

VIRGINIA ACTS OF ASSEMBLY — CHAPTER

An Act to amend and reenact § 63.1-249.1 of the Code of Virginia, relating to child support enforcement privatization.

[S 289]

Approved

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That § 63.1-249.1 of the Code of Virginia is amended and reenacted as follows:

§ 63.1-249.1. Child support enforcement; private contracts.

A. Pursuant to the authority granted in § 63.1-249, child support enforcement ~~fieldwork~~ *field work* administrative functions *and central office payment processing functions* in the Commonwealth may be performed by private entities ~~on a pilot basis~~. The Department shall supervise the administration of the child support enforcement program, let and monitor all contracts with private entities and ensure compliance with applicable state and federal laws and regulations. The Department may also enter into contracts with private collection agencies and other entities to effect the collection of child support arrearages. Contracts entered into pursuant to this section shall be in accordance with the applicable laws and regulations governing public entities pursuant to the Public Procurement Act (§ 11-35 et seq.). Any contract to perform child support enforcement *field work* administrative functions *and central office payment processing functions* entered into by the Department shall contain a provision that the entity to whom the contract is awarded shall give employment preference to qualified persons whose employment with the Division of Child Support Enforcement is terminated as a result of the privatization of child support enforcement functions. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, when hiring to fill vacant positions within the Department, preference shall be given to qualified persons who are unable to obtain employment with an entity who is awarded a contract to perform child support enforcement *field work* administrative functions *and central office payment processing functions* pursuant to this section and whose employment with the Division of Child Support Enforcement is terminated as a result of the privatization of child support enforcement functions.

B. The State Board shall establish guidelines to implement the Department's responsibilities under this section. Such guidelines shall specify procedures by which child support enforcement funding mechanisms authorized by state and federal law are allocated to fund central office and privatized child support enforcement functions.

C. The Attorney General shall provide and supervise legal services to the Division of Child Support Enforcement in child support enforcement cases to establish, obligate, enforce and collect child support. In addition to other methods of providing legal services as may be authorized by law, the Attorney General may contract ~~on a pilot basis~~ with private attorneys to provide such services as special counsel pursuant to § 2.1-122 or to conduct ~~pilot~~ programs to evaluate the costs and benefits of the privatization of such legal services. The compensation for such special and private counsel shall be paid out of funds received by the Division of Child Support Enforcement as provided by state and federal law and such reasonable attorney's fees as may be recovered. The Attorney General may also use collection agencies as may be necessary and cost-effective to pursue fully the recovery of all costs and fees authorized by § 63.1-274.10 in proceedings to enforce child support obligations.

D. By July 1, 1997, and annually thereafter, the Department and the Office of the Attorney General shall each submit a written report to the Governor and General Assembly with a detailed summary and evaluation of ~~pilot~~ the privatization of child support enforcement programs.

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