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State of Minnesota
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

**EIGHTY-FIFTH
SESSION**

HOUSE FILE No. 3371

February 25, 2008

Authored by Tingelstad; Hosch; Wardlow; Anderson, B.; Severson and others
The bill was read for the first time and referred to the Committee on Health and Human Services

March 17, 2008

Committee Recommendation and Adoption of Report: To Pass as Amended and re-referred to the Committee on Finance

March 18, 2008

By motion, recalled and re-referred to the Committee on Public Safety and Civil Justice

March 27, 2008

Committee Recommendation and Adoption of Report: To Pass as Amended
Pursuant to Joint Rule 2.03 and in accordance with Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 8, re-referred to the Committee on Rules and Legislative Administration

March 31, 2008

Committee Recommendation and Adoption of Report:
To Pass
Read Second Time

1.1 A bill for an act
1.2 relating to adoption; allowing adopted persons access to birth records; amending
1.3 Minnesota Statutes 2006, sections 13.465, subdivision 8; 144.218, subdivision 1;
1.4 144.225, subdivision 2; 144.2252; 144.226, subdivision 1; 259.89, subdivision 1;
1.5 260C.317, subdivision 4; proposing coding for new law in Minnesota Statutes,
1.6 chapter 144; repealing Minnesota Statutes 2006, sections 259.83, subdivision 3;
1.7 259.89, subdivisions 2, 3, 4, 5.

1.8 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MINNESOTA:

1.9 Section 1. Minnesota Statutes 2006, section 13.465, subdivision 8, is amended to read:

1.10 Subd. 8. **Adoption records.** Various adoption records are classified under section
1.11 259.53, subdivision 1. Access to the original birth record of a person who has been
1.12 adopted is governed by section ~~259.89~~ 144.2253.

1.13 Sec. 2. Minnesota Statutes 2006, section 144.218, subdivision 1, is amended to read:

1.14 Subdivision 1. **Adoption.** Upon receipt of a certified copy of an order, decree, or
1.15 certificate of adoption, the state registrar shall register a replacement vital record in the
1.16 new name of the adopted person. The original record of birth is ~~confidential~~ private data
1.17 on individuals pursuant to section 13.02, subdivision ~~3~~ 12, and shall not be disclosed
1.18 except pursuant to court order or section 144.2252 or 144.2253. The information
1.19 contained on the original birth record, except for the registration number, shall be provided
1.20 on request to: (1) a parent who is named on the original birth record; and (2) the adopted
1.21 person who is the subject of the vital record if the person is at least 19 years of age. Upon
1.22 the receipt of a certified copy of a court order of annulment of adoption the state registrar
1.23 shall restore the original vital record to its original place in the file.

2.1 Sec. 3. Minnesota Statutes 2006, section 144.225, subdivision 2, is amended to read:

2.2 Subd. 2. **Data about births.** (a) Except as otherwise provided in this subdivision,
2.3 data pertaining to the birth of a child to a woman who was not married to the child's father
2.4 when the child was conceived nor when the child was born, including the original record
2.5 of birth and the certified vital record, are confidential data. At the time of the birth of a
2.6 child to a woman who was not married to the child's father when the child was conceived
2.7 nor when the child was born, the mother may designate demographic data pertaining to
2.8 the birth as public. Notwithstanding the designation of the data as confidential, it may
2.9 be disclosed:

2.10 (1) to a parent or guardian of the child;

2.11 (2) to the child when the child is 16 years of age or older;

2.12 (3) under paragraph (b) or (e); or

2.13 (4) pursuant to a court order. For purposes of this section, a subpoena does not
2.14 constitute a court order.

2.15 (b) Unless the child is adopted, data pertaining to the birth of a child that are not
2.16 accessible to the public become public data if 100 years have elapsed since the birth of
2.17 the child who is the subject of the data, or as provided under section 13.10, whichever
2.18 occurs first.

2.19 (c) If a child is adopted, data pertaining to the child's birth are governed by the
2.20 provisions relating to adoption records, including sections 13.10, subdivision 5; 144.218,
2.21 subdivision 1; 144.2252; 144.2253; and 259.89.

2.22 (d) The name and address of a mother under paragraph (a) and the child's date of
2.23 birth may be disclosed to the county social services or public health member of a family
2.24 services collaborative for purposes of providing services under section 124D.23.

2.25 (e) The commissioner of human services shall have access to birth records for:

2.26 (1) the purposes of administering medical assistance, general assistance medical
2.27 care, and the MinnesotaCare program;

2.28 (2) child support enforcement purposes; and

2.29 (3) other public health purposes as determined by the commissioner of health.

2.30 Sec. 4. Minnesota Statutes 2006, section 144.2252, is amended to read:

2.31 **144.2252 ACCESS TO ORIGINAL BIRTH RECORD AFTER ADOPTION.**

2.32 (a) Whenever an adopted person requests the state registrar to disclose the
2.33 information on the adopted person's original birth record, the state registrar shall act
2.34 according to section ~~259.89~~ 144.2253.

3.1 (b) The state registrar shall provide a transcript of an adopted person's original birth
3.2 record to an authorized representative of a federally recognized American Indian tribe
3.3 for the sole purpose of determining the adopted person's eligibility for enrollment or
3.4 membership. Information contained in the birth record may not be used to provide the
3.5 adopted person information about the person's birth parents, except as provided in this
3.6 section or section ~~259.83~~ 144.2253.

3.7 Sec. 5. **[144.2253] ACCESS TO ORIGINAL BIRTH RECORDS BY ADOPTED**
3.8 **PERSON; DEPARTMENT DUTIES.**

3.9 Subdivision 1. **Disclosure.** The state registrar shall provide a noncertified copy of
3.10 the original birth record upon request to an adopted person age 19 or older if there is no
3.11 affidavit of nondisclosure on file. Affidavits of disclosure and affidavits of nondisclosure
3.12 must be honored by the state registrar.

3.13 Subd. 2. **Affidavit of nondisclosure.** The department shall make the affidavit of
3.14 disclosure and affidavit of nondisclosure forms readily accessible for birth parents on
3.15 the department's Web site.

3.16 Subd. 3. **Rescission of affidavit.** A birth parent may rescind an affidavit of disclosure
3.17 or an affidavit of nondisclosure at any time.

3.18 Subd. 4. **Affidavit of nondisclosure; access to birth record.** (a) An adopted person
3.19 age 19 or older may petition the appropriate court for disclosure of the original birth record
3.20 pursuant to section 259.61, and the court shall grant the petition, if, after consideration of
3.21 the interests of all known persons involved, the court determines that disclosure of the
3.22 information would be of greater benefit than nondisclosure.

3.23 (b) An adopted person age 19 or older may request the state registrar search the state
3.24 death records to determine if the birth parent is deceased. The state registrar may impose a
3.25 fee for the record search. If the birth parent is deceased, a noncertified copy of the original
3.26 birth record must be released only to the adopted person making the request.

3.27 Subd. 5. **Information provided.** (a) The department shall, in consultation with
3.28 adoption agencies and adoption advocates, provide information and educational materials
3.29 to adopted persons and birth parents about the changes in the law affecting accessibility
3.30 to birth records. For purposes of this subdivision, an adoption advocate is a nonprofit
3.31 organization that works with adoption issues in Minnesota.

3.32 (b) The department shall provide notice on the department Web site about the change
3.33 in the law, and will direct individuals to private agencies and advocates for post-adoption
3.34 resources.

4.1 Sec. 6. Minnesota Statutes 2006, section 144.226, subdivision 1, is amended to read:

4.2 Subdivision 1. **Which services are for fee.** The fees for the following services shall
4.3 be the following or an amount prescribed by rule of the commissioner:

4.4 (a) The fee for the issuance of a certified vital record or a certification that the vital
4.5 record cannot be found is \$9. No fee shall be charged for a certified birth, stillbirth, or
4.6 death record that is reissued within one year of the original issue, if an amendment is
4.7 made to the vital record and if the previously issued vital record is surrendered. The
4.8 fee is nonrefundable.

4.9 (b) The fee for processing a request for the replacement of a birth record for
4.10 all events, except when filing a recognition of parentage pursuant to section 257.73,
4.11 subdivision 1, is \$40. The fee is payable at the time of application and is nonrefundable.

4.12 (c) The fee for processing a request for the filing of a delayed registration of
4.13 birth, stillbirth, or death is \$40. The fee is payable at the time of application and is
4.14 nonrefundable. This fee includes one subsequent review of the request if the request
4.15 is not acceptable upon the initial receipt.

4.16 (d) The fee for processing a request for the amendment of any vital record when
4.17 requested more than 45 days after the filing of the vital record is \$40. No fee shall be
4.18 charged for an amendment requested within 45 days after the filing of the vital record.
4.19 The fee is payable at the time of application and is nonrefundable. This fee includes one
4.20 subsequent review of the request if the request is not acceptable upon the initial receipt.

4.21 (e) The fee for processing a request for the verification of information from vital
4.22 records is \$9 when the applicant furnishes the specific information to locate the vital
4.23 record. When the applicant does not furnish specific information, the fee is \$20 per hour
4.24 for staff time expended. Specific information includes the correct date of the event and
4.25 the correct name of the registrant. Fees charged shall approximate the costs incurred in
4.26 searching and copying the vital records. The fee is payable at the time of application
4.27 and is nonrefundable.

4.28 (f) The fee for processing a request for the issuance of a copy of any document on
4.29 file pertaining to a vital record or statement that a related document cannot be found is \$9.
4.30 The fee is payable at the time of application and is nonrefundable.

4.31 (g) The department shall charge a fee of \$18 for noncertified copies of birth records
4.32 provided to adopted persons age 19 or older; the fee shall cover the costs of providing
4.33 the birth record and any costs associated with the distribution of information to adopted
4.34 persons and birth parents in subdivision 5.

4.35 Sec. 7. Minnesota Statutes 2006, section 259.89, subdivision 1, is amended to read:

5.1 Subdivision 1. **Request.** An adopted person who is 19 years of age or over may
5.2 request the commissioner of health to disclose the information on the adopted person's
5.3 original birth record. ~~The commissioner of health shall, within five days of receipt of~~
5.4 ~~the request, notify the commissioner of human services in writing of the request by the~~
5.5 ~~adopted person.~~

5.6 Sec. 8. Minnesota Statutes 2006, section 260C.317, subdivision 4, is amended to read:

5.7 Subd. 4. **Rights of terminated parent.** Upon entry of an order terminating the
5.8 parental rights of any person who is identified as a parent on the original birth record of
5.9 the child as to whom the parental rights are terminated, the court shall cause written
5.10 notice to be made to that person setting forth:

5.11 (1) the right of the person to file at any time with the state registrar of vital statistics
5.12 a consent to disclosure, as defined in section 144.212, subdivision 11;

5.13 (2) the right of the person to file at any time with the state registrar of vital statistics
5.14 an affidavit stating that the information on the original birth record shall not be disclosed
5.15 as provided in section ~~144.2252~~ 144.2253; and

5.16 (3) the effect of a failure to file either a consent to disclosure, as defined in section
5.17 144.212, subdivision 11, or an affidavit stating that the information on the original birth
5.18 record shall not be disclosed.

5.19 Sec. 9. **ADOPTION AGENCIES; FEE.**

5.20 Adoption agencies may charge a fee for counseling and support services provided to
5.21 adopted persons and birth parents.

5.22 Sec. 10. **REPEALER.**

5.23 Minnesota Statutes 2006, sections 259.83, subdivision 3; and 259.89, subdivisions 2,
5.24 3, 4, and 5, are repealed.

5.25 Sec. 11. **EFFECTIVE DATE.**

5.26 This act is effective July 1, 2009.