

Rifqa Bary to Remain in Foster Care Until Age 18

✖ Runaway teen convert Rifqa Bary will not be forced to return to her Muslim parents.

An agreement the 17-year-old reached with her parents Tuesday says she will remain in foster care under Ohio state custody until she turns 18 in August. At that time she will be an adult and will be able to decide what she wants to do.

Bary's attorney read a statement in Franklin County Juvenile Court Tuesday, saying Bary and her parents love each other and will attempt to resolve their differences through counseling, the Associated Press reported.

Bary ran away to Florida in July, saying she feared her father would harm or kill her for converting from Islam. Her father has denied the claim, and a Florida law enforcement investigation found no evidence to support the teen's accusations.

In Florida, Bary took refuge with Blake and Beverly Lorenz, pastors of Global Revolution Church, whom she met through a prayer group on Facebook. The pastors are currently under investigation for their role in helping the teen run away.

Attorney John Stemberger, who represented Bary when her case was in Florida, said the settlement was a victory for the teen. "Anytime you get a settlement and get what you want, it's always better than having a trial," he told the *Orlando Sentinel*. "In terms of what's in Rifqa's best interest, this is in Rifqa's best interest."