

**OPD** OFFICE OF THE  
PARENT DEFENDER

# Legislative (and other) Updates

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8/29/2024

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# 2024 Short Session

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<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1) Grandparents' role in A/N/D and TPR cases</li><li>2) \$ for unlicensed relative caretakers</li><li>3) Safe Babies Court</li></ol>	<p><i>What has been enacted?</i></p>
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## Grandparents in A/N/D and TPR cases

§ 7B-401.1. Parties.

(e2) Grandparent. – A grandparent is not a party to the case and shall be allowed to intervene if one of the following applies:

- (1) Both parents of the juvenile are deceased.
- (2) One parent of the juvenile is deceased and no other parent is known.
- (3) One parent of the juvenile is deceased and any other parent's rights have been terminated.

§ 7B-1103. Who may file a petition or motion.

8) A grandparent of the juvenile if all known parents are deceased and the motion is to terminate the parental rights of an unknown parent.

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## Unlicensed Family Foster Home

Requires State DSS to develop and implement a policy that allows an individual who is related to a child and providing foster care to a child in a family foster home to be reimbursed for the provision of care without having to meet the requirements for licensure. **New: includes any half-sibling of that child, effective 7/8/2024.**

Blood, Marriage, Adoption  
New: any half sibling of child

½ Foster Care Rate

50-50 Split county-state

Effective November 16, 2023

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## Foster Care/Non-Licensed Placements

0-5	\$702 / \$351
6-12	\$742 / \$371
13-18	\$810 / \$405

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## Safe Babies Court

Creating a Safe Babies Court (SBC) program in NC is a recommendation from Chief Justice Paul Newby's ACES-Informed Courts Task Force.

Currently, there are five pilot counties that will implement SBC: New Hanover, Mitchell and Yancey, Brunswick and Durham.

"SBC connects babies, toddlers, and their families involved in the child welfare court system with intensive support and services designed to promote healthy child development while working to ensure a safe and timely exit from foster care. This means there are frequent judicial status conferences and family team meetings to provide additional oversight and ensure the family's needs are met and the case is not lingering in the court system."

[North Carolina Safe Babies Court Fact Sheet](#).

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## What is still pending?

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## Short Session-2024

The House and Senate of the NCGA will reconvene on the following dates:

- Monday, September 9, 2024, at 12:00.
- Wednesday, October 9, 2024, at 12:00.
- Tuesday, November 19, 2024, at 12:00.
- Wednesday, December 11, 2024, at 12:00.
- Adjourn sine die\* on Friday, December 13, 2024.

For all sessions other than the November session, items generally limited to vetoes, appointments, litigation, and elections.

During the November session, the following topics are allowed: bills directly and primarily affecting the state budget; constitutional amendments; bills that crossed over; bills and resolutions implementing the recommendations of study commissions; local bills filed by May 7, 2024; appointments and confirmations, and other topics.

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## HB 647: ... Expedite Child Permanency

- Use of illegal controlled substance or abuse of alcohol
  - ✓ *Criteria for nonsecure*
  - ✓ *Definition of neglected juvenile*
  - ✓ *Aggravating factor (in utero included)*
- Development and attachment needs of juvenile
- Once with a foster parent for 9 months = “nonrelative kin”
- TPR standing: 15 months placement

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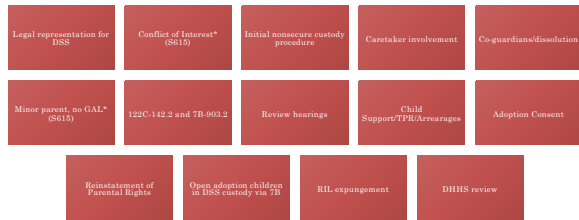
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## S625 - Child Welfare, Safety and Permanency Reforms



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## Budget

IDS' highest priority for the short session is enough funds for the Private Assigned Counsel (“PAC”) Fund to allow IDS to continue to pay PAC uninterrupted through 6/30/2025.

IDS initially requested \$12 million for the PAC Fund. Since the original short-term request, IDS asked for an additional \$20 million to be held in reserve due to an “historic and unabated demand on the PAC Fund.”

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**ECourts Expanding to All 100 Counties in 2025**

ECourts currently serves about half of North Carolina's population in its three largest cities and 38 counties across the coastal, piedmont, and mountain regions.

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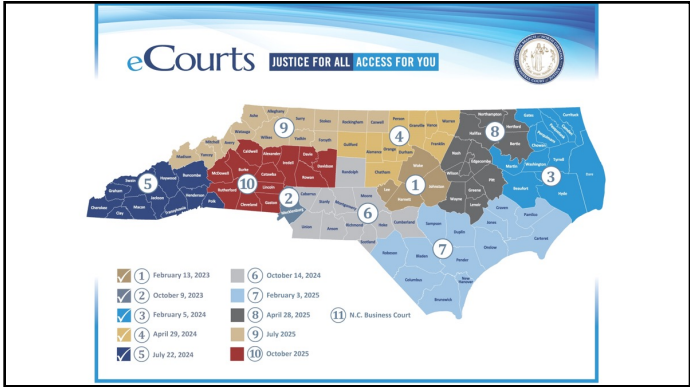
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**PD Expansion**

Niccoya Dobson	District 5:	<i>Duplin, Jones, Sampson</i>
Tonza D. Ruffin	District 7:	<i>Bertie, Halifax, Hertford, Northampton</i>
A. Traynham Dorn	District 13:	<i>Johnston</i>
Jacob Ward	District 15:	<i>Bladen, Columbus, Brunswick</i>
Ricky Champion	District 17:	<i>Alamance</i>
Seth J. Johnson	District 22A:	<i>Alexander and Iredell</i>
Randolph Lee	District 30:	<i>Union County</i>
Janna D. Allison	District 43A:	<i>Cherokee, Clay, Graham, Haywood, Jackson, Macon, and Swain</i>

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**3 Asks and 1 Announcement**

1. 100 counties = 100 contacts
2. Attorneys in counties in or near a law school
3. Clients who should be a parent/peer mentor

❖ Announcement!

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