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SENATE BILL NO. 127

Senate Amendments in [] — February 15, 2000

A BILL to amend and reenact § 20-124.4 of the Code of Virginia, relating to mediation.

Patron—Norment

Referred to Committee for Courts of Justice

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:**1. That § 20-124.4 of the Code of Virginia is amended and reenacted as follows:**

§ 20-124.4. Mediation.

In any appropriate case the court shall refer the parents or persons with a legitimate interest to a dispute resolution evaluation session to be conducted [*by a mediator certified pursuant to guidelines promulgated by the Judicial Council*] at no cost ~~to the parties~~ and in accordance with the procedures set out in Chapter 20.2 of Title 8.01 (§ 8.01-576.4 et seq.). In assessing the appropriateness of a referral, the court shall ascertain upon motion of a party whether there is a history of family abuse. If an agreement is not reached on any issue through further mediation as agreed to by the parties, prior to the return date set by the court pursuant to § 8.01-576.5, the court shall proceed with a hearing on any unresolved issue, unless a continuance has been granted by the court. [~~The cost of a mediator appointed under this section shall be paid as provided in subsection B of § 16.1-267. The fee of a mediator appointed in any custody, support or visitation case shall be \$100 per appointment and shall be paid by the Commonwealth from the funds appropriated for payment of appointments made pursuant to subsection B of § 16.1-267.~~]

ENGROSSED

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