

**ARKANSAS SENATE**  
93rd General Assembly - Regular Session, 2021  
**Amendment Form**

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**Subtitle of Senate Bill No. 166**

TO ALLOW THE PUBLIC TO ATTEND HEARINGS CONCERNING CHILD SUPPORT, PATERNITY, AND  
MATTERS HEARD UNDER THE ARKANSAS JUVENILE CODE OF 1989; AND TO ALLOW THE PUBLIC  
TO OBTAIN CERTAIN COURT FILES AND RECORDS.

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**Amendment No. 1 to Senate Bill 166**

Amend Senate Bill No. 166 as originally introduced:

Delete the title in its entirety and substitute:

"AN ACT TO ALLOW CERTAIN INDIVIDUALS TO ATTEND HEARINGS CONCERNING MATTERS  
HEARD UNDER THE ARKANSAS JUVENILE CODE OF 1989; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES."

AND

Delete the subtitle in its entirety and substitute:

"TO ALLOW CERTAIN INDIVIDUALS TO ATTEND HEARINGS CONCERNING MATTERS HEARD  
UNDER THE ARKANSAS JUVENILE CODE OF 1989."

AND

Delete everything after the enacting clause and substitute the following:

"SECTION 1. Arkansas Code § 9-27-325(i)(1)(A), concerning hearings  
under the Arkansas Juvenile Code of 1989, is amended to read as follows:

(i)(1)(A) ~~All~~ Except as provided by this section, all hearings  
involving allegations and reports of child maltreatment and all hearings  
involving cases of children in foster care shall be closed.

SECTION 2. Arkansas Code § 9-27-325(i)(1), concerning hearings under  
the Arkansas Juvenile Code of 1989, is amended to add additional subdivisions  
to read as follows:

(D)(i) A relative, fictive kin, or individual with a  
connection to the family involved in a dependency-neglect proceeding may  
attend a hearing unless the court determines:

(a) The best interest of the child requires  
the relative, fictive kin, or individual with a connection to the family



involved in the dependency-neglect proceeding to be excluded from the hearing; or

(b) It is within the authority of the court under the Arkansas Rules of Civil Procedure or the Arkansas Rules of Evidence to exclude the relative, fictive kin, or individual with a connection to the family involved in the dependency-neglect proceeding from the hearing.

(ii) The court shall confirm the identity of each relative, fictive kin, or individual with a connection to the family involved in the dependency-neglect proceeding to determine if the relative, fictive kin, or individual with a connection to the family involved in the dependency-neglect proceeding should be excluded from the hearing.

(iii) A relative, fictive kin, or individual with a connection to the family involved in the dependency-neglect proceeding who is permitted to attend a hearing shall not disclose any information obtained during the hearing.

(E)(i) The court may allow an individual with an interest in attending a closed hearing in a dependency-neglect proceeding to attend the hearing if:

(a) It is in the best interest of the child;  
and

(b) The individual demonstrates a sincere and legitimate need to attend the hearing as determined by the court.

(ii) An individual who attends a hearing in accordance with subdivision (i)(1)(E)(i) of this section shall not disclose any information obtained during the hearing.

(F) An individual who discloses information in violation of subdivisions (i)(1)(D)(iii) and (i)(1)(E)(ii) of this section is guilty of a Class C misdemeanor."

The Amendment was read the first time, rules suspended and read the second time and \_\_\_\_\_

By: Senator A. Clark  
JNL/JNL - 02-24-2021 09:34:31  
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Secretary