WEST VIRGINIA CODE: §49-2-101

§49-2-101. Authorization and responsibility; Bureau for Social Services.

(a) The Bureau for Social Services is continued within the department. The bureau is under the immediate supervision of a commissioner.

(b) The Bureau for Social Services is authorized to provide care, support, and protective services for children who are handicapped by dependency, neglect, single parent status, mental or physical disability, or who for other reasons are in need of public service. The bureau is also authorized to accept children for care from their parent or parents, guardian, custodian, or relatives, and to accept the custody of children committed to its care by courts. The bureau or any county office of the department is also authorized to accept temporary custody of children for care from any law-enforcement officer in an emergency situation.

(c) The bureau is responsible for the care of the infant child of an unmarried mother who has been committed to the custody of the department while the infant is placed in the same licensed child welfare agency as his or her mother. The bureau provides care for those children in family homes meeting required standards, at board or otherwise, through a licensed child welfare agency, or in a state institution providing care for dependent or neglected children. If practical, when placing any child in the care of a family or a child welfare agency, the bureau shall select a family holding the same religious belief as the parents or relatives of the child, or a child welfare agency conducted under religious auspices of the same belief as the parents or relatives.

WV Legislature