

## HR 2657

### District of Columbia Family Court Act of 2001

**Congress:** 107 (2001–2003, Ended)

**Chamber:** House

**Policy Area:** Law

**Introduced:** Jul 26, 2001

**Current Status:** Became Public Law No: 107-114.

**Latest Action:** Became Public Law No: 107-114. (Jan 8, 2002)

**Law:** 107-114 (Enacted Jan 8, 2002)

**Official Text:** <https://www.congress.gov/bill/107th-congress/house-bill/2657>

### Sponsor

**Name:** Rep. DeLay, Tom [R-TX-22]

**Party:** Republican • **State:** TX • **Chamber:** House

### Cosponsors (3 total)

Cosponsor	Party / State	Role	Date Joined
Del. Norton, Eleanor Holmes [D-DC-At Large]	D · DC		Jul 26, 2001
Rep. Davis, Tom [R-VA-11]	R · VA		Jul 26, 2001
Rep. Morella, Constance A. [R-MD-8]	R · MD		Jul 26, 2001

### Committee Activity

Committee	Chamber	Activity	Date
Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee	Senate	Referred to	Oct 16, 2001
Oversight and Government Reform Committee	House	Markup by	Aug 13, 2001

### Subjects & Policy Tags

#### Policy Area:

Law

### Related Bills

Bill	Relationship	Last Action
107 S 1382	Related bill	Dec 5, 2001: Placed on Senate Legislative Calendar under General Orders. Calendar No. 257.

## **Summary** (as of Dec 14, 2001)

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District of Columbia Family Court Act of 2001 - Amends the District of Columbia Code to rename the Family Division of the Superior Court of the District of Columbia as the Family Court of the Superior Court of the District of Columbia.

Provides that: (1) the Family Court shall have original jurisdiction over currently mandated actions, applications, determinations, adjudications, and proceedings; and (2) actions, applications, determinations, adjudications, and proceedings being assigned to cross-jurisdictional units established by the Superior Court, including the Domestic Violence Unit, on the enactment of this Act may continue to be so assigned thereafter.

(Sec. 3) Sets forth special rules regarding the assignment and service of Family Court judges, including temporary reassignment in emergency situations to the Family Court of judges from other divisions of the Superior Court who meet certain requirements.

(Sec. 4) Specifies the original jurisdiction of the Family Court. Requires assignment to the same judge ("One Family, One Judge"), to the greatest extent practicable, feasible, and lawful, of all cases and proceedings involving members of the same family or household. Requires resolution of such cases and proceedings through alternative dispute resolution procedures, to the greatest extent practicable and safe.

Requires the Family Court presiding judge to carry out an ongoing training program in family law and related matters for Family Court and other Superior Court judges, and appropriate nonjudicial personnel. Requires the Executive Officer of the D.C. courts to establish an electronic tracking and management system for Family Court cases and proceedings, with all records and materials stored and maintained in an accessible electronic format.

Requires on-site coordination of social services and other related services.

Requires the chief judge of the Superior Court to report to Congress annually on the Family Court's activities, including analyses of the Family's Court's efficiency and effectiveness in managing its case load during the year and of the time required to dispose of actions and proceedings among the various categories of the Family Court's jurisdiction. Requires the annual report to propose a remedial action plan to address any failure of the Family Court to meet deadlines, standards, and outcome measures.

Requires expedited review by the District of Columbia Court of Appeals of any appeal from a Family Court order terminating parental rights or granting or denying a petition to adopt.

Directs the Mayor of the District of Columbia to submit to the President and Congress a plan for integrating the computer systems of the District government with those of the Superior Court so that the Family Court and appropriate District government offices providing social and other related services to individuals and families served by the Family Court will be able to access and share information.

Authorizes appropriations.

(Sec. 5) Redesignates hearing commissioners as magistrate judges.

(Sec. 6) Sets forth special rules for Family Court and Domestic Violence Unit magistrate judges, including special qualifications. Requires any advisory selection merit panel used in the selection of magistrate judges for the Family Court to include certified social workers specializing in child welfare matters who are D.C. residents but not District of Columbia Court employees.

(Sec. 7) Expresses the sense of: (1) Congress that Maryland, Virginia, and the District of Columbia should promptly enter into a border agreement to facilitate the timely and safe placement of children in the District's welfare system in foster and kinship homes and other Maryland and Virginia facilities; and (2) the Senate that the chief judge of the Superior Court and the presiding judge of the Family Division (sic) should take all steps necessary to encourage and support the use of Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) in family court actions or proceedings.

(Sec. 9) Requires the chief judge of the Superior Court and the presiding judge of the Family Court to submit to Congress: (1) a feasibility study for the construction, lease, or acquisitions of appropriate permanent courts and facilities for the Family Court; and (2) an analysis of the success of the use of magistrate judges under the expedited appointment procedures established under this Act in reducing the number of pending actions and proceedings within the Family Court's jurisdiction.

(Sec. 10) Authorizes appropriations.

## Actions Timeline

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- **Jan 8, 2002:** Signed by President.
- **Jan 8, 2002:** Signed by President.
- **Jan 8, 2002:** Became Public Law No: 107-114.
- **Jan 8, 2002:** Became Public Law No: 107-114.
- **Dec 27, 2001:** Presented to President.
- **Dec 27, 2001:** Presented to President.
- **Dec 19, 2001:** Mrs. Morella moved that the House suspend the rules and agree to the Senate amendment. (consideration: CR H10366-10373, H10427-10428)
- **Dec 19, 2001:** DEBATE - The House proceeded with forty minutes of debate on the motion to suspend the rules and agree to the Senate amendment to H.R. 2657.
- **Dec 19, 2001:** At the conclusion of debate, the chair put the question on the motion to suspend the rules. Ms. Norton objected to the vote on the grounds that a quorum was not present. Further proceedings on the motion were postponed. The point of no quorum was withdrawn.
- **Dec 19, 2001:** Resolving differences -- House actions: On motion that the House suspend the rules and agree to the Senate amendment Agreed to by recorded vote (2/3 required): 418 - 1 (Roll no. 502).(text: CR H10366-10370)
- **Dec 19, 2001:** On motion that the House suspend the rules and agree to the Senate amendment Agreed to by recorded vote (2/3 required): 418 - 1 (Roll no. 502). (text: CR H10366-10370)
- **Dec 19, 2001:** Motion to reconsider laid on the table Agreed to without objection.
- **Dec 17, 2001:** Message on Senate action sent to the House.
- **Dec 14, 2001:** Measure laid before Senate by unanimous consent. (consideration: CR S13312-13317; text of measure as reported in Senate: CR S13312-13316)
- **Dec 14, 2001:** The committee substitute as amended agreed to by Unanimous Consent.
- **Dec 14, 2001:** Passed/agreed to in Senate: Passed Senate with an amendment by Unanimous Consent.(text: CR H10366-10370)
- **Dec 14, 2001:** Passed Senate with an amendment by Unanimous Consent. (text: CR H10366-10370)
- **Dec 5, 2001:** Committee on Governmental Affairs. Reported by Senator Lieberman with an amendment in the nature of a substitute. With written report No. 107-108.
- **Dec 5, 2001:** Committee on Governmental Affairs. Reported by Senator Lieberman with an amendment in the nature of a substitute. With written report No. 107-108.
- **Dec 5, 2001:** Placed on Senate Legislative Calendar under General Orders. Calendar No. 258.
- **Nov 14, 2001:** Committee on Governmental Affairs. Ordered to be reported with an amendment in the nature of a substitute favorably.
- **Oct 16, 2001:** Committee on Governmental Affairs referred to Subcommittee on Oversight of Government Management, Restructuring and the District of Columbia.
- **Sep 21, 2001:** Received in the Senate and Read twice and referred to the Committee on Governmental Affairs.
- **Sep 20, 2001:** Mrs. Morella moved to suspend the rules and pass the bill.
- **Sep 20, 2001:** Considered under suspension of the rules. (consideration: CR H5740-5750, H5764)
- **Sep 20, 2001:** DEBATE - The House proceeded with forty hours of debate on H.R. 2657.
- **Sep 20, 2001:** At the conclusion of debate, the Yeas and Nays were demanded and ordered. Pursuant to the provisions of clause 8, rule XX, the Chair announced that further proceedings on the motion would be postponed.
- **Sep 20, 2001:** Passed/agreed to in House: On motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill Agreed to by the Yeas and Nays: (2/3 required): 408 - 0 (Roll no. 343).(text: CR H5740-5744)
- **Sep 20, 2001:** On motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill Agreed to by the Yeas and Nays: (2/3 required): 408 - 0 (Roll no. 343). (text: CR H5740-5744)
- **Sep 20, 2001:** Motion to reconsider laid on the table Agreed to without objection.
- **Aug 13, 2001:** Referred to the Subcommittee on District of Columbia.
- **Aug 13, 2001:** Subcommittee Consideration and Mark-up Session Held by the Subcommittee on District of Columbia; Forwarded by the Subcommittee to the Full Committee Prior to Introduction and Referral (July 27, 2001).
- **Jul 26, 2001:** Introduced in House
- **Jul 26, 2001:** Introduced in House
- **Jul 26, 2001:** Referred to the House Committee on Government Reform