

Committee on Children, Families, and Elder Affairs

CS/HB 1209 — Caregivers for Children in Out-of-Home Care

by Children, Families and Seniors Subcommittee and Rep. Buchanan and others (CS/CS/SB 1432 by Rules Committee; Children, Families, and Elder Affairs Committee; and Senator Baxley)

Current law provides duties for the Department of Children and Families (DCF) and community-based care lead agencies (CBCs) while working with caregivers who provide out-of-home care to dependent children. CS/HB 1209 establishes a goal for DCF to treat foster parents, kinship caregivers, and nonrelative caregivers with dignity, respect, and trust while ensuring the delivery of child welfare services. The bill requires DCF to strive to accomplish these goals to the extent not otherwise prohibited by state or federal law and within current resources. The goals require DCF to provide specified information and supports to foster parents, kinship caregivers, and nonrelative caregivers.

Additionally, CS/HB 1209 creates a dispute resolution process for a caregiver who believes the goals are not being met and such failure is harmful to the child or is inhibiting the caregiver's ability to meet the child's needs.

If approved by the Governor, these provisions take effect July 1, 2019.

Vote: Senate 39-0; House 114-0