

AN ACT concerning State government.

**Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois,
represented in the General Assembly:**

Section 5. The Foster Children's Bill of Rights Act is amended by changing Section 5 as follows:

(20 ILCS 521/5)

Sec. 5. Foster Children's Bill of Rights. It is the policy of this State that every child and adult in the care of the Department of Children and Family Services who is placed in foster care shall have the following rights:

(1) To live in a safe, healthy, and comfortable home where he or she is treated with respect.

(2) To be free from physical, sexual, emotional, or other abuse, or corporal punishment.

(3) To receive adequate and healthy food, adequate clothing, and, for youth in group homes, residential treatment facilities, and foster homes, an allowance.

(4) To receive medical, dental, vision, and mental health services.

(5) To be free of the administration of medication or chemical substances, unless authorized by a physician.

(6) To contact family members, unless prohibited by court order, and social workers, attorneys, foster youth

advocates and supporters, Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASAs), and probation officers.

(7) To visit and contact brothers and sisters, unless prohibited by court order.

(8) To contact the Advocacy Office for Children and Families established under the Children and Family Services Act or the Department of Children and Family Services' Office of the Inspector General regarding violations of rights, to speak to representatives of these offices confidentially, and to be free from threats or punishment for making complaints.

(9) To make and receive confidential telephone calls and send and receive unopened mail, unless prohibited by court order.

(10) To attend religious services and activities of his or her choice.

(11) To maintain an emancipation bank account and manage personal income, consistent with the child's age and developmental level, unless prohibited by the case plan.

(12) To not be locked in a room, building, or facility premises, unless placed in a secure child care facility licensed by the Department of Children and Family Services under the Child Care Act of 1969 and placed pursuant to Section 2-27.1 of the Juvenile Court Act of 1987.

(13) To attend school and participate in extracurricular, cultural, and personal enrichment

activities, consistent with the child's age and developmental level, with minimal disruptions to school attendance and educational stability.

(14) To work and develop job skills at an age-appropriate level, consistent with State law.

(15) To have social contacts with people outside of the foster care system, including teachers, church members, mentors, and friends.

(16) If he or she meets age requirements, to attend services and programs operated by the Department of Children and Family Services or any other appropriate State agency that aim to help current and former foster youth achieve self-sufficiency prior to and after leaving foster care.

(17) To attend court hearings and speak to the judge.

(18) To have storage space for private use.

(19) To be involved in the development of his or her own case plan and plan for permanent placement.

(20) To review his or her own case plan and plan for permanent placement, if he or she is 12 years of age or older and in a permanent placement, and to receive information about his or her out-of-home placement and case plan, including being told of changes to the case plan.

(21) To be free from unreasonable searches of personal belongings.

(22) To the confidentiality of all juvenile court

records consistent with existing law.

(23) To have fair and equal access to all available services, placement, care, treatment, and benefits, and to not be subjected to discrimination or harassment on the basis of actual or perceived race, ethnic group identification, ancestry, national origin, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, mental or physical disability, or HIV status.

(24) To have caregivers and child welfare personnel who have received sensitivity training and instruction on matters concerning race, ethnicity, national origin, color, ancestry, religion, mental and physical disability, and HIV status.

(25) To have caregivers and child welfare personnel who have received instruction on cultural competency and sensitivity relating to, and best practices for, providing adequate care to lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender youth in out-of-home care.

(26) At 16 years of age or older, to have access to existing information regarding the educational options available, including, but not limited to, the coursework necessary for vocational and postsecondary educational programs, and information regarding financial aid for postsecondary education.

(27) To have access to age-appropriate, medically accurate information about reproductive health care, the

prevention of unplanned pregnancy, and the prevention and treatment of sexually transmitted infections at 12 years of age or older.

(28) To receive a copy of this Act from and have it fully explained by the Department of Children and Family Services when the child or adult is placed in the care of the Department of Children and Family Services.

(29) To be placed in the least restrictive and most family-like setting available and in close proximity to his or her parent's home consistent with his or her health, safety, best interests, and special needs.

(Source: P.A. 99-344, eff. 1-1-16.)