

Senate Bill No. 116

Passed the Senate August 31, 2005

Secretary of the Senate

Passed the Assembly August 30, 2005

Chief Clerk of the Assembly

This bill was received by the Governor this _____ day
of _____, 2005, at _____ o'clock ____M.

Private Secretary of the Governor

CHAPTER _____

An act to amend Section 1255.7 of the Health and Safety Code, to amend Section 271.5 of the Penal Code, and to amend Section 14005.24 of, and to amend and repeal Sections 300 and 361.5 of, the Welfare and Institutions Code, relating to abandonment of newborns.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 116, Dutton. Child abandonment: newborns.

Existing law makes it a crime for a parent of a minor child, without lawful excuse, to not furnish necessary clothing, food, shelter, or medical or remedial care for the child, or to refuse, without lawful excuse, to accept the child in his or her home or provide alternate shelter. Existing law also makes it a crime for a parent of a child under the age of 14 years to desert the child with intent to abandon, or for any person to knowingly or willfully abandon or, having the ability to refuse to do so, fail to maintain his or her child under the age of 14 years.

Existing law, until 2006, provides that no parent or other person having lawful custody of a minor child 72 hours old or younger may be prosecuted for a violation of the above crimes if he or she voluntarily surrenders physical custody of the child to an employee on duty at a public or private hospital emergency room, or any additional location designated by the board of supervisors. Existing law provides that within 48 hours of accepting the physical custody of a child who is surrendered pursuant to these provisions, the personnel that have custody of the child must notify child protective services or a county agency providing child welfare services. Existing law requires that agency to immediately notify the State Department of Social Services of each child to whom this provision applies upon taking temporary custody of the child.

This bill would delete that date thereby extending those provisions indefinitely. By expanding the duties of local public entities and employees, the bill would impose a state-mandated local program.

The California Constitution requires the state to reimburse local agencies and school districts for certain costs mandated by

the state. Statutory provisions establish procedures for making that reimbursement.

This bill would provide that, if the Commission on State Mandates determines that the bill contains costs mandated by the state, reimbursement for those costs shall be made pursuant to these statutory provisions.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

SECTION 1. Section 1255.7 of the Health and Safety Code is amended to read:

1255.7. (a) (1) For purposes of this section, “safe-surrender site” means either of the following:

(A) A location designated by the board of supervisors of a county to be responsible for accepting physical custody of a minor child who is 72 hours old or younger from a parent or individual who has lawful custody of the child and who surrenders the child pursuant to Section 271.5 of the Penal Code.

(B) A location within a public or private hospital that is designated by that hospital to be responsible for accepting physical custody of a minor child who is 72 hours old or younger from a parent or individual who has lawful custody of the child and who surrenders the child pursuant to Section 271.5 of the Penal Code.

(2) For purposes of this section, “parent” means a birth parent of a minor child who is 72 hours old or younger.

(3) For purposes of this section, “personnel” means any person who is an officer or employee of a safe-surrender site or who has staff privileges at the site.

(4) A hospital and any safe-surrender site designated by the county board of supervisors shall post a sign utilizing a statewide logo that has been adopted by the State Department of Social Services that notifies the public of the location where a minor child 72 hours old or younger may be safely surrendered pursuant to this section.

(b) Any personnel on duty at a safe-surrender site shall accept physical custody of a minor child 72 hours old or younger pursuant to this section if a parent or other individual having lawful custody of the child voluntarily surrenders physical custody of the child to personnel who are on duty at the

safe-surrender site. Safe-surrender site personnel shall ensure that a qualified person does all of the following:

(1) Places a coded, confidential ankle bracelet on the child.

(2) Provides, or makes a good faith effort to provide, to the parent or other individual surrendering the child a copy of a unique, coded, confidential ankle bracelet identification in order to facilitate reclaiming the child pursuant to subdivision (f). However, possession of the ankle bracelet identification, in and of itself, does not establish parentage or a right to custody of the child.

(3) Provides, or makes a good faith effort to provide, to the parent or other individual surrendering the child a medical information questionnaire, which may be declined, voluntarily filled out and returned at the time the child is surrendered, or later filled out and mailed in the envelope provided for this purpose. This medical information questionnaire shall not require any identifying information about the child or the parent or individual surrendering the child, other than the identification code provided in the ankle bracelet placed on the child. Every questionnaire provided pursuant to this section shall begin with the following notice in no less than 12-point type:

NOTICE: THE BABY YOU HAVE BROUGHT IN TODAY MAY HAVE SERIOUS MEDICAL NEEDS IN THE FUTURE THAT WE DON'T KNOW ABOUT TODAY. SOME ILLNESSES, INCLUDING CANCER, ARE BEST TREATED WHEN WE KNOW ABOUT FAMILY MEDICAL HISTORIES. IN ADDITION, SOMETIMES RELATIVES ARE NEEDED FOR LIFE-SAVING TREATMENTS. TO MAKE SURE THIS BABY WILL HAVE A HEALTHY FUTURE, YOUR ASSISTANCE IN COMPLETING THIS QUESTIONNAIRE FULLY IS ESSENTIAL. THANK YOU.

(c) Personnel of a safe-surrender site that has physical custody of a minor child pursuant to this section shall ensure that a medical screening examination and any necessary medical care is provided to the minor child. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the consent of the parent or other relative shall not be required to provide that care to the minor child.

(d) (1) As soon as possible, but in no event later than 48 hours after the physical custody of a child has been accepted pursuant to this section, personnel of the safe-surrender site that has

physical custody of the child shall notify child protective services or a county agency providing child welfare services pursuant to Section 16501 of the Welfare and Institutions Code, that the safe-surrender site has physical custody of the child pursuant to this section. In addition, any medical information pertinent to the child's health, including, but not limited to, information obtained pursuant to the medical information questionnaire described in paragraph (3) of subdivision (b) that has been received by or is in the possession of the safe-surrender site shall be provided to that child protective services or county agency.

(2) Any personal identifying information that pertains to a parent or individual who surrenders a child that is obtained pursuant to the medical information questionnaire is confidential and shall be exempt from disclosure by the child protective services or county agency under the California Public Records Act (Chapter 3.5 (commencing with Section 6250) of Division 7 of Title 1 of the Government Code). Any personal identifying information that pertains to a parent or individual who surrenders a child shall be redacted from any medical information provided to child protective services or the county agency providing child welfare services.

(e) Child protective services or the county agency providing child welfare services pursuant to Section 16501 of the Welfare and Institutions Code shall assume temporary custody of the child pursuant to Section 300 of the Welfare and Institutions Code immediately upon receipt of notice under subdivision (d). Child protective services or the county agency providing child welfare services pursuant to Section 16501 of the Welfare and Institutions Code shall immediately investigate the circumstances of the case and file a petition pursuant to Section 311 of the Welfare and Institutions Code. Child protective services or the county agency providing child welfare services pursuant to Section 16501 of the Welfare and Institutions Code shall immediately notify the State Department of Social Services of each child to whom this subdivision applies upon taking temporary custody of the child pursuant to Section 300 of the Welfare and Institutions Code. As soon as possible, but no later than 24 hours after temporary custody is assumed, child protective services or the county agency providing child welfare services pursuant to Section 16501 of the Welfare and

Institutions Code shall report all known identifying information concerning the child, except personal identifying information pertaining to the parent or individual who surrendered the child, to the California Missing Children Clearinghouse and to the National Crime Information Center.

(f) If, prior to the filing of a petition under subdivision (e), a parent or individual who has voluntarily surrendered a child pursuant to this section requests that the safe-surrender site that has physical custody of the child pursuant to this section return the child and the safe-surrender site still has custody of the child, personnel of the safe-surrender site shall either return the child to the parent or individual or contact a child protective agency if any personnel at the safe-surrender site knows or reasonably suspects that the child has been the victim of child abuse or neglect. The voluntary surrender of a child pursuant to this section is not in and of itself a sufficient basis for reporting child abuse or neglect. The terms “child abuse,” “child protective agency,” “mandated reporter,” “neglect,” and “reasonably suspects” shall be given the same meanings as in Article 2.5 (commencing with Section 11164) of Title 1 of Part 4 of the Penal Code.

(g) Subsequent to the filing of a petition under subdivision (e), if within 14 days of the voluntary surrender described in this section, the parent or individual who surrendered custody returns to claim physical custody of the child, the child welfare agency shall verify the identity of the parent or individual, conduct an assessment of his or her circumstances and ability to parent, and request that the juvenile court dismiss the petition for dependency and order the release of the child, if the child welfare agency determines that none of the conditions described in subdivisions (a) to (d), inclusive, of Section 319 of the Welfare and Institutions Code currently exist.

(h) A safe-surrender site, or personnel of the safe-surrender site, that accepts custody of a surrendered child pursuant to this section shall not be subject to civil, criminal, or administrative liability for accepting the child and caring for the child in the good faith belief that action is required or authorized by this section, including, but not limited to, instances where the child is older than 72 hours or the parent or individual surrendering the child did not have lawful physical custody of the child. This

subdivision does not confer immunity from liability for personal injury or wrongful death, including, but not limited to, injury resulting from medical malpractice.

(i) (1) In order to encourage assistance to persons who voluntarily surrender physical custody of a child pursuant to this section or Section 271.5 of the Penal Code, no person who, without compensation and in good faith, provides assistance for the purpose of effecting the safe surrender of a minor 72 hours old or younger shall be civilly liable for injury to or death of the minor child as a result of any of his or her acts or omissions. This immunity does not apply to any act or omission constituting gross negligence, recklessness, or willful misconduct.

(2) For purposes of this section, “assistance” means transporting the minor child to the safe-surrender site as a person with lawful custody, or transporting or accompanying the parent or person with lawful custody at the request of that parent or person to effect the safe surrender, or performing any other act in good faith for the purpose of effecting the safe surrender of the minor.

(j) For purposes of this section, “lawful custody” means physical custody of a minor 72 hours old or younger accepted by a person from a parent of the minor, who the person believes in good faith is the parent of the minor, with the specific intent and promise of effecting the safe surrender of the minor.

(k) Any identifying information that pertains to a parent or individual who surrenders a child pursuant to this section, that is obtained as a result of the questionnaire described in paragraph (3) of subdivision (b) or in any other manner, is confidential, shall be exempt from disclosure under the California Public Records Act (Chapter 3.5 (commencing with Section 6250) of Division 7 of Title 1 of the Government Code), and shall not be disclosed by any personnel of a safe-surrender site that accepts custody of a child pursuant to this section.

SEC. 2. Section 271.5 of the Penal Code is amended to read:

271.5. (a) No parent or other individual having lawful custody of a minor child 72 hours old or younger may be prosecuted for a violation of Section 270, 270.5, 271, or 271a if he or she voluntarily surrenders physical custody of the child to personnel on duty at a safe-surrender site.

(b) For purposes of this section, “safe-surrender site” has the same meaning as defined in paragraph (1) of subdivision (a) of Section 1255.7 of the Health and Safety Code.

(c) (1) For purposes of this section, “lawful custody” has the same meaning as defined in subdivision (j) of Section 1255.7 of the Health and Safety Code.

(2) For purposes of this section, “personnel” has the same meaning as defined in paragraph (2) of subdivision (a) of Section 1255.7 of the Health and Safety Code.

SEC. 3. Section 300 of the Welfare and Institutions Code, as amended by Section 3 of Chapter 824 of the Statutes of 2000, is amended to read:

300. Any child who comes within any of the following descriptions is within the jurisdiction of the juvenile court which may adjudge that person to be a dependent child of the court:

(a) The child has suffered, or there is a substantial risk that the child will suffer, serious physical harm inflicted nonaccidentally upon the child by the child’s parent or guardian. For the purposes of this subdivision, a court may find there is a substantial risk of serious future injury based on the manner in which a less serious injury was inflicted, a history of repeated inflictions of injuries on the child or the child’s siblings, or a combination of these and other actions by the parent or guardian which indicate the child is at risk of serious physical harm. For purposes of this subdivision, “serious physical harm” does not include reasonable and age-appropriate spanking to the buttocks where there is no evidence of serious physical injury.

(b) The child has suffered, or there is a substantial risk that the child will suffer, serious physical harm or illness, as a result of the failure or inability of his or her parent or guardian to adequately supervise or protect the child, or the willful or negligent failure of the child’s parent or guardian to adequately supervise or protect the child from the conduct of the custodian with whom the child has been left, or by the willful or negligent failure of the parent or guardian to provide the child with adequate food, clothing, shelter, or medical treatment, or by the inability of the parent or guardian to provide regular care for the child due to the parent’s or guardian’s mental illness, developmental disability, or substance abuse. No child shall be found to be a person described by this subdivision solely due to

the lack of an emergency shelter for the family. Whenever it is alleged that a child comes within the jurisdiction of the court on the basis of the parent's or guardian's willful failure to provide adequate medical treatment or specific decision to provide spiritual treatment through prayer, the court shall give deference to the parent's or guardian's medical treatment, nontreatment, or spiritual treatment through prayer alone in accordance with the tenets and practices of a recognized church or religious denomination, by an accredited practitioner thereof, and shall not assume jurisdiction unless necessary to protect the child from suffering serious physical harm or illness. In making its determination, the court shall consider (1) the nature of the treatment proposed by the parent or guardian, (2) the risks to the child posed by the course of treatment or nontreatment proposed by the parent or guardian, (3) the risk, if any, of the course of treatment being proposed by the petitioning agency, and (4) the likely success of the courses of treatment or nontreatment proposed by the parent or guardian and agency. The child shall continue to be a dependent child pursuant to this subdivision only so long as is necessary to protect the child from risk of suffering serious physical harm or illness.

(c) The child is suffering serious emotional damage, or is at substantial risk of suffering serious emotional damage, evidenced by severe anxiety, depression, withdrawal, or untoward aggressive behavior toward self or others, as a result of the conduct of the parent or guardian or who has no parent or guardian capable of providing appropriate care. No child shall be found to be a person described by this subdivision if the willful failure of the parent or guardian to provide adequate mental health treatment is based on a sincerely held religious belief and if a less intrusive judicial intervention is available.

(d) The child has been sexually abused, or there is a substantial risk that the child will be sexually abused, as defined in Section 11165.1 of the Penal Code, by his or her parent or guardian or a member of his or her household, or the parent or guardian has failed to adequately protect the child from sexual abuse when the parent or guardian knew or reasonably should have known that the child was in danger of sexual abuse.

(e) The child is under the age of five years and has suffered severe physical abuse by a parent, or by any person known by the

parent, if the parent knew or reasonably should have known that the person was physically abusing the child. For the purposes of this subdivision, “severe physical abuse” means any of the following: any single act of abuse which causes physical trauma of sufficient severity that, if left untreated, would cause permanent physical disfigurement, permanent physical disability, or death; any single act of sexual abuse which causes significant bleeding, deep bruising, or significant external or internal swelling; or more than one act of physical abuse, each of which causes bleeding, deep bruising, significant external or internal swelling, bone fracture, or unconsciousness; or the willful, prolonged failure to provide adequate food. A child may not be removed from the physical custody of his or her parent or guardian on the basis of a finding of severe physical abuse unless the social worker has made an allegation of severe physical abuse pursuant to Section 332.

(f) The child’s parent or guardian caused the death of another child through abuse or neglect.

(g) The child has been left without any provision for support; physical custody of the child has been voluntarily surrendered pursuant to Section 1255.7 of the Health and Safety Code and the child has not been reclaimed within the 14-day period specified in subdivision (e) of that section; the child’s parent has been incarcerated or institutionalized and cannot arrange for the care of the child; or a relative or other adult custodian with whom the child resides or has been left is unwilling or unable to provide care or support for the child, the whereabouts of the parent are unknown, and reasonable efforts to locate the parent have been unsuccessful.

(h) The child has been freed for adoption by one or both parents for 12 months by either relinquishment or termination of parental rights or an adoption petition has not been granted.

(i) The child has been subjected to an act or acts of cruelty by the parent or guardian or a member of his or her household, or the parent or guardian has failed to adequately protect the child from an act or acts of cruelty when the parent or guardian knew or reasonably should have known that the child was in danger of being subjected to an act or acts of cruelty.

(j) The child’s sibling has been abused or neglected, as defined in subdivision (a), (b), (d), (e), or (i), and there is a substantial

risk that the child will be abused or neglected, as defined in those subdivisions. The court shall consider the circumstances surrounding the abuse or neglect of the sibling, the age and gender of each child, the nature of the abuse or neglect of the sibling, the mental condition of the parent or guardian, and any other factors the court considers probative in determining whether there is a substantial risk to the child.

It is the intent of the Legislature that nothing in this section disrupt the family unnecessarily or intrude inappropriately into family life, prohibit the use of reasonable methods of parental discipline, or prescribe a particular method of parenting. Further, nothing in this section is intended to limit the offering of voluntary services to those families in need of assistance but who do not come within the descriptions of this section. To the extent that savings accrue to the state from child welfare services funding obtained as a result of the enactment of the act that enacted this section, those savings shall be used to promote services which support family maintenance and family reunification plans, such as client transportation, out-of-home respite care, parenting training, and the provision of temporary or emergency in-home caretakers and persons teaching and demonstrating homemaking skills. The Legislature further declares that a physical disability, such as blindness or deafness, is no bar to the raising of happy and well-adjusted children and that a court's determination pursuant to this section shall center upon whether a parent's disability prevents him or her from exercising care and control.

As used in this section, "guardian" means the legal guardian of the child.

SEC. 4. Section 300 of the Welfare and Institutions Code, as added by Section 3.5 of Chapter 824 of the Statutes of 2000, is repealed.

SEC. 5. Section 361.5 of the Welfare and Institutions Code, as amended by Section 7 of Chapter 918 of the Statutes of 2002, is amended to read:

361.5. (a) Except as provided in subdivision (b), or when the parent has voluntarily relinquished the child and the relinquishment has been filed with the State Department of Social Services, or upon the establishment of an order of guardianship pursuant to Section 360, whenever a child is

removed from a parent's or guardian's custody, the juvenile court shall order the social worker to provide child welfare services to the child and the child's mother and statutorily presumed father or guardians. Upon a finding and declaration of paternity by the juvenile court or proof of a prior declaration of paternity by any court of competent jurisdiction, the juvenile court may order services for the child and the biological father, if the court determines that the services will benefit the child. Child welfare services, when provided, shall be provided as follows:

(1) For a child who, on the date of initial removal from the physical custody of his or her parent or guardian, was three years of age or older, court-ordered services shall not exceed a period of 12 months from the date the child entered foster care, except as otherwise provided in paragraph (3).

(2) For a child who, on the date of initial removal from the physical custody of his or her parent or guardian, was under the age of three years, court-ordered services shall not exceed a period of six months from the date the child entered foster care.

(3) For the purpose of placing and maintaining a sibling group together in a permanent home should reunification efforts fail, for a child in a sibling group whose members were removed from parental custody at the same time, and in which one member of the sibling group was under the age of three years on the date of initial removal from the physical custody of his or her parent or guardian, court-ordered services to some or all of the sibling group may be limited to a period of six months from the date the child entered foster care. For the purposes of this paragraph, "a sibling group" shall mean two or more children who are related to each other as full or half-siblings.

Regardless of the age of the child, a child shall be deemed to have entered foster care on the earlier of the date of the jurisdictional hearing held pursuant to Section 356 or the date that is 60 days after the date on which the child was initially removed from the physical custody of his or her parent or guardian.

Notwithstanding paragraphs (1), (2), and (3), court-ordered services may be extended up to a maximum time period not to exceed 18 months after the date the child was originally removed from physical custody of his or her parent or guardian if it can be shown, at the hearing held pursuant to subdivision (f) of Section

366.21, that the permanent plan for the child is that he or she will be returned and safely maintained in the home within the extended time period. The court shall extend the time period only if it finds that there is a substantial probability that the child will be returned to the physical custody of his or her parent or guardian within the extended time period or that reasonable services have not been provided to the parent or guardian. If the court extends the time period, the court shall specify the factual basis for its conclusion that there is a substantial probability that the child will be returned to the physical custody of his or her parent or guardian within the extended time period. The court also shall make findings pursuant to subdivision (a) of Section 366 and subdivision (e) of Section 358.1.

When counseling or other treatment services are ordered, the parent or guardian shall be ordered to participate in those services, unless the parent's or guardian's participation is deemed by the court to be inappropriate or potentially detrimental to the child. Physical custody of the child by the parents or guardians during the applicable time period under paragraph (1), (2), or (3) shall not serve to interrupt the running of the period. If at the end of the applicable time period, a child cannot be safely returned to the care and custody of a parent or guardian without court supervision, but the child clearly desires contact with the parent or guardian, the court shall take the child's desire into account in devising a permanency plan.

In cases where the child was under the age of three years on the date of the initial removal from the physical custody of his or her parent or guardian or is a member of a sibling group as described in paragraph (3), the court shall inform the parent or guardian that the failure of the parent or guardian to participate regularly in any court-ordered treatment programs or to cooperate or avail himself or herself of services provided as part of the child welfare services case plan may result in a termination of efforts to reunify the family after six months. The court shall inform the parent or guardian of the factors used in subdivision (e) of Section 366.21 to determine whether to limit services to six months for some or all members of a sibling group as described in paragraph (3).

Except in cases where, pursuant to subdivision (b), the court does not order reunification services, the court shall inform the

parent or parents of Section 366.26 and shall specify that the parent's or parents' parental rights may be terminated.

(b) Reunification services need not be provided to a parent or guardian described in this subdivision when the court finds, by clear and convincing evidence, any of the following:

(1) That the whereabouts of the parent or guardian is unknown. A finding pursuant to this paragraph shall be supported by an affidavit or by proof that a reasonably diligent search has failed to locate the parent or guardian. The posting or publication of notices is not required in that search.

(2) That the parent or guardian is suffering from a mental disability that is described in Chapter 2 (commencing with Section 7820) of Part 4 of Division 12 of the Family Code and that renders him or her incapable of utilizing those services.

(3) That the child or a sibling of the child has been previously adjudicated a dependent pursuant to any subdivision of Section 300 as a result of physical or sexual abuse, that following that adjudication the child had been removed from the custody of his or her parent or guardian pursuant to Section 361, that the child has been returned to the custody of the parent or guardian from whom the child had been taken originally, and that the child is being removed pursuant to Section 361, due to additional physical or sexual abuse.

(4) That the parent or guardian of the child has caused the death of another child through abuse or neglect.

(5) That the child was brought within the jurisdiction of the court under subdivision (e) of Section 300 because of the conduct of that parent or guardian.

(6) That the child has been adjudicated a dependent pursuant to any subdivision of Section 300 as a result of severe sexual abuse or the infliction of severe physical harm to the child, a sibling, or a half-sibling by a parent or guardian, as defined in this subdivision, and the court makes a factual finding that it would not benefit the child to pursue reunification services with the offending parent or guardian.

A finding of severe sexual abuse, for the purposes of this subdivision, may be based on, but is not limited to, sexual intercourse, or stimulation involving genital-genital, oral-genital, anal-genital, or oral-anal contact, whether between the parent or guardian and the child or a sibling or half-sibling of the child, or

between the child or a sibling or half-sibling of the child and another person or animal with the actual or implied consent of the parent or guardian; or the penetration or manipulation of the child's, sibling's, or half-sibling's genital organs or rectum by any animate or inanimate object for the sexual gratification of the parent or guardian, or for the sexual gratification of another person with the actual or implied consent of the parent or guardian.

A finding of the infliction of severe physical harm, for the purposes of this subdivision, may be based on, but is not limited to, deliberate and serious injury inflicted to or on a child's body or the body of a sibling or half-sibling of the child by an act or omission of the parent or guardian, or of another individual or animal with the consent of the parent or guardian; deliberate and torturous confinement of the child, sibling, or half-sibling in a closed space; or any other torturous act or omission that would be reasonably understood to cause serious emotional damage.

(7) That the parent is not receiving reunification services for a sibling or a half-sibling of the child pursuant to paragraph (3), (5), or (6).

(8) That the child was conceived by means of the commission of an offense listed in Section 288 or 288.5 of the Penal Code, or by an act committed outside of this state that, if committed in this state, would constitute one of those offenses. This paragraph only applies to the parent who committed the offense or act.

(9) That the child has been found to be a child described in subdivision (g) of Section 300, that the parent or guardian of the child willfully abandoned the child, and the court finds that the abandonment itself constituted a serious danger to the child; or that the parent or other person having custody of the child voluntarily surrendered physical custody of the child pursuant to Section 1255.7 of the Health and Safety Code. For the purposes of this paragraph, "serious danger" means that without the intervention of another person or agency, the child would have sustained severe or permanent disability, injury, illness, or death. For purposes of this paragraph, "willful abandonment" shall not be construed as actions taken in good faith by the parent without the intent of placing the child in serious danger.

(10) That the court ordered termination of reunification services for any siblings or half-siblings of the child because the

parent or guardian failed to reunify with the sibling or half-sibling after the sibling or half-sibling had been removed from that parent or guardian pursuant to Section 361 and that parent or guardian is the same parent or guardian described in subdivision (a) and that, according to the findings of the court, this parent or guardian has not subsequently made a reasonable effort to treat the problems that led to removal of the sibling or half-sibling of that child from that parent or guardian.

(11) That the parental rights of a parent over any sibling or half-sibling of the child had been permanently severed, and this parent is the same parent described in subdivision (a), and that, according to the findings of the court, this parent has not subsequently made a reasonable effort to treat the problems that led to removal of the sibling or half-sibling of that child from the parent.

(12) That the parent or guardian of the child has been convicted of a violent felony, as defined in subdivision (c) of Section 667.5 of the Penal Code.

(13) That the parent or guardian of the child has a history of extensive, abusive, and chronic use of drugs or alcohol and has resisted prior court-ordered treatment for this problem during a three-year period immediately prior to the filing of the petition that brought that child to the court's attention, or has failed or refused to comply with a program of drug or alcohol treatment described in the case plan required by Section 358.1 on at least two prior occasions, even though the programs identified were available and accessible.

(14) That the parent or guardian of the child has advised the court that he or she is not interested in receiving family maintenance or family reunification services or having the child returned to or placed in his or her custody and does not wish to receive family maintenance or reunification services.

The parent or guardian shall be represented by counsel and shall execute a waiver of services form to be adopted by the Judicial Council. The court shall advise the parent or guardian of any right to services and of the possible consequences of a waiver of services, including the termination of parental rights and placement of the child for adoption. The court shall not accept the waiver of services unless it states on the record its

finding that the parent or guardian has knowingly and intelligently waived the right to services.

(15) That the parent or guardian has on one or more occasions willfully abducted the child or child's sibling or half-sibling from his or her placement and refused to disclose the child's or child's sibling's or half-sibling's whereabouts, refused to return physical custody of the child or child's sibling or half-sibling to his or her placement, or refused to return physical custody of the child or child's sibling or half-sibling to the social worker.

(c) In deciding whether to order reunification in any case in which this section applies, the court shall hold a dispositional hearing. The social worker shall prepare a report that discusses whether reunification services shall be provided. When it is alleged, pursuant to paragraph (2) of subdivision (b), that the parent is incapable of utilizing services due to mental disability, the court shall order reunification services unless competent evidence from mental health professionals establishes that, even with the provision of services, the parent is unlikely to be capable of adequately caring for the child within the time limits specified in subdivision (a).

The court shall not order reunification for a parent or guardian described in paragraph (3), (4), (6), (7), (8), (9), (10), (11), (12), (13), (14), or (15) of subdivision (b) unless the court finds, by clear and convincing evidence, that reunification is in the best interest of the child.

In addition, the court shall not order reunification in any situation described in paragraph (5) of subdivision (b) unless it finds that, based on competent testimony, those services are likely to prevent reabuse or continued neglect of the child or that failure to try reunification will be detrimental to the child because the child is closely and positively attached to that parent. The social worker shall investigate the circumstances leading to the removal of the child and advise the court whether there are circumstances that indicate that reunification is likely to be successful or unsuccessful and whether failure to order reunification is likely to be detrimental to the child.

The failure of the parent to respond to previous services, the fact that the child was abused while the parent was under the influence of drugs or alcohol, a past history of violent behavior, or testimony by a competent professional that the parent's

behavior is unlikely to be changed by services are among the factors indicating that reunification services are unlikely to be successful. The fact that a parent or guardian is no longer living with an individual who severely abused the child may be considered in deciding that reunification services are likely to be successful, provided that the court shall consider any pattern of behavior on the part of the parent that has exposed the child to repeated abuse.

(d) If reunification services are not ordered pursuant to paragraph (1) of subdivision (b) and the whereabouts of a parent become known within six months of the out-of-home placement of the child, the court shall order the social worker to provide family reunification services in accordance with this subdivision.

(e) (1) If the parent or guardian is incarcerated or institutionalized, the court shall order reasonable services unless the court determines, by clear and convincing evidence, those services would be detrimental to the child. In determining detriment, the court shall consider the age of the child, the degree of parent-child bonding, the length of the sentence, the nature of the treatment, the nature of the crime or illness, the degree of detriment to the child if services are not offered and, for children 10 years of age or older, the child's attitude toward the implementation of family reunification services, and any other appropriate factors. Reunification services are subject to the applicable time limitations imposed in subdivision (a). Services may include, but shall not be limited to, all of the following:

(A) Maintaining contact between the parent and child through collect telephone calls.

(B) Transportation services, where appropriate.

(C) Visitation services, where appropriate.

(D) Reasonable services to extended family members or foster parents providing care for the child if the services are not detrimental to the child.

An incarcerated parent may be required to attend counseling, parenting classes, or vocational training programs as part of the service plan if these programs are available.

(2) The presiding judge of the juvenile court of each county may convene representatives of the county welfare department, the sheriff's department, and other appropriate entities for the purpose of developing and entering into protocols for ensuring

the notification, transportation, and presence of an incarcerated or institutionalized parent at all court hearings involving proceedings affecting the child pursuant to Section 2625 of the Penal Code.

(3) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, if the incarcerated parent is a woman seeking to participate in the community treatment program operated by the Department of Corrections pursuant to Chapter 4.8 (commencing with Section 1174) of Title 7 of Part 2 of, Chapter 4 (commencing with Section 3410) of Title 2 of Part 3 of, the Penal Code, the court shall determine whether the parent's participation in a program is in the child's best interest and whether it is suitable to meet the needs of the parent and child.

(f) If the court, pursuant to paragraph (2), (3), (4), (5), (6), (7), (8), (9), (10), (11), (12), (13), (14), or (15) of subdivision (b) or paragraph (1) of subdivision (e), does not order reunification services, it shall, at the dispositional hearing, that shall include a permanency hearing, determine if a hearing under Section 366.26 shall be set in order to determine whether adoption, guardianship, or long-term foster care is the most appropriate plan for the child. If the court so determines, it shall conduct the hearing pursuant to Section 366.26 within 120 days after the dispositional hearing. However, the court shall not schedule a hearing so long as the other parent is being provided reunification services pursuant to subdivision (a). The court may continue to permit the parent to visit the child unless it finds that visitation would be detrimental to the child.

(g) Whenever a court orders that a hearing shall be held pursuant to Section 366.26, it shall direct the agency supervising the child and the licensed county adoption agency, or the State Department of Social Services when it is acting as an adoption agency in counties that are not served by a county adoption agency, to prepare an assessment that shall include:

- (1) Current search efforts for an absent parent or parents.
- (2) A review of the amount of and nature of any contact between the child and his or her parents and other members of his or her extended family since the time of placement. Although the extended family of each child shall be reviewed on a case-by-case basis, "extended family" for the purpose of this

paragraph shall include, but not be limited to, the child's siblings, grandparents, aunts, and uncles.

(3) An evaluation of the child's medical, developmental, scholastic, mental, and emotional status.

(4) A preliminary assessment of the eligibility and commitment of any identified prospective adoptive parent or guardian, particularly the caretaker, to include a social history including screening for criminal records and prior referrals for child abuse or neglect, the capability to meet the child's needs, and the understanding of the legal and financial rights and responsibilities of adoption and guardianship. If a proposed guardian is a relative of the minor, and the relative was assessed for foster care placement of the minor prior to January 1, 1998, the assessment shall also consider, but need not be limited to, all of the factors specified in subdivision (a) of Section 361.3. As used in this paragraph, "relative" means an adult who is related to the minor by blood, adoption, or affinity within the fifth degree of kinship, including stepparents, stepsiblings, and all relatives whose status is preceded by the words "great," "great-great," or "grand," or the spouse of any of those persons even if the marriage was terminated by death or dissolution.

(5) The relationship of the child to any identified prospective adoptive parent or guardian, the duration and character of the relationship, the motivation for seeking adoption or guardianship, and a statement from the child concerning placement and the adoption or guardianship, unless the child's age or physical, emotional, or other condition precludes his or her meaningful response, and if so, a description of the condition.

(6) An analysis of the likelihood that the child will be adopted if parental rights are terminated.

(h) In determining whether reunification services will benefit the child pursuant to paragraph (6) or (7) of subdivision (b), the court shall consider any information it deems relevant, including the following factors:

(1) The specific act or omission comprising the severe sexual abuse or the severe physical harm inflicted on the child or the child's sibling or half-sibling.

(2) The circumstances under which the abuse or harm was inflicted on the child or the child's sibling or half-sibling.

(3) The severity of the emotional trauma suffered by the child or the child's sibling or half-sibling.

(4) Any history of abuse of other children by the offending parent or guardian.

(5) The likelihood that the child may be safely returned to the care of the offending parent or guardian within 12 months with no continuing supervision.

(6) Whether or not the child desires to be reunified with the offending parent or guardian.

(i) The court shall read into the record the basis for a finding of severe sexual abuse or the infliction of severe physical harm under paragraph (6) of subdivision (b), and shall also specify the factual findings used to determine that the provision of reunification services to the offending parent or guardian would not benefit the child.

SEC. 6. Section 361.5 of the Welfare and Institutions Code, as amended by Section 8 of Chapter 918 of the Statutes of 2002, is repealed.

SEC. 7. Section 14005.24 of the Welfare and Institutions Code is amended to read:

14005.24. The department shall instruct counties, by means of an all county letter or similar instruction, as to the process that is to be used to ensure that each child, physical custody of whom has been voluntarily surrendered pursuant to Section 1255.7 of the Health and Safety Code, shall be determined eligible for benefits under this chapter for, at a minimum, a period of time commencing on the date physical custody is surrendered and ending on the earliest of the following dates:

(a) The last day of the month following the month in which the child was voluntarily surrendered under Section 1255.7 of the Health and Safety Code.

(b) The date the child is reclaimed under Section 1255.7 of the Health and Safety Code.

(c) The date the child ceases to reside in California.

SEC. 8. If the Commission on State Mandates determines that this act contains costs mandated by the state, reimbursement to local agencies and school districts for those costs shall be made pursuant to Part 7 (commencing with Section 17500) of Division 4 of Title 2 of the Government Code.

Approved _____, 2005

Governor