

# **WEST VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE**

## **2026 REGULAR SESSION**

**Introduced**

### **House Bill 4616**

By Delegates Burkhammer, Mazzochi, Chiarelli,  
Flanigan, Heckert, Kimble, Miller, and Pinson

[Introduced January 20, 2026; referred to the  
Committee on the Judiciary]

1 A BILL to amend the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, by adding a new section,  
2 designated §49-4-611, relating to the imposition of a time limitation on disposition  
3 decisions in child abuse and neglect proceedings.

*Be it enacted by the Legislature of West Virginia:*

<b>ARTICLE</b>	<b>4.</b>	<b>COURT</b>	<b>ACTIONS.</b>
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**§49-4-611. Time limitations for disposition decisions in abuse and neglect proceedings.**

1 Notwithstanding any other provision of this code to the contrary, a disposition decision, as  
2 set forth in § 49-4-604(c) of this code, shall be rendered by the court no later than 12 months after  
3 the date of the ratification of the initial petition.

NOTE: The purpose of this bill is to require the court to issue a disposition decision within 12 months of ratification of the initial petition.

The bill was recommended for introduction by the Joint Committee on Children and Families.

Strike-throughs indicate language that would be stricken from a heading or the present law and underscoring indicates new language that would be added.