



## 104TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

### State of Illinois

2025 and 2026

**HB4694**

by Rep. Michelle Mussman

#### SYNOPSIS AS INTRODUCED:

55 ILCS 80/2.5

55 ILCS 80/4

from Ch. 23, par. 1804

Amends the Child Advocacy Center Act. Provides that Multidisciplinary Team Members shall work together, share information, and maintain confidentiality throughout the investigative process. Provides that Multidisciplinary Team members shall coordinate, communicate, and keep nonoffending parents, caregivers, and their families aware of the status of child abuse investigations. Provides that Children's Advocacy Centers shall be (rather than may be) established to coordinate the activities of the various agencies involved in the investigation, prosecution, and treatment of child maltreatment. Provides that every Child Advocacy Center shall include a multidisciplinary systems approach that includes all Multidisciplinary Team members as equal partners in the investigation of child maltreatment. Provides that an investigation into child maltreatment shall include a comprehensive interagency notification procedure for all Multidisciplinary Team partners. Provides that the investigation shall also include a policy that mandates every Multidisciplinary Team member has access to records related to every child abuse investigation and that ensures all information is shared in a confidential manner. Provides that the Children's Advocacy Center of Illinois shall convene an annual meeting of statewide leadership from each MDT discipline to review data, discuss and analyze findings, and work collaboratively to identify service gaps and opportunities for process improvement. Provides the Children's Advocacy Center of Illinois shall create a report that summarizes the discussion at the annual meeting. Requires the Children's Advocacy Center of Illinois to share the report with the leadership of MDT partners and other agencies. Makes other changes.

LRB104 17780 RTM 31212 b

1 AN ACT concerning local government.

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

4 Section 5. The Children's Advocacy Center Act is amended  
5 by changing Sections 2.5 and 4 as follows:

6 (55 ILCS 80/2.5)

7 Sec. 2.5. Definitions. As used in this Section:

8 "Accreditation" means the process in which certification  
9 of competency, authority, or credibility is presented by  
10 standards set by the National Children's Alliance to ensure  
11 effective, efficient and consistent delivery of services by a  
12 CAC.

13 "Child maltreatment" includes any act or occurrence, as  
14 defined in Section 5 of the Criminal Code of 2012, under the  
15 Children and Family Services Act or the Juvenile Court Act of  
16 1987 involving either a child victim or child witness.

17 "Children's Advocacy Center" or "CAC" is a child-focused,  
18 trauma-informed, facility-based program in which  
19 representatives from law enforcement, child protection,  
20 prosecution, mental health, forensic interviewing, medical,  
21 and victim advocacy disciplines collaborate to interview  
22 children, meet with a child's parent or parents, caregivers,  
23 and family members, and make team decisions about the

1 investigation, prosecution, safety, treatment, and support  
2 services for child maltreatment cases.

3 "Children's Advocacy Centers of Illinois" or "CACI" is a  
4 state chapter of the National Children's Alliance ("NCA") and  
5 organizing entity for Children's Advocacy Centers in the State  
6 of Illinois. It defines membership and engages member CACs in  
7 the NCA accreditation process and collecting and sharing of  
8 data, and provides training, leadership, and technical  
9 assistance to existing and emerging CACs in the State.

10 "Electronic recording" includes a motion picture,  
11 audiotape, videotape, or digital recording.

12 "Forensic interview" means an interview between a trained  
13 forensic interviewer, as defined by NCA standards, and a child  
14 in which the interviewer obtains information from children in  
15 an unbiased and fact finding manner that is developmentally  
16 appropriate and culturally sensitive to support accurate and  
17 fair decision making by the multidisciplinary team in the  
18 criminal justice and child protection systems. Whenever  
19 practical, all parties involved in investigating reports of  
20 child maltreatment shall observe the interview, which shall be  
21 electronically recorded.

22 "Forensic interview transcription" means a verbatim  
23 transcript of a forensic interview for the purpose of  
24 translating the interview into another language.

25 "Multidisciplinary team" or "MDT" means a group of  
26 professionals working collaboratively under a written

1 protocol, who represent various disciplines from the point of  
2 a report of child maltreatment to assure the most effective  
3 coordinated response possible for every child. MDT members  
4 shall work together, share information, and maintain  
5 confidentiality throughout the investigative process.  
6 ~~Employees from each participating entity shall be included on~~  
7 ~~the MDT.~~ A CAC's MDT must include professionals involved in  
8 the coordination, investigation, and prosecution and treatment  
9 of child abuse investigations ~~cases~~, including the CAC's  
10 staff, participating law enforcement agencies, the county  
11 state's attorney, ~~and~~ the Illinois Department of Children and  
12 Family Services, and specialized medical and mental health  
13 providers ~~must include professionals involved in the delivery~~  
14 ~~of services to victims of child maltreatment and non-offending~~  
15 ~~parent or parents, caregiver, and their families.~~ MDT members  
16 shall coordinate, communicate, and keep nonoffending parents  
17 and caregivers and their families aware of the status of the  
18 investigation.

19 "National Children's Alliance" or "NCA" means the  
20 professional membership organization dedicated to helping  
21 local communities respond to allegations of child abuse in an  
22 effective and efficient manner. NCA provides training,  
23 support, technical assistance and leadership on a national  
24 level to state and local CACs and communities responding to  
25 reports of child maltreatment. NCA is the national  
26 organization that provides the standards for CAC

1 accreditation.

2 "Protocol" means a written methodology defining the  
3 responsibilities of each of the MDT members in the  
4 investigation and prosecution of child maltreatment within a  
5 defined jurisdiction. Written protocols are signed documents  
6 and are reviewed and/or updated annually, at a minimum, by a  
7 CAC's Advisory Board.

8 (Source: P.A. 101-81, eff. 7-12-19; 101-236, eff. 1-1-20.)

9 (55 ILCS 80/4) (from Ch. 23, par. 1804)

10 Sec. 4. Children's Advocacy Center.

11 (a) Children's Advocacy Centers shall ~~A CAC may~~ be  
12 established to coordinate the activities of the various  
13 agencies involved in the investigation, prosecution and  
14 treatment of child maltreatment. The individual county or  
15 regional Advisory Board shall set the written protocol of the  
16 CAC within the appropriate jurisdiction. The operation of the  
17 CAC may be funded through public or private grants, contracts,  
18 donations, fees, and other available sources under this Act.  
19 Each CAC shall operate to the best of its ability in accordance  
20 with available funding. In counties in which a referendum has  
21 been adopted under Section 5 of this Act, the Advisory Board,  
22 by the majority vote of its members, shall submit a proposed  
23 annual budget for the operation of the CAC to the county board,  
24 which shall appropriate funds and levy a tax sufficient to  
25 operate the CAC. The county board in each county in which a

1 referendum has been adopted shall establish a Children's  
2 Advocacy Center Fund and shall deposit the net proceeds of the  
3 tax authorized by Section 6 of this Act in that Fund, which  
4 shall be kept separate from all other county funds and shall  
5 only be used for the purposes of this Act.

6 (b) The Advisory Board shall pay from the Children's  
7 Advocacy Center Fund or from other available funds the  
8 salaries of all employees of the Center and the expenses of  
9 acquiring a physical plant for the Center by construction or  
10 lease and maintaining the Center, including the expenses of  
11 administering the coordination of the investigation,  
12 prosecution and treatment referral of child maltreatment under  
13 the provisions of the protocol adopted pursuant to this Act.

14 (b-1) Recognizing the pivotal role of CACs in providing  
15 comprehensive support to trafficked children and youth, each  
16 CAC shall:

17 (1) ensure that each county's multi-disciplinary team  
18 protocol includes a response to allegations of human  
19 trafficking;

20 (2) increase the capacity of each multi-disciplinary  
21 team to identify, assess, and serve trafficked children  
22 and youth;

23 (3) facilitate collaboration between the CAC, law  
24 enforcement, child welfare agencies, health care  
25 providers, and other pertinent stakeholders to ensure a  
26 synchronized and trauma-informed response to trafficked

1 children and youth;

2 (4) ensure all CAC employees and contractors treating,  
3 interviewing, or coming in contact with victims receive  
4 training on victim-centered, trauma-informed response to  
5 child and youth victims of human trafficking, including  
6 identifying and addressing the unique needs of trafficked  
7 children and youth, thereby enabling access to appropriate  
8 support services and legal remedies; and

9 (5) work with the Department of Human Services to  
10 establish standards for victim-centered, trauma-informed  
11 training for CACs and members of multi-disciplinary teams.

12 (c) Every CAC shall include at least the following  
13 components:

14 (1) A multidisciplinary, coordinated systems approach  
15 that includes all MDT members as equal partners in ~~to~~ the  
16 investigation of child maltreatment, which shall include,  
17 at a minimum:

18 (i) a comprehensive ~~an~~ interagency notification  
19 procedure for all MDT partners;

20 (ii) a policy on multidisciplinary team  
21 collaboration and communication that mandates every  
22 ~~requires~~ MDT member has access to records related to  
23 every child abuse investigation and shares all ~~members~~  
24 ~~share~~ information in a confidential manner for  
25 ~~pertinent to investigations and~~ the safety of  
26 children;

1 (iii) (blank);

2 (iv) a description of the role each agency has in  
3 responding to a referral for services in an individual  
4 case;

5 (v) a dispute resolution process between the  
6 involved agencies when a conflict arises on how to  
7 proceed on the referral of a particular case;

8 (vi) a process for the CAC to assist in the  
9 forensic interview of children that witness alleged  
10 crimes;

11 (vii) a child-friendly, trauma informed space for  
12 children and their non-offending family members;

13 (viii) an MDT approach including law enforcement,  
14 prosecution, medical, mental health, victim advocacy,  
15 the Department of Children and Family Services, school  
16 personnel, if appropriate, and other community  
17 resources;

18 (ix) medical evaluation on-site or off-site  
19 through referral;

20 (x) mental health services on-site or off-site  
21 through referral;

22 (xi) on-site forensic interviews;

23 (xii) culturally competent services;

24 (xiii) case tracking and review;

25 (xiv) case staffing on each investigation;

26 (xv) effective organizational capacity; and

1           (xvi) a policy or procedure to familiarize a child  
2           and his or her non-offending family members or  
3           guardians with the court process as well as  
4           preparations for testifying in court, if necessary;

5           (2) A safe, separate space with assigned personnel  
6           designated for the investigation and coordination of child  
7           maltreatment cases;

8           (3) A multidisciplinary case review process for  
9           purposes of decision-making, problem solving, systems  
10          coordination, and information sharing;

11          (4) A comprehensive client tracking system to receive  
12          and coordinate information concerning child maltreatment  
13          cases from each participating agency;

14          (5) Multidisciplinary specialized training for all  
15          professionals involved with the victims and non-offending  
16          family members in child maltreatment cases; and

17          (6) A process for evaluating the effectiveness of the  
18          CAC and its operations.

19          (d) In the event that a CAC has been established as  
20          provided in this Section, the Advisory Board of that CAC may,  
21          by a majority vote of the members, authorize the CAC to  
22          coordinate the activities of the various agencies involved in  
23          the investigation, prosecution, and treatment referral in  
24          cases of serious or fatal injury to a child. For CACs receiving  
25          funds under Section 5 or 6 of this Act, the Advisory Board  
26          shall provide for the financial support of these activities in

1 a manner similar to that set out in subsections (a) and (b) of  
2 this Section and shall be allowed to submit a budget that  
3 includes support for physical abuse and neglect activities to  
4 the County Board, which shall appropriate funds that may be  
5 available under Section 5 of this Act. In cooperation with the  
6 Department of Children and Family Services Child Death Review  
7 Teams, the Department of Children and Family Services Office  
8 of the Inspector General, and other stakeholders, this  
9 protocol must be initially implemented in selected counties to  
10 the extent that State appropriations or funds from other  
11 sources for this purpose allow.

12 (e) CACI may also provide technical assistance and  
13 guidance to the Advisory Boards.

14 (e-5) CACI shall convene an annual meeting of statewide  
15 leadership from each MDT discipline to review data, discuss  
16 and analyze findings, and work collaboratively to identify  
17 service gaps and opportunities for process improvement. CACI  
18 shall create a report that summarizes discussion at the annual  
19 meeting and shall share the report with the leadership of MDT  
20 partners and other agencies.

21 (f) In this Section:

22 "Child" or "children" refers to persons under 18 years of  
23 age.

24 "Youth" means persons between the ages of 18 and 24 years.

25 (Source: P.A. 104-159, eff. 1-1-26.)