

AN ACT concerning State government.

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

Section 5. The Children and Family Services Act is amended by adding Section 7.3b as follows:

(20 ILCS 505/7.3b new)

Sec. 7.3b. Case plan requirements for hair-related needs of youth in care.

(a) Purposes. Hair plays an important role in fostering youths' connection to their race, culture, and identity. Haircare promotes positive messages of self-worth, comfort, and affection. Because these messages typically are developed through interactions with family and community members, it is necessary to establish a framework to ensure that youth in care are not deprived of these messages and that caregivers and appropriate child care facility staff are adequately prepared to provide culturally competent haircare for youth.

(b) Definitions. As used in this Section:

(1) "Haircare" means all care related to the maintenance of hair, including, but not limited to, the daily maintenance routine, cutting, styling, or dying of hair.

(2) "Culture" means the norms, traditions, and

experiences of a person's community that inform that person's daily life and long-term goals.

(3) "Identity" means the memories, experiences, relationships, and values that create one's sense of self. This amalgamation creates a steady sense of who one is over time, even as new facets are developed and incorporated into one's identity.

(c) Haircare plan. Every case plan shall include a Haircare Plan for each youth in care that is developed in consultation with the youth based upon the youth's developmental abilities, as well as with the youth's parents or caregivers or appropriate child care facility staff if not contrary to the youth's wishes, and that outlines any training or resources required by the caregiver or appropriate child care facility staff to meet the haircare needs of the youth. At a minimum, the Haircare Plan must address:

(1) necessary haircare steps to be taken to preserve the youth's desired connection to the youth's race, culture, gender, religion, and identity;

(2) necessary steps to be taken specific to the youth's haircare needs during emergency and health situations; and

(3) the desires of the youth as they pertain to the youth's haircare.

A youth's Haircare Plan must be reviewed at the same time as the case plan review required under Section 6a as well as

during monthly visits to ensure compliance with the Haircare Plan and identify any needed changes.

(d) By June 1, 2025, the Department shall develop training and resources to make available for caregivers and appropriate child care facility staff to provide culturally competent haircare to youth in care.

(e) By June 1, 2025, the Department must adopt rules to facilitate the implementation of this Section.

Section 10. The Foster Parent Law is amended by changing Sections 1-15 and 1-20 as follows:

(20 ILCS 520/1-15)

Sec. 1-15. Foster parent rights. A foster parent's rights include, but are not limited to, the following:

(1) The right to be treated with dignity, respect, and consideration as a professional member of the child welfare team.

(2) The right to be given standardized pre-service training and appropriate ongoing training to meet mutually assessed needs and improve the foster parent's skills.

(3) The right to be informed as to how to contact the appropriate child placement agency in order to receive information and assistance to access supportive services for children in the foster parent's care.

(4) The right to receive timely financial

reimbursement commensurate with the care needs of the child as specified in the service plan.

(5) The right to be provided a clear, written understanding of a placement agency's plan concerning the placement of a child in the foster parent's home. Inherent in this right is the foster parent's responsibility to support activities that will promote the child's right to relationships with the child's own family and cultural heritage.

(6) The right to be provided a fair, timely, and impartial investigation of complaints concerning the foster parent's licensure, to be provided the opportunity to have a person of the foster parent's choosing present during the investigation, and to be provided due process during the investigation; the right to be provided the opportunity to request and receive mediation or an administrative review of decisions that affect licensing parameters, or both mediation and an administrative review; and the right to have decisions concerning a licensing corrective action plan specifically explained and tied to the licensing standards violated.

(7) The right, at any time during which a child is placed with the foster parent, to receive additional or necessary information that is relevant to the care of the child.

(7.5) The right to be given information concerning a

child (i) from the Department as required under subsection (u) of Section 5 of the Children and Family Services Act and (ii) from a child welfare agency as required under subsection (c-5) of Section 7.4 of the Child Care Act of 1969.

(8) The right to be notified of scheduled meetings and staffings concerning the foster child in order to actively participate in the case planning and decision-making process regarding the child, including individual service planning meetings, administrative case reviews, interdisciplinary staffings, and individual educational planning meetings; the right to be informed of decisions made by the courts or the child welfare agency concerning the child; the right to provide input concerning the plan of services for the child and to have that input given full consideration in the same manner as information presented by any other professional on the team; and the right to communicate with other professionals who work with the foster child within the context of the team, including therapists, physicians, attending health care professionals, and teachers.

(9) The right to be given, in a timely and consistent manner, any information a caseworker has regarding the child and the child's family which is pertinent to the care and needs of the child and to the making of a permanency plan for the child. Disclosure of information

concerning the child's family shall be limited to that information that is essential for understanding the needs of and providing care to the child in order to protect the rights of the child's family. When a positive relationship exists between the foster parent and the child's family, the child's family may consent to disclosure of additional information.

(10) The right to be given reasonable written notice of (i) any change in a child's case plan, (ii) plans to terminate the placement of the child with the foster parent, and (iii) the reasons for the change or termination in placement. The notice shall be waived only in cases of a court order or when the child is determined to be at imminent risk of harm.

(11) The right to be notified in a timely and complete manner of all court hearings, including notice of the date and time of the court hearing, the name of the judge or hearing officer hearing the case, the location of the hearing, and the court docket number of the case; and the right to intervene in court proceedings or to seek mandamus under the Juvenile Court Act of 1987.

(12) The right to be considered as a placement option when a foster child who was formerly placed with the foster parent is to be re-entered into foster care, if that placement is consistent with the best interest of the child and other children in the foster parent's home.

(13) The right to have timely access to the child placement agency's existing appeals process and the right to be free from acts of harassment and retaliation by any other party when exercising the right to appeal.

(14) The right to be informed of the Foster Parent Hotline established under Section 35.6 of the Children and Family Services Act and all of the rights accorded to foster parents concerning reports of misconduct by Department employees, service providers, or contractors, confidential handling of those reports, and investigation by the Inspector General appointed under Section 35.5 of the Children and Family Services Act.

(15) The right to timely training necessary to meet the haircare needs of the children placed in the foster parent's care.

(Source: P.A. 103-22, eff. 8-8-23.)

(20 ILCS 520/1-20)

Sec. 1-20. Foster parent responsibilities. A foster parent's responsibilities include, but are not limited to, the following:

(1) The responsibility to openly communicate and share information about the child with other members of the child welfare team.

(2) The responsibility to respect the confidentiality of information concerning foster children and their

families and act appropriately within applicable confidentiality laws and regulations.

(3) The responsibility to advocate for children in the foster parent's care.

(4) The responsibility to treat children in the foster parent's care and the children's families with dignity, respect, and consideration.

(5) The responsibility to recognize the foster parent's own individual and familial strengths and limitations when deciding whether to accept a child into care; and the responsibility to recognize the foster parent's own support needs and utilize appropriate supports in providing care for foster children.

(6) The responsibility to be aware of the benefits of relying on and affiliating with other foster parents and foster parent associations in improving the quality of care and service to children and families.

(7) The responsibility to assess the foster parent's ongoing individual training needs and take action to meet those needs.

(8) The responsibility to develop and assist in implementing strategies to prevent placement disruptions, recognizing the traumatic impact of placement disruptions on a foster child and all members of the foster family; and the responsibility to provide emotional support for the foster children and members of the foster family if



preventive strategies fail and placement disruptions occur.

(9) The responsibility to know the impact foster parenting has on individuals and family relationships; and the responsibility to endeavor to minimize, as much as possible, any stress that results from foster parenting.

(10) The responsibility to know the rewards and benefits to children, parents, families, and society that come from foster parenting and to promote the foster parenting experience in a positive way.

(11) The responsibility to know the roles, rights, and responsibilities of foster parents, other professionals in the child welfare system, the foster child, and the foster child's own family.

(12) The responsibility to know and, as necessary, fulfill the foster parent's responsibility to serve as a mandated reporter of suspected child abuse or neglect under the Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act; and the responsibility to know the child welfare agency's policy regarding allegations that foster parents have committed child abuse or neglect and applicable administrative rules and procedures governing investigations of those allegations.

(13) The responsibility to know and receive training regarding the purpose of administrative case reviews, client service plans, and court processes, as well as any

filing or time requirements associated with those proceedings; and the responsibility to actively participate in the foster parent's designated role in these proceedings.

(14) The responsibility to know the child welfare agency's appeal procedure for foster parents and the rights of foster parents under the procedure.

(15) The responsibility to know and understand the importance of maintaining accurate and relevant records regarding the child's history and progress; and the responsibility to be aware of and follow the procedures and regulations of the child welfare agency with which the foster parent is licensed or affiliated.

(16) The responsibility to share information, through the child welfare team, with the subsequent caregiver (whether the child's parent or another substitute caregiver) regarding the child's adjustment in the foster parent's home.

(17) The responsibility to provide care and services that are respectful of and responsive to the child's cultural needs and are supportive of the relationship between the child and the child's own family; the responsibility to recognize the increased importance of maintaining a child's cultural identity when the race or culture of the foster family differs from that of the foster child; the responsibility to provide haircare that

preserves the child's desired connection to the child's race, culture, gender, religion, and identity; and the responsibility to take action to address these issues.

(Source: P.A. 103-22, eff. 8-8-23.)

Section 15. 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 they are 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 siblings, 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 their 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 they meet 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 their own case plan and plan for permanent placement.

(20) To review their own case plan and plan for permanent placement, if they are 12 years of age or older and in a permanent placement, and to receive information about their 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 their parent's home consistent with their health, safety, best interests, and special needs.

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

(31) To participate in appropriate intervention and counseling services after removal from the home of origin in order to assess whether the youth is exhibiting signs

of traumatic stress, special needs, or mental illness.

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

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

(34) To be assessed by a third-party entity or agency prior to enrollment in any independent living services program in order to determine the youth's readiness for a transition out of foster care based on the youth's individual needs, emotional development, and ability,



regardless of age, to make a successful transition to adulthood.

(35) To haircare that preserves the child's desired connection to the child's race, culture, gender, religion, and identity and to have a corresponding haircare plan established in accordance with Section 7.3b of the Children and Family Services Act. The Department must provide, in a timely and consistent manner, training for all caregivers and child welfare personnel on how to meet the haircare needs of children.

(Source: P.A. 102-810, eff. 1-1-23; 103-22, eff. 8-8-23.)