

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

**Article - Courts and Judicial Proceedings**

3-816.1.

(a) The provisions of this section apply to a hearing conducted in accordance with § 3-815, § 3-817, § 3-819, or § 3-823 of this subtitle or a review hearing conducted in accordance with § 5-326 of the Family Law Article in which a child is placed under an order of guardianship, commitment, or shelter care.

(b) (1) In a hearing conducted in accordance with § 3-815, § 3-817, § 3-819, or § 3-823 of this subtitle, the court shall make a finding whether the local department made reasonable efforts to prevent placement of the child into the local department's custody.

(2) In a review hearing conducted in accordance with § 3-823 of this subtitle or § 5-326 of the Family Law Article, the court shall make a finding whether a local department made reasonable efforts to:

(i) Finalize the permanency plan in effect for the child; and

(ii) Meet the needs of the child, including the child's health, education, safety, and preparation for independence.

**(3) IN A HEARING CONDUCTED IN ACCORDANCE WITH § 3-815, § 3-817, OR § 3-819 OF THIS SUBTITLE, BEFORE DETERMINING WHETHER A CHILD WITH A DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITY OR A MENTAL ILLNESS IS A CHILD IN NEED OF ASSISTANCE, THE COURT SHALL MAKE A FINDING WHETHER THE LOCAL DEPARTMENT MADE REASONABLE EFFORTS TO PREVENT PLACEMENT OF THE CHILD INTO THE LOCAL DEPARTMENT'S CUSTODY BY DETERMINING WHETHER THE LOCAL DEPARTMENT COULD HAVE PLACED THE CHILD IN ACCORDANCE WITH A VOLUNTARY PLACEMENT AGREEMENT UNDER § 5-525(A)(1)(I) OR (III) OF THE FAMILY LAW ARTICLE.**

[(3)] (4) The court shall require a local department to provide evidence of its efforts before the court makes a finding required under this subsection.

[(4)] (5) The court's finding under this subsection shall assess the efforts made since the last adjudication of reasonable efforts and may not rely on findings from prior hearings.

3-819.