

5-525.

(a) (1) The Administration shall establish a program of out-of-home placement for minor children:

(i) who are placed in the custody of a local department, for a period of not more than 180 days, by a parent or legal guardian under a voluntary placement agreement;

(ii) who are abused, abandoned, neglected, or dependent, if a juvenile court:

1. has determined that continued residence in the child's home is contrary to the child's welfare; and

2. has committed the child to the custody or guardianship of a local department; or

(iii) who, with the approval of the Administration, are placed in an out-of-home placement by a local department under a voluntary placement agreement subject to paragraph (2) of this subsection.

(2) (i) A local department may not seek legal custody of a child under a voluntary placement agreement if the child has a developmental disability or a mental illness and the purpose of the voluntary placement agreement is to obtain treatment or care related to the child's disability that the parent is unable to provide.

(ii) A child described in subparagraph (i) of this paragraph may remain in an out-of-home placement under a voluntary placement agreement for more than 180 days if the child's disability necessitates care or treatment in the out-of-home placement and a juvenile court makes a finding that continuation of the placement is in the best interests of the child.

(III) EACH LOCAL DEPARTMENT SHALL DESIGNATE, FROM EXISTING STAFF, A STAFF PERSON ~~WHO DOES NOT INVESTIGATE CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT ALLEGATIONS~~ TO ADMINISTER REQUESTS FOR VOLUNTARY PLACEMENT AGREEMENTS FOR CHILDREN WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES OR MENTAL ILLNESSES.

(IV) EACH LOCAL DEPARTMENT SHALL REPORT ANNUALLY TO THE ADMINISTRATION ON THE NUMBER OF REQUESTS FOR VOLUNTARY PLACEMENT AGREEMENTS FOR CHILDREN WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES OR MENTAL ILLNESSES THAT HAVE BEEN RECEIVED, THE OUTCOME OF EACH REQUEST, AND THE REASON FOR EACH DENIAL.