



Ohio Revised Code

Section 3107.161 Determining best interest of child in contested adoption - burden of proof.

Effective: November 6, 1996

Legislation: Senate Bill 292 - 121st General Assembly

(A) As used in this section, "the least detrimental available alternative" means the alternative that would have the least long-term negative impact on the child.

(B) When a court makes a determination in a contested adoption concerning the best interest of a child, the court shall consider all relevant factors including, but not limited to, all of the following:

(1) The least detrimental available alternative for safeguarding the child's growth and development;

(2) The age and health of the child at the time the best interest determination is made and, if applicable, at the time the child was removed from the home;

(3) The wishes of the child in any case in which the child's age and maturity makes this feasible;

(4) The duration of the separation of the child from a parent;

(5) Whether the child will be able to enter into a more stable and permanent family relationship, taking into account the conditions of the child's current placement, the likelihood of future placements, and the results of prior placements;

(6) The likelihood of safe reunification with a parent within a reasonable period of time;

(7) The importance of providing permanency, stability, and continuity of relationships for the child;

(8) The child's interaction and interrelationship with the child's parents, siblings, and any other person who may significantly affect the child's best interest;

(9) The child's adjustment to the child's current home, school, and community;



(10) The mental and physical health of all persons involved in the situation;

(11) Whether any person involved in the situation has been convicted of, pleaded guilty to, or accused of any criminal offense involving any act that resulted in a child being abused or neglected; whether the person, in a case in which a child has been adjudicated to be an abused or neglected child, has been determined to be the perpetrator of the abusive or neglectful act that is the basis of the adjudication; whether the person has been convicted of, pleaded guilty to, or accused of a violation of section 2919.25 of the Revised Code involving a victim who at the time of the commission of the offense was a member of the person's family or household; and whether the person has been convicted of, pleaded guilty to, or accused of any offense involving a victim who at the time of the commission of the offense was a member of the person's family or household and caused physical harm to the victim in the commission of the offense.

(C) A person who contests an adoption has the burden of providing the court material evidence needed to determine what is in the best interest of the child and must establish that the child's current placement is not the least detrimental available alternative.