

1 AN ACT concerning children.

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

4 Section 1. Short title. This Act may be cited as the Foster  
5 Children's Bill of Rights Act.

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

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

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

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

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

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

21 (6) To contact family members, unless prohibited by  
22 court order, and social workers, attorneys, foster youth  
23 advocates and supporters, Court Appointed Special

1 Advocates (CASAs), and probation officers.

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

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

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

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

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

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

24 (13) To attend school and participate in  
25 extracurricular, cultural, and personal enrichment  
26 activities, consistent with the child's age and

1 developmental level, with minimal disruptions to school  
2 attendance and educational stability.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

24           (27) To have access to age-appropriate, medically  
25 accurate information about reproductive health care, the  
26 prevention of unplanned pregnancy, and the prevention and

1 treatment of sexually transmitted infections at 12 years of  
2 age or older.

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

7 Section 10. Foster care provider. Nothing in this Act shall  
8 be interpreted to require a foster care provider to take any  
9 action that would impair the health and safety of children in  
10 out-of-home placement.