



Safe Families
for Children

PLEASE VOTE YES

House Bill 1390 Safe Family Option for Families in Crisis

by

Rep. Jonathan Singer (D-Longmont) & Rep. Kim Ransom (R-Lone Tree)
Sen. Jim Smallwood (R-Parker) & Sen. Dominick Moreno (D-Commerce City)

Background

- Safe Families for Children (SFFC) exists in 32 states as an option for fit, custodial parents outside the child welfare system when they are in crisis. The intervention has existed since 2003.
- SFFC operates differently in each state and community in which they exist, largely on referrals from the faith-based community, domestic violence shelters, and 2-1-1 hotlines in each area.
- SFFC is entirely privately funded through philanthropy.
- Over 90-percent of SFFC placements are with single mothers with sole custody of their children
- Colorado Department of Human Services (CDHS) sent a cease-and-desist order in April 2017 claiming the Pikes Peak chapter of SFFC was violating the licensed Child Placement Agency (CPA) statute.
- SFFC worked with CDHS, counties, and child welfare stakeholders to thread the needle between parental rights and the health and safety of children in temporary care.
- CRS 26-6-101.4 states that “licensing of child care facilities contribute to a safe and healthy environment for children.”

What does HB-1390 do?

- Authorizes CDHS to promulgate rules for a “Substitute Care Organization” license and “Certified Family Caregivers.”
 - Licensing provides structured oversight of these voluntary placements outside of Colorado’s county-administered child welfare model, with state oversight.
- The workgroup for rule making includes nonprofits interested in applying for a license, child welfare nonprofits, CDHS, Counties, Office of the Respondent Parents Counsel, Office of the Child Representative, and Court-Appointed Special Advocates
- Allows a qualified non-profit organization to apply for a license once rules are adopted, with CDHS oversight to ensure the health, safety, and well-being of children.
 - There is no county involvement as these are not child welfare cases
- Requires the permission of both custodial parents to consent to a substitute care organization placement (Language crafted by the Office of the Respondent Parents Counsel)
- Ensures substitute care organizations and certified family caregivers are mandatory reporters for child abuse and neglect, subject to a full TRAILS background check by CDHS, paid for privately.
- Parental rights are preserved throughout the process, with an authorization agreement between the custodial parent(s) and a substitute care organization based upon each family’s unique needs.
- States clearly that a substitute care organization is not a licensed CPA nor are placements considered part of the foster care system.
- Counties would not be required to partner with a Substitute Care Organization like SFFC, but could make referrals outside of the child welfare system should both parties agree to do so.

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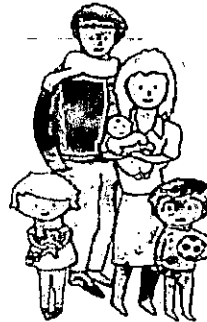
How Safe Families for Children Works



Family in Crisis

Parents in need voluntarily approach SFFC through a self-referral or other referral sources. They can opt to reunify with their children at any time and never lose custody of their children.

Host families are recruited on an ongoing basis and undergo an application and screening process (background check, home study, references).



Host Family



Family Coach

Throughout the hosting arrangement, Family Coaches offer emotional and tangible support to families in need and host families. The family coaches work with parents in crisis to develop goals and visit the host families' homes regularly to offer guidance and support.

Family Friends support parents in need by befriending, coaching, and offering moral support until their situation has begun to normalize, thus helping them to improve their parenting and home environment.



Family Friend