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House Bill 5082 (Substitute S-1 as reported)
Sponsor: Representative Kurt Heise
House Committee: Judiciary
Senate Committee: Judiciary

CONTENT

The bill would amend the Child Custody Act to do the following:

- Authorize a court to order the appointment of a parenting coordinator, with the consent of the parties, to help implement the court's parenting time orders and to help resolve parenting disputes.
- Require the State Court Administrative Office (SCAO) to develop standards for the qualifications and training of parenting coordinators, and require coordinators to complete the training within two years of the promulgation of the standards.
- Require a court order appointing a parenting coordinator to identify the scope of the coordinator's duties in resolving disputes, and meet other criteria.
- Provide that the court order could give a parenting coordinator access to certain information and individuals, including a specific therapist of any of the parties or the child, if a proper release were executed, and the results of specific evaluations and psychological tests performed on any child or parent or other person living in the parent's household.
- Provide for the costs of a parenting coordinator to be the responsibility of the parties.
- Require a parenting coordinator to inquire about any history of a coercive or violent relationship between the parties and to take certain actions if there were such a history.
- Require a parenting coordinator to report to the Department of Human Services if he or she had reasonable cause to suspect child abuse or neglect.
- Require a parenting coordinator to make written recommendations to the parties, but specify that the recommendations would not be considered evidence unless agreed to by the parties.
- Specify that communications with a parenting coordinator would not be privileged and confidential, but a coordinator would not have to disclose information that would compromise the safety of a party or a child.
- Specify that the court could allow the testimony of the parenting coordinator, but he or she could not testify about a child's statements if disclosure would be damaging to the child.

Proposed MCL 722.27c

Legislative Analyst: Patrick Affholter

FISCAL IMPACT

The bill would result in cost to State government by requiring the State Court Administrative Office to create and implement standards for the qualification and training of parenting coordinators. There would be no fiscal impact on local government.

Date Completed: 6-13-14

Fiscal Analyst: John Maxwell

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Bill Analysis @ www.senate.michigan.gov/sfa

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