

SENATE BILL 855

By Black

AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Section
37-2-415, relative to the rights of foster parents.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 37-2-415, is amended by adding the following new subsections:

(d)

(1)

(A) If a foster parent believes that the department or an employee of the department has failed to follow the tenets listed in subsection (a) and such failure has harmed or could harm a child who is or was in the custody of the department, the foster parent may request in writing via registered mail that the department's central office review the actions of the department or the department's employee.

(B) If a review is requested pursuant to subdivision (d)(1)(A), the department shall conduct such review and respond in writing to the foster parent no later than thirty (30) days from the postmarked date of the foster parent's written mailed request. The review shall include, but not be limited to, an in-person interview with the foster parent.

(2) The department shall transmit to the Tennessee commission on children and youth copies of the written request made pursuant to subdivision (d)(1)(A) along with the written response made pursuant to subdivision (d)(1)(B). Such copies shall be transmitted no later than ten (10) days from the date the response was sent pursuant to subdivision (d)(1)(B).

(3) The provisions of this subsection (d) shall not be construed to limit any rights otherwise granted to foster parents by law.

(e) The department shall train all employees of the department who come in contact with foster parents regarding the provisions of this section and § 37-2-416. A plan for such training shall be submitted to the select committee on children and youth no later than October 1, 2009. All current employees shall receive such training no later than February 1, 2010, and new employees shall be trained within thirty (30) days from the date of such employment.

SECTION 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2009, the public welfare requiring it.