

1 AN ACT concerning State government.

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

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

6 (20 ILCS 521/5)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

26 (13) To attend school and participate in

1 extracurricular, cultural, and personal enrichment  
2 activities, consistent with the child's age and  
3 developmental level, with minimal disruptions to school  
4 attendance and educational stability.

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

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

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

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

17 (18) To have storage space for private use.

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

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

26 (21) To be free from unreasonable searches of personal

1 belongings.

2 (22) To the confidentiality of all juvenile court  
3 records consistent with existing law.

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

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

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

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

1           (27) To have access to age-appropriate, medically  
2 accurate information about reproductive health care, the  
3 prevention of unplanned pregnancy, and the prevention and  
4 treatment of sexually transmitted infections at 12 years  
5 of age or older.

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

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

14          (30) To participate in an age and developmentally  
15 appropriate intake process immediately after placement in  
16 the custody or guardianship of the Department. During the  
17 intake process, the Department shall provide the youth  
18 with a document describing inappropriate acts of  
19 affection, discipline, and punishment by guardians, foster  
20 parents, foster siblings, or any other adult responsible  
21 for the youth's welfare. The Department shall review and  
22 discuss the document with the child. The Department must  
23 document completion of the intake process in the child's  
24 records as well as giving a copy of the document to the  
25 child.

26          (31) To participate in appropriate intervention and

1 counseling services after removal from the home of origin  
2 in order to assess whether the youth is exhibiting signs  
3 of traumatic stress, special needs, or mental illness.

4 (32) To receive a home visit by an assigned child  
5 welfare specialist, per existing Department policies and  
6 procedures, on a monthly basis or more frequently as  
7 needed. In addition to what existing policies and  
8 procedures outline, home visits shall be used to assess  
9 the youth's well-being and emotional health following  
10 placement, to determine the youth's relationship with the  
11 youth's guardian or foster parent or with any other adult  
12 responsible for the youth's welfare or living in or  
13 frequenting the home environment, and to determine what  
14 forms of discipline, if any, the youth's guardian or  
15 foster parent or any other person in the home environment  
16 uses to correct the youth.

17 (33) To be enrolled in an independent living services  
18 program prior to transitioning out of foster care where  
19 the youth will receive classes and instruction,  
20 appropriate to the youth's age and developmental capacity,  
21 on independent living and self-sufficiency in the areas of  
22 employment, finances, meals, and housing as well as help  
23 in developing life skills and long-term goals.

24 (34) To be assessed by a third-party entity or agency  
25 prior to enrollment in any independent living services  
26 program in order to determine the youth's readiness for a

1       transition out of foster care based on the youth's  
2       individual needs, emotional development, and ability,  
3       regardless of age, to make a successful transition to  
4       adulthood.

5       (Source: P.A. 99-344, eff. 1-1-16; 100-189, eff. 1-1-18.)