SENATE BILL NO. 2474

AN ACT TO AMEND SECTION 43-27-20, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO CHANGE THE NAME OF THE DIVISION OF YOUTH SERVICES, OFFICE OF COMMUNITY SERVICES IN THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES TO THE "OFFICE OF JUVENILE PROBATION/AFTERCARE"; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI:

SECTION 1. Section 43-27-20, Mississippi Code of 1972, is amended as follows:

43-27-20. (a) Within the Division of Youth Services of the Mississippi Department of Human Services there shall be an Office of Juvenile Probation/Aftercare which shall be headed by a director appointed by and responsible to the Director of the Department of Youth Services. He shall hold a master's degree in social work or a related field and shall have no less than three (3) years' experience in social services, or in lieu of such degree and experience, he shall have a minimum of eight (8) years' experience in social work or a related field. He shall employ and assign the Juvenile Probation/Aftercare workers to serve in the various areas in the state and any other supporting personnel necessary to carry out the duties of the Office of Juvenile Probation/Aftercare.

(b) The Director of the Office of Juvenile Probation/Aftercare shall assign probation and aftercare workers to the youth court or family court judges of the various court districts upon the request of the individual judge on the basis of caseload and need, when funds are available. The probation and aftercare workers shall live in their respective districts except upon approval of the Director of the Office of Juvenile Probation/Aftercare.
Probation/Aftercare. The Director of the Office of Juvenile Probation/Aftercare is authorized to assign a youth services counselor to a district other than the district in which the youth services counselor lives upon the approval of the youth court judge of the assigned district and the Director of the Division of Youth Services. Every placement shall be with the approval of the youth court or the family court judge, and a probation and aftercare worker may be removed for cause from a youth or family court district.

(c) Any counties or cities which, on July 1, 1973, have court counselors or similar personnel may continue using this personnel or may choose to come within the statewide framework.

(d) A probation and aftercare worker may be transferred by the division from one court to another after consultation with the judge or judges in the court to which the employee is currently assigned.

(e) The Office of Juvenile Probation/Aftercare shall have such duties as the Division of Youth Services shall assign to it which shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

(1) Preparing the social, educational and home-life history and other diagnostic reports on the child for the benefit of the court or the training school; however, this provision shall not abridge the power of the court to require similar services from other agencies, according to law.

(2) Serving in counseling capacities with the youth or family courts.

(3) Serving as probation agents for the youth or family courts.

(4) Serving, advising and counseling of children in the various institutions under the control of the Office of Juvenile Correctional Institutions as may be necessary to the placement of the children in proper environment after release and the placement of children in suitable jobs where necessary and proper.
(5) Supervising and guiding of children released or conditionally released from institutions under the control of the Office of Juvenile Correctional Institutions.

(6) Counseling in an aftercare program.

(7) Coordinating the activities of supporting community agencies which aid in the social adjustment of children released from the institution and in an aftercare program.

(8) Providing or arranging for necessary services leading to the rehabilitation of delinquents, either within the division or through cooperative arrangements with other appropriate agencies.

(9) Providing counseling and supervision for any child under ten (10) years of age who has been brought to the attention of the court when other suitable personnel is not available and upon request of the court concerned.

(10) Supervising the aftercare program and making revocation investigations at the request of the court.

(f) This section shall stand repealed on July 1, 2003.

SECTION 2. This act shall take effect and be in force from and after July 1, 2002.