

SENATE BILL 656

By Jackson

AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 36
and Title 37, relative to children.

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

SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 37, Chapter 2, Part 4, is amended by adding the following new section:

(a) If a child is removed from the custody of a parent or guardian due to a finding of dependency and neglect and placed in the custody of the department, then the department shall not allow unsupervised visitation with or return physical custody of the child to the parent or guardian without a hearing at which the court finds that the child will receive proper care and supervision in a safe home.

(b) Before the department may recommend the return of physical custody of the child to the parent or guardian, the department must first observe the parent or guardian with the child for at least two (2) visits that support a recommendation to return physical custody. Each visit must consist of an observation of not less than one (1) hour with the child, and the observation visits shall be conducted at least seven (7) days apart. The department must provide documentation of any observation visits conducted to the court for its consideration as to whether physical custody should be returned to the parent or guardian.

SECTION 2. This act takes effect upon becoming a law, the public welfare requiring it.