556, is amended by adding a subdivision to read:

Subd. 11d. **DISCLOSURE IN CHILD FATALITY OR NEAR FATALITY CASES.** (a) The definitions in this paragraph apply to this section.

(1) "Child fatality" means the death of a child from suspected abuse, neglect, or maltreatment.

(2) "Near fatality" means a case in which a physician determines that a child is in serious or critical condition as the result of sickness or injury caused by suspected abuse, neglect, or maltreatment.

(3) "Findings and information" means a written summary described in paragraph (c) of actions taken or services rendered by a local social services agency following receipt of a report.

(b) Notwithstanding any other provision of law and subject to this subdivision, a public agency shall disclose to the public, upon request, the findings and information related to a child fatality or near fatality if:

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(1) a person is criminally charged with having caused the child fatality or near fatality; or

(2) a county attorney certifies that a person would have been charged with having caused the child fatality or near fatality but for that person's death.

(c) Findings and information disclosed under this subdivision consist of a written summary that includes any of the following information the agency is able to provide:

(1) the dates, outcomes, and results of any actions taken or services rendered;

(2) the results of any review of the state child mortality review panel, a local child mortality review panel, a local community child protection team, or any public agency; and

(3) confirmation of the receipt of all reports, accepted or not accepted, by the local welfare agency for assessment of suspected child abuse, neglect, or maltreatment, including confirmation that investigations were conducted, the results of the investigations, a description of the conduct of the most recent investigation and the services rendered, and a statement of the basis for the agency's determination.

(d) Nothing in this subdivision authorizes access to the private data in the custody of a local social services agency, or the disclosure to the public of the records or content of any psychiatric, psychological, or therapeutic evaluations, or the disclosure of information that would reveal the identities of persons who provided information related to suspected abuse, neglect, or maltreatment of the child.

(e) A person whose request is denied may apply to the appropriate court for an order compelling disclosure of all or part of the findings and information of the public agency. The application must set forth, with reasonable particularity, factors supporting the application. The court has jurisdiction to issue these orders. Actions under this section must be set down for immediate hearing, and subsequent proceedings in those actions must be given priority by the appellate courts.

(f) A public agency or its employees acting in good faith in disclosing or declining to disclose information under this section are immune from criminal or civil liability that might otherwise be incurred or imposed for that action.

#### **Sec. 37. INCONSISTENT AMENDMENTS.**

The amendments to Minnesota Statutes in this article prevail over any inconsistent amendments to the same statutes contained in 1998 S.F. No. 3346, if enacted.

#### **Sec. 38. EFFECTIVE DATE.**

This article is effective the day following final enactment, except that:

(1) sections 11 and 32 are effective July 1, 1998;

(2) section 20 is effective retroactive to July 1, 1997, and applies to communication or contact agreements entered into on or after that date; and

(3) section 30 and the provisions of section 33, paragraphs (a) and (c), that apply to children under eight years of age, are effective July 1, 1999.

The amendments to Minnesota Statutes 1997 Supplement, section 260.191, subdivision 1; and the amendments to Minnesota Statutes 1997 Supplement, section 260.191,

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subdivision 3b, paragraphs (a) and (c), relating to children under eight years of age, that are contained in 1998 S.F. No. 3346, if enacted, are effective July 1, 1999.

## ARTICLE 2

### CONCURRENT PERMANENCY PLANNING

Section 1. Minnesota Statutes 1997 Supplement, section 256F.05, subdivision 8, is amended to read:

Subd. 8. **USES OF FAMILY PRESERVATION FUND GRANTS.** (a) A county which has not demonstrated that year that its family preservation core services are developed as provided in subdivision 1a, must use its family preservation fund grant exclusively for family preservation services defined in section 256F.03, subdivision 5, paragraphs (a), (b), (c), and (e).

(b) A county which has demonstrated that year that its family preservation core services are developed becomes eligible either to continue using its family preservation fund grant as provided in paragraph (a), or to exercise the expanded service option under paragraph (c).

(c) The expanded service option permits an eligible county to use its family preservation fund grant for child welfare preventive services. For purposes of this section, child welfare preventive services are those services directed toward a specific child or family that further the goals of section 256F.01 and include assessments, family preservation services, service coordination, community-based treatment, crisis nursery services when the parents retain custody and there is no voluntary placement agreement with a child-placing agency, respite care except when it is provided under a medical assistance waiver, home-based services, and other related services. For purposes of this section, child welfare preventive services shall not include shelter care or other placement services under the authority of the court or public agency to address an emergency. To exercise this option, an eligible county must notify the commissioner in writing of its intention to do so no later than 30 days into the quarter during which it intends to begin or in its county plan, as provided in section 256F.04, subdivision 2. Effective with the first day of that quarter, the county must maintain its base level of expenditures for child welfare preventive services and use the family preservation fund to expand them. The base level of expenditures for a county shall be that established under section 256F.10, subdivision 7. For counties which have no such base established, a comparable base shall be established with the base year being the calendar year ending at least two calendar quarters before the first calendar quarter in which the county exercises its expanded service option. The commissioner shall, at the request of the counties, reduce, suspend, or eliminate either or both of a county's obligations to continue the base level of expenditures and to expand child welfare preventive services under extraordinary circumstances.

(d) Notwithstanding paragraph (a), a county that is participating in the concurrent permanency planning program under section 257.0711 may use its family preservation fund grant for that program.

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**Sec. 2. [257.0711] CONCURRENT PERMANENCY PLANNING.**

Subdivision 1. PROGRAM; GOALS. (a) The commissioner of human services shall establish a program for concurrent permanency planning for child protection services.

(b) Concurrent permanency planning involves a planning process for children who are placed out of the home of their parents pursuant to a court order, or who have been voluntarily placed out of the home by the parents for 60 days or more and who are not developmentally disabled or emotionally handicapped under section 257.071, subdivision 4. The local social service agency shall develop an alternative permanency plan while making reasonable efforts for reunification of the child with the family, if required by section 260.012. The goals of concurrent permanency planning are to:

- (1) achieve early permanency for children;
- (2) decrease children's length of stay in foster care and reduce the number of moves children experience in foster care; and
- (3) develop a group of families who will work towards reunification and also serve as permanent families for children.

Subd. 2. DEVELOPMENT OF GUIDELINES AND PROTOCOLS. The commissioner shall establish guidelines and protocols for social service agencies involved in concurrent permanency planning, including criteria for conducting concurrent permanency planning based on relevant factors such as:

- (1) age of the child and duration of out-of-home placement;
- (2) prognosis for successful reunification with parents;
- (3) availability of relatives and other concerned individuals to provide support or a permanent placement for the child; and
- (4) special needs of the child and other factors affecting the child's best interests.

In developing the guidelines and protocols, the commissioner shall consult with interest groups within the child protection system, including child protection workers, child protection advocates, county attorneys, law enforcement, community service organizations, the councils of color, and the ombudsperson for families.

Subd. 3. PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT AND DISCLOSURE. Concurrent permanency planning programs must include involvement of parents and full disclosure of their rights and responsibilities; goals of concurrent permanency planning; support services that are available for families; permanency options; and the consequences of not complying with case plans.

Subd. 4. TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE. The commissioner of human services shall provide ongoing technical assistance, support, and training for local social service agencies and other individuals and agencies involved in concurrent permanency planning.

Subd. 5. AVAILABILITY OF FUNDING. The requirements of this section relating to concurrent permanency planning are effective only for state fiscal years when aid is distributed under section 256F.05 for concurrent permanency planning.

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### Sec. 3. EVALUATION AND REPORT.

The commissioner shall develop a detailed plan for evaluating concurrent permanency planning programs, based on identifiable goals and factors, including those specified in section 1, subdivision 1. The plan must also include an evaluation of the fiscal impact of concurrent planning, including the effect on costs of out-of-home placement. The evaluation must incorporate input and recommendations from counties. By January 15, 2001, the commissioner shall report to the appropriate committees in the legislature on the operation of the concurrent planning programs and the results of the evaluation under this section.

### Sec. 4. INCONSISTENT AMENDMENTS.

The amendment to Minnesota Statutes 1997 Supplement, section 256F.05, subdivision 8, contained in section 1, prevails over the amendment to Minnesota Statutes 1997 Supplement, section 256F.05, subdivision 8, contained in 1998 S.F. No. 3346, if enacted.

## ARTICLE 3

### CHILD WELFARE SERVICES PLAN

#### Section 1. CHILD WELFARE SERVICES PLAN.

By January 15, 1999, the commissioner of human services shall submit to the legislature a statewide plan for child welfare services consistent with the five-year comprehensive child and family services plan required for title IV-B, 1 and 2 of the Social Security Act. The plan must establish statewide and county-specific performance targets for improved outcomes for the safety, permanency, and well-being of children and families and reform of the service delivery system. The plan must set prioritized goals and measurable objectives for a child and family service continuum that includes family support and family preservation services; child welfare services such as child abuse and neglect prevention, intervention, and treatment services; and services to support reunification, adoption, kinship care, foster care, independent living, or other permanent living arrangement. The plan should set baseline measures and timetables for accomplishment of the goals and include specific legislative, budget, or administrative recommendations necessary to implement the plan. The commissioner should incorporate in the plan baseline data from the semiannual report on children in out-of-home placement required under Minnesota Statutes, section 257.0725, and other data sources related to child welfare services including social service information.

The commissioner of human services shall also submit to the legislature by January 15 of each year a copy of the annual progress and service report of its child and family services plan required by the federal government for child welfare services under title IV-B, 1 and 2 of the Social Security Act. The document will report on specific accomplishments made in meeting the prior year's goals and objectives and describe proposed revisions in the plan's goals, objectives, and training plan.

The commissioner of human services shall make these plans available for public distribution by placing a notice of their availability in the State Register no later than ten days following the date of their submission.

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## ARTICLE 4

## CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES

Section 1. Minnesota Statutes 1996, section 260.191, subdivision 1e, is amended to read:

Subd. 1e. **CASE PLAN.** For each disposition ordered, the court shall order the appropriate agency to prepare a written case plan developed after consultation with any foster parents, and consultation with and participation by the child and the child's parent, guardian, or custodian, guardian ad litem, and tribal representative if the tribe has intervened. The case plan shall comply with the requirements of section 257.071, where applicable. The case plan shall, among other matters, specify the actions to be taken by the child and the child's parent, guardian, foster parent, or custodian to ensure the child's safety and to comply with the court's disposition order, and the services to be offered and provided by the agency to the child and the child's parent, guardian, or custodian. The court shall review the case plan and, upon approving it, incorporate the plan into its disposition order. The court may review and modify the terms of the case plan in the manner provided in subdivision 2. For each disposition ordered, the written case plan shall specify what reasonable efforts shall be provided to the family. The case plan must include a discussion of:

(1) the availability of appropriate prevention and reunification services for the family to safely prevent the removal of the child from the home or to safely reunify the child with the family after removal;

(2) any services or resources that were requested by the child or the child's parent, guardian, foster parent, or custodian since the date of initial adjudication, and whether those services or resources were provided or the basis for denial of the services or resources;

(3) the need of the child and family for care, treatment, or rehabilitation;

(4) the need for participation by the parent, guardian, or custodian in the plan of care for the child;

(5) the visitation rights and obligations of the parent or other relatives, as defined in section 260.181, subdivision 3, during any period when the child is placed outside the home; and

(6) a description of any services that could safely prevent placement or reunify the family if such services were available; and

(7) the need for continued monitoring of the child and family by the appropriate local social services agency once the family has completed all services required in the case plan.

A party has a right to request a court review of the reasonableness of the case plan upon a showing of a substantial change of circumstances.

Sec. 2. Minnesota Statutes 1996, section 626.556, subdivision 10, is amended to read:

Subd. 10. **DUTIES OF LOCAL WELFARE AGENCY AND LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCY UPON RECEIPT OF A REPORT.** (a) If the report al-

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leges neglect, physical abuse, or sexual abuse by a parent, guardian, or individual functioning within the family unit as a person responsible for the child's care, the local welfare agency shall immediately conduct an assessment and offer protective social services for purposes of preventing further abuses, safeguarding and enhancing the welfare of the abused or neglected minor, and preserving family life whenever possible. If the report alleges a violation of a criminal statute involving sexual abuse, physical abuse, or neglect or endangerment, under section 609.378, the local law enforcement agency and local welfare agency shall coordinate the planning and execution of their respective investigation and assessment efforts to avoid a duplication of fact-finding efforts and multiple interviews. Each agency shall prepare a separate report of the results of its investigation. In cases of alleged child maltreatment resulting in death, the local agency may rely on the fact-finding efforts of a law enforcement investigation to make a determination of whether or not maltreatment occurred. When necessary the local welfare agency shall seek authority to remove the child from the custody of a parent, guardian, or adult with whom the child is living. In performing any of these duties, the local welfare agency shall maintain appropriate records.

(b) When a local agency receives a report or otherwise has information indicating that a child who is a client, as defined in section 245.91, has been the subject of physical abuse, sexual abuse, or neglect at an agency, facility, or program as defined in section 245.91, it shall, in addition to its other duties under this section, immediately inform the ombudsman established under sections 245.91 to 245.97.

(c) Authority of the local welfare agency responsible for assessing the child abuse or neglect report and of the local law enforcement agency for investigating the alleged abuse or neglect includes, but is not limited to, authority to interview, without parental consent, the alleged victim and any other minors who currently reside with or who have resided with the alleged offender. The interview may take place at school or at any facility or other place where the alleged victim or other minors might be found or the child may be transported to, and the interview conducted at, a place appropriate for the interview of a child designated by the local welfare agency or law enforcement agency. The interview may take place outside the presence of the alleged offender or parent, legal custodian, guardian, or school official. Except as provided in this paragraph, the parent, legal custodian, or guardian shall be notified by the responsible local welfare or law enforcement agency no later than the conclusion of the investigation or assessment that this interview has occurred. Notwithstanding rule 49.02 of the Minnesota rules of procedure for juvenile courts, the juvenile court may, after hearing on an ex parte motion by the local welfare agency, order that, where reasonable cause exists, the agency withhold notification of this interview from the parent, legal custodian, or guardian. If the interview took place or is to take place on school property, the order shall specify that school officials may not disclose to the parent, legal custodian, or guardian the contents of the notification of intent to interview the child on school property, as provided under this paragraph, and any other related information regarding the interview that may be a part of the child's school record. A copy of the order shall be sent by the local welfare or law enforcement agency to the appropriate school official.

(d) When the local welfare or local law enforcement agency determines that an interview should take place on school property, written notification of intent to interview the child on school property must be received by school officials prior to the interview. The notification shall include the name of the child to be interviewed, the purpose of the

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interview, and a reference to the statutory authority to conduct an interview on school property. For interviews conducted by the local welfare agency, the notification shall be signed by the chair of the local social services agency or the chair's designee. The notification shall be private data on individuals subject to the provisions of this paragraph. School officials may not disclose to the parent, legal custodian, or guardian the contents of the notification or any other related information regarding the interview until notified in writing by the local welfare or law enforcement agency that the investigation or assessment has been concluded. Until that time, the local welfare or law enforcement agency shall be solely responsible for any disclosures regarding the nature of the assessment or investigation.

Except where the alleged offender is believed to be a school official or employee, the time and place, and manner of the interview on school premises shall be within the discretion of school officials, but the local welfare or law enforcement agency shall have the exclusive authority to determine who may attend the interview. The conditions as to time, place, and manner of the interview set by the school officials shall be reasonable and the interview shall be conducted not more than 24 hours after the receipt of the notification unless another time is considered necessary by agreement between the school officials and the local welfare or law enforcement agency. Where the school fails to comply with the provisions of this paragraph, the juvenile court may order the school to comply. Every effort must be made to reduce the disruption of the educational program of the child, other students, or school staff when an interview is conducted on school premises.

(e) Where the alleged offender or a person responsible for the care of the alleged victim or other minor prevents access to the victim or other minor by the local welfare agency, the juvenile court may order the parents, legal custodian, or guardian to produce the alleged victim or other minor for questioning by the local welfare agency or the local law enforcement agency outside the presence of the alleged offender or any person responsible for the child's care at reasonable places and times as specified by court order.

(f) Before making an order under paragraph (e), the court shall issue an order to show cause, either upon its own motion or upon a verified petition, specifying the basis for the requested interviews and fixing the time and place of the hearing. The order to show cause shall be served personally and shall be heard in the same manner as provided in other cases in the juvenile court. The court shall consider the need for appointment of a guardian ad litem to protect the best interests of the child. If appointed, the guardian ad litem shall be present at the hearing on the order to show cause.

(g) The commissioner, the ombudsman for mental health and mental retardation, the local welfare agencies responsible for investigating reports, and the local law enforcement agencies have the right to enter facilities as defined in subdivision 2 and to inspect and copy the facility's records, including medical records, as part of the investigation. Notwithstanding the provisions of chapter 13, they also have the right to inform the facility under investigation that they are conducting an investigation, to disclose to the facility the names of the individuals under investigation for abusing or neglecting a child, and to provide the facility with a copy of the report and the investigative findings.

(h) The local welfare agency shall collect available and relevant information to ascertain whether maltreatment occurred and whether protective services are needed. Information collected includes, when relevant, information with regard to the person reporting the alleged maltreatment, including the nature of the reporter's relationship to the

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child and to the alleged offender, and the basis of the reporter's knowledge for the report; the child allegedly being maltreated; the alleged offender; the child's caretaker; and other collateral sources having relevant information related to the alleged maltreatment. The local welfare agency may make a determination of no maltreatment early in an assessment, and close the case and retain immunity, if the collected information shows no basis for a full assessment or investigation.

Information relevant to the assessment or investigation must be asked for, and may include:

(1) the child's sex and age, prior reports of maltreatment, information relating to developmental functioning, credibility of the child's statement, and whether the information provided under this clause is consistent with other information collected during the course of the assessment or investigation;

(2) the alleged offender's age, a record check for prior reports of maltreatment, and criminal charges and convictions. The local welfare agency must provide the alleged offender with an opportunity to make a statement. The alleged offender may submit supporting documentation relevant to the assessment or investigation;

(3) collateral source information regarding the alleged maltreatment and care of the child. Collateral information includes, when relevant: (i) a medical examination of the child; (ii) prior medical records relating to the alleged maltreatment or the care of the child and an interview with the treating professionals; and (iii) interviews with the child's caretakers, including the child's parent, guardian, foster parent, child care provider, teachers, counselors, family members, relatives, and other persons who may have knowledge regarding the alleged maltreatment and the care of the child; and

(4) information on the existence of domestic abuse and violence in the home of the child.

Nothing in this paragraph precludes the local welfare agency from collecting other relevant information necessary to conduct the assessment or investigation. Notwithstanding the data's classification in the possession of any other agency, data acquired by the local welfare agency during the course of the assessment or investigation are private data on individuals and must be maintained in accordance with subdivision 11.

(i) In the initial stages of an assessment or investigation, the local welfare agency shall conduct a face-to-face observation of the child reported to be maltreated and a face-to-face interview of the alleged offender. The interview with the alleged offender may be postponed if it would jeopardize an active law enforcement investigation.

(j) The local welfare agency shall use a question and answer interviewing format with questioning as nondirective as possible to elicit spontaneous responses. The following interviewing methods and procedures must be used whenever possible when collecting information:

(1) audio recordings of all interviews with witnesses and collateral sources; and

(2) in cases of alleged sexual abuse, audio-video recordings of each interview with the alleged victim and child witnesses.

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Sec. 3. Minnesota Statutes 1997 Supplement, section 626.556, subdivision 10e, is amended to read:

Subd. 10e. **DETERMINATIONS.** Upon the conclusion of every assessment or investigation it conducts, the local welfare agency shall make two determinations: first, whether maltreatment has occurred; and second, whether child protective services are needed. When maltreatment is determined in an investigation involving a facility, the investigating agency shall also determine whether the facility or individual was responsible for the maltreatment using the mitigating factors in paragraph (d). Determinations under this subdivision must be made based on a preponderance of the evidence.

(a) For the purposes of this subdivision, "maltreatment" means any of the following acts or omissions committed by a person responsible for the child's care:

- (1) physical abuse as defined in subdivision 2, paragraph (d);
- (2) neglect as defined in subdivision 2, paragraph (c);
- (3) sexual abuse as defined in subdivision 2, paragraph (a); or
- (4) mental injury as defined in subdivision 2, paragraph (k).

(b) For the purposes of this subdivision, a determination that child protective services are needed means that the local welfare agency has documented conditions during the assessment or investigation sufficient to cause a child protection worker, as defined in section 626.559, subdivision 1, to conclude that a child is at significant risk of maltreatment if protective intervention is not provided and that the individuals responsible for the child's care have not taken or are not likely to take actions to protect the child from maltreatment or risk of maltreatment.

(c) This subdivision does not mean that maltreatment has occurred solely because the child's parent, guardian, or other person responsible for the child's care in good faith selects and depends upon spiritual means or prayer for treatment or care of disease or remedial care of the child, in lieu of medical care. However, if lack of medical care may result in serious danger to the child's health, the local welfare agency may ensure that necessary medical services are provided to the child.

(d) When determining whether the facility or individual is the responsible party for determined maltreatment in a facility, the investigating agency shall consider at least the following mitigating factors:

- (1) whether the actions of the facility or the individual caregivers were according to, and followed the terms of, an erroneous physician order, prescription, individual care plan, or directive; however, this is not a mitigating factor when the facility or caregiver was responsible for the issuance of the erroneous order, prescription, individual care plan, or directive or knew or should have known of the errors and took no reasonable measures to correct the defect before administering care;
- (2) comparative responsibility between the facility, other caregivers, and requirements placed upon an employee, including the facility's compliance with related regulatory standards and the adequacy of facility policies and procedures, facility training, an individual's participation in the training, the caregiver's supervision, and facility staffing levels and the scope of the individual employee's authority and discretion; and

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(3) whether the facility or individual followed professional standards in exercising professional judgment.

(e) The commissioner shall work with the maltreatment of minors advisory committee established under Laws 1997, chapter 203, to make recommendations to further specify the kinds of acts or omissions that constitute physical abuse, neglect, sexual abuse, or mental injury. The commissioner shall submit the recommendation and any legislation needed by January 15, 1999. Individual counties may implement more detailed definitions or criteria that indicate which allegations to investigate, as long as a county's policies are consistent with the definitions in the statutes and rules and are approved by the county board. Each local welfare agency shall periodically inform mandated reporters under subdivision 3 who work in the county of the definitions of maltreatment in the statutes and rules and any additional definitions or criteria that have been approved by the county board.

Sec. 4. Minnesota Statutes 1996, section 626.556, is amended by adding a subdivision to read:

Subd. 10j. **RELEASE OF DATA TO MANDATED REPORTERS.** A local social service or child protection agency may provide relevant private data on individuals obtained under this section to mandated reporters who have an ongoing responsibility for the health, education, or welfare of a child affected by the data. The commissioner shall consult with the maltreatment of minors advisory committee to develop criteria for determining which records may be shared with mandated reporters under this subdivision.

Sec. 5. Minnesota Statutes 1996, section 626.556, is amended by adding a subdivision to read:

Subd. 10k. **RELEASE OF CERTAIN INVESTIGATIVE RECORDS TO OTHER COUNTIES.** Records maintained under subdivision 11c, paragraph (a), may be shared with another local welfare agency that requests the information because it is conducting an investigation under this section of the subject of the records.

Sec. 6. Minnesota Statutes 1997 Supplement, section 626.556, subdivision 11c, is amended to read:

Subd. 11c. **WELFARE, COURT SERVICES AGENCY, AND SCHOOL RECORDS MAINTAINED.** Notwithstanding sections 138.163 and 138.17, records maintained or records derived from reports of abuse by local welfare agencies, court services agencies, or schools under this section shall be destroyed as provided in paragraphs (a) to (d) by the responsible authority.

(a) If upon assessment or investigation there is no determination of maltreatment or the need for child protective services, the records may must be maintained for a period of four years. After the individual alleged to have maltreated a child is notified under subdivision 10f of the determinations at the conclusion of the assessment or investigation, upon that individual's request, records shall be destroyed within 30 days or after the appeal rights under subdivision 10i have been concluded, whichever is later. Records under this paragraph may not be used for employment, background checks, or purposes other than to assist in future risk and safety assessments.

(b) All records relating to reports which, upon assessment or investigation, indicate either maltreatment or a need for child protective services shall be maintained for at least ten years after the date of the final entry in the case record.

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(c) All records regarding a report of maltreatment, including any notification of intent to interview which was received by a school under subdivision 10, paragraph (d), shall be destroyed by the school when ordered to do so by the agency conducting the assessment or investigation. The agency shall order the destruction of the notification when other records relating to the report under investigation or assessment are destroyed under this subdivision.

(d) Private or confidential data released to a court services agency under subdivision 10h must be destroyed by the court services agency when ordered to do so by the local welfare agency that released the data. The local welfare agency shall order destruction of the data when other records relating to the assessment or investigation are destroyed under this subdivision.

Sec. 7. Minnesota Statutes 1996, section 626.556, is amended by adding a subdivision to read:

Subd. 15. AUDITING. The commissioner of human services shall regularly audit for accuracy the data reported by counties on maltreatment of minors.

**Sec. 8. RISK ASSESSMENT; PERFORMANCE MEASURES; EXTERNAL REVIEW.**

Subdivision 1. RISK ASSESSMENT ALTERNATIVES. Notwithstanding any rule to the contrary, the commissioner of human services may authorize local welfare agencies to research and conduct pilot projects for alternative methods of child protection risk assessment. The commissioner shall give priority to the establishment of at least one pilot project that includes a study of domestic abuse and violence in the home as a risk factor for children. The commissioner shall report to the appropriate committees in the house of representatives and the senate on the outcomes of research and risk assessment pilot projects by January 15, 2000.

Subd. 2. PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT. (a) The commissioner of human services shall establish a task force of county and state officials to identify:

(1) statewide measures of the performance of child welfare services, including, but not limited to, screening, early intervention services, assessment, number, episodes, and length of stay in out-of-home placement, permanency, and adoption, and steps needed to collect reliable information on these measures; and

(2) potentially useful practices that individual counties could use to monitor and evaluate child welfare services.

(b) The task force shall report its findings to the commissioner by January 15, 1999. The commissioner shall recommend to appropriate committees of the legislature during the 1999 regular session any legislative action required to implement task force recommendations.

Subd. 3. COORDINATION OF CHILD WELFARE AND DOMESTIC ABUSE SERVICES. The commissioner of human services shall work with the maltreatment of minors advisory committee established under Laws 1997, chapter 203, to study and evaluate the opportunities for coordination or integration of child welfare and domestic abuse services for children and parents. The commissioner shall consult with consumers and child protection and domestic abuse advocates. The commissioner shall

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submit a report to the legislature by January 15, 1999, that includes recommendations for improving coordination between the domestic abuse and child welfare systems for further integration of services.

#### Sec. 9. **PLAN FOR EXTERNAL REVIEWS.**

By January 15, 1999, the commissioner of human services shall present to the appropriate committees in the senate and the house of representatives a plan for periodic external reviews of:

(1) county compliance with state statutes and rules in the area of child protection;  
and

(2) the appropriateness of decisions by county child protection agencies in selected individual cases.

Nothing in section 8 or 9 prevents the commissioner from developing and implementing performance measurement plans for periodic reviews and best practices before January 15, 1999.

## ARTICLE 5

### FUNDING ALLOCATION

#### Section 1. **ALLOCATION OF FAMILY PRESERVATION FUNDS.**

Of the \$10,000,000 transferred for family preservation program funding under 1998 S.F. No. 3346, if enacted, or other legislation containing a similar funding transfer, \$9,300,000 is to be allocated to counties based on the family preservation allocation formula in Minnesota Statutes, chapter 256F. The counties shall use the funds allocated under this section to comply with the concurrent permanency planning requirements in Minnesota Statutes, section 257.0711. When a county is in compliance with the concurrent permanency planning requirements, the county may use any excess funding from the allocation for other services under Minnesota Statutes, chapter 256F.

Of the amount transferred, \$200,000 is to the commissioner of human services for mediation training for relative care conferencing under Minnesota Statutes, section 626.5565.

Of the amount transferred, \$200,000 is to the commissioner of human services for independent evaluation of the concurrent permanency planning program under Minnesota Statutes, section 257.0711.

Of the amount transferred, \$300,000 is for administrative costs associated with developing the concurrent permanency planning program and providing training, and for conducting external reviews of county child protection practices related to the provisions in article 4.

Presented to the governor April 10, 1998

Signed by the governor April 20, 1998, 11:32 a.m.

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