

By Senator Kirkpatrick

5-362-99

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A bill to be entitled
An act relating to dependency mediation
services; amending s. 39.4075, F.S.; requiring
each judicial circuit to establish a dependency
mediation program; providing for funding of the
programs; providing an effective date.

Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

Section 1. Section 39.4075, Florida Statutes, 1998
Supplement, is amended to read:

39.4075 Referral of a dependency case to mediation.--

(1) Each circuit shall establish a dependency
mediation program to provide dependency mediation services in
that circuit.At any stage in a dependency proceeding, any
party may request the court to refer the parties to mediation
in accordance with chapter 44 and rules and procedures
developed by the Supreme Court.

(2) A court may refer the parties to mediation. ~~When
such services are available,~~The court must determine whether
it is in the best interests of the child to refer the parties
to mediation.

(3) Dependency mediation programs shall be funded from
general revenue.The court ~~department~~ shall advise the parties
that they are responsible for contributing to the cost of the
dependency mediation to the extent of their ability to pay.

~~(4) This section applies only to courts in counties in
which dependency mediation programs have been established and
does not require the establishment of such programs in any
county.~~

Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 1999.

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SENATE SUMMARY

Requires each judicial circuit to establish a dependency mediation program. Provides that such programs are to be funded from general revenue.