

# SENATE BILL 178

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By: **Senators Jacobs and Montgomery**

Introduced and read first time: January 20, 2012

Assigned to: Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

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## A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Education – Informal Kinship Care – Documentation Supporting Affidavit –**  
3 **Repeal**

4 FOR the purpose of repealing the requirement that certain supporting documentation  
5 accompany a certain affidavit verifying to a certain county superintendant of  
6 schools that a child is living in an informal kinship care arrangement for certain  
7 school attendance purposes; repealing a requirement that certain instructions  
8 explain the necessity of and encourage the submission of certain supporting  
9 documentation; and generally relating to the repeal of requirements for  
10 documentation supporting an affidavit of informal kinship care for educational  
11 purposes.

12 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,  
13 Article – Education  
14 Section 7–101  
15 Annotated Code of Maryland  
16 (2008 Replacement Volume and 2011 Supplement)

17 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF  
18 MARYLAND, That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

19 **Article – Education**

20 7–101.

21 (a) All individuals who are 5 years old or older and under 21 shall be  
22 admitted free of charge to the public schools of this State.

23 (b) (1) Except as provided in § 7–301 of this title and in paragraph (2) of  
24 this subsection, each child shall attend a public school in the county where the child is

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EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 domiciled with the child's parent, guardian, or relative providing informal kinship  
2 care, as defined in subsection (c) of this section.

3 (2) Upon request and in accordance with a county board's policies  
4 concerning residency, a county superintendent may allow a child to attend school in  
5 the county even if the child is not domiciled in that county with the child's parent or  
6 guardian.

7 (3) If a child fraudulently attends a public school in a county where  
8 the child is not domiciled with the child's parent or guardian, the child's parent or  
9 guardian shall be subject to a penalty payable to the county for the pro rata share of  
10 tuition for the time the child fraudulently attends a public school in the county.

11 (4) Nothing in this section alters the requirements for out-of-county  
12 placements contained in § 4-122 and Title 8, Subtitles 3 and 4 of this article or in any  
13 other State or federal law.

14 (c) (1) (i) In this subsection the following words have the meanings  
15 indicated.

16 (ii) "Informal kinship care" means a living arrangement in  
17 which a relative of a child, who is not in the care, custody, or guardianship of the local  
18 department of social services, provides for the care and custody of the child due to a  
19 serious family hardship.

20 (iii) "Relative" means an adult related to the child by blood or  
21 marriage within the fifth degree of consanguinity.

22 (iv) "Serious family hardship" means:

- 23 1. Death of a parent or legal guardian of the child;
- 24 2. Serious illness of a parent or legal guardian of the  
25 child;
- 26 3. Drug addiction of a parent or legal guardian of the  
27 child;
- 28 4. Incarceration of a parent or legal guardian of the  
29 child;
- 30 5. Abandonment by a parent or legal guardian of the  
31 child; or
- 32 6. Assignment of a parent or legal guardian of a child to  
33 active military duty.

1           (2)    [(i)] A county superintendent shall allow a child who is a  
2 resident of this State to attend a public school in:

3                           [1.] (I)        A county other than the county where the child  
4 is domiciled with the child's parent or legal guardian if the child lives with a relative  
5 providing informal kinship care in the county and the relative verifies the informal  
6 kinship care relationship through a sworn affidavit; or

7                           [2.] (II)       A school attendance area other than the school  
8 in the school attendance area where the child is domiciled with the child's parent or  
9 legal guardian if the child lives with a relative providing informal kinship care in the  
10 school attendance area and the relative verifies the informal kinship care relationship  
11 through a sworn affidavit.

12                           [(ii) 1.    The affidavit shall be accompanied by supporting  
13 documentation of one or more serious family hardships and, where possible, the  
14 telephone number and address of any authority who is legally authorized to reveal  
15 information which can verify the assertions in the affidavit.

16                           2.    The supporting documentation required under  
17 subsubparagraph 1 of this subparagraph shall be consistent with local, State, and  
18 federal privacy and confidentiality policies and statutes.]

19           (3)    The affidavit shall include:

20                           (i)    The name and date of birth of the child;

21                           (ii)   The name and address of the child's parent or legal  
22 guardian;

23                           (iii)   The name and address of the relative providing informal  
24 kinship care;

25                           (iv)   The date the relative assumed informal kinship care;

26                           (v)    The nature of the serious family hardship and why it  
27 resulted in informal kinship care;

28                           (vi)   The kinship relation to the child of the relative providing  
29 informal kinship care;

30                           (vii)   The name and address of the school the child previously  
31 attended;

32                           (viii)   Notice that the county superintendent may verify the facts  
33 given by the relative providing informal kinship care in the affidavit and conduct an  
34 audit of the case after the child has been enrolled in the county public school system;

1 (ix) Notice that if fraud or misrepresentation is discovered  
2 during an audit, the county superintendent shall remove the child from the public  
3 school or county public school system roll; and

4 (x) Notice that any person who willfully makes a material  
5 misrepresentation in the affidavit shall be subject to a penalty payable to the county  
6 for three times the pro rata share of tuition for the time the child fraudulently attends  
7 a public school in the county.

8 (4) The affidavit shall be in the following form:

9 (i) I, the undersigned, am over eighteen (18) years of age and  
10 competent to testify to the facts and matters set forth herein.

11 (ii) \_\_\_\_\_ (name of child), whose date of birth is  
12 \_\_\_\_\_, is living with me because of the following serious family hardship:  
13 (check each that is applicable)

- 14  death of father/mother/legal guardian
- 15  serious illness of father/mother/legal guardian
- 16  drug addiction of father/mother/legal guardian
- 17  incarceration of father/mother/legal guardian
- 18  abandonment by father/mother/legal guardian
- 19  assignment of a parent or legal guardian of a child to active military duty

20 (iii) The name and last known address of the child's parent(s) or  
21 legal guardian is:

22 \_\_\_\_\_  
 23 \_\_\_\_\_  
 24 \_\_\_\_\_

25 (iv) My kinship relation to the child is \_\_\_\_\_

26 (v) My address is:

27 \_\_\_\_\_  
 28 Street Apt. No.  
 29 \_\_\_\_\_  
 30 City State Zip Code

31 (vi) I assumed informal kinship care of this child for 24 hours a  
32 day and 7 days a week on \_\_\_\_\_(day/month/year).

33 (vii) The name and address of the last school that the child  
34 attended is:

1 \_\_\_\_\_  
2 \_\_\_\_\_  
3 (viii) The county superintendent may verify the facts contained in  
4 the foregoing affidavit and conduct an audit on a case-by-case basis after the child  
5 has been enrolled in the county public school system. If the county superintendent  
6 discovers fraud or misrepresentation, the child shall be removed from the public school  
7 or county public school system roll.

8 (ix) I solemnly affirm under the penalties of perjury that the  
9 contents of the foregoing are true to the best of my knowledge, information, and belief.

10 \_\_\_\_\_  
11 Signature of affiant  
12 \_\_\_\_\_  
13 (Day/month/year)

14 (x) Any person who willfully makes a material  
15 misrepresentation in this affidavit shall be subject to a penalty payable to the county  
16 for three times the pro rata share of tuition for the time the child fraudulently attends  
17 a public school in the county.

18 (5) (i) Instructions that explain the necessity for [both] an affidavit  
19 [and supporting documentation] of the serious family hardship resulting in informal  
20 kinship care shall:

21 1. Be attached to affidavit forms that comply with  
22 paragraph (4) of this subsection; and

23 2. Include language encouraging the relative providing  
24 informal kinship care to submit the affidavit [and supporting documentation] prior to  
25 September 30 of each year.

26 (ii) The affidavit forms, with attached instructions, shall be  
27 made available free of charge at the offices of each county board of education, each  
28 local department of social services, and each local area agency on aging.

29 (6) If a change occurs in the care or in the serious family hardship of  
30 the child, the relative providing informal kinship care for the child shall notify the  
31 local school system in writing within 30 days after the change occurs.

32 (7) (i) An informal kinship care affidavit may be filed during a  
33 school year.

1                   (ii) The relative providing informal kinship care shall file an  
2 affidavit annually at least 2 weeks prior to the beginning of the school year for each  
3 year the child continues to live with the relative because of a serious family hardship.

4                   (8) Unless the court appoints a guardian for the child or awards  
5 custody of the child to someone other than the relative providing informal kinship  
6 care, the relative providing informal kinship care shall make the full range of  
7 educational decisions for the child.

8                   (9) The relative providing informal kinship care shall make reasonable  
9 efforts to inform the parent or legal guardian of the child of the informal kinship care  
10 relationship.

11                   (10) The parent or legal guardian of a child in an informal kinship care  
12 relationship shall have final decision making authority regarding the educational  
13 needs of the child.

14                   (d) Section 4–122.1 of this article shall apply to the education funding of a  
15 child in an informal kinship care relationship if the fiscal impact of the requirements  
16 of subsections (b) and (c) of this section exceed 0.1% of a county board’s total operating  
17 budget for a fiscal year.

18                   (e) (1) By the 2007–2008 school year, each county board shall provide  
19 full–day kindergarten programs for all kindergarten students in that county.

20                   (2) In the comprehensive master plan that is submitted under § 5–401  
21 of this article, a county board shall identify the strategies that will be used in that  
22 county to ensure that full–day kindergarten programs are provided to all kindergarten  
23 students in that county by the 2007–2008 school year.

24                   SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect  
25 July 1, 2012.