

1 AN ACT concerning criminal law.

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
5 Emerging Adult Criminal Justice Task Force Act.

6 Section 5. Findings. The General Assembly finds that:

7 (1) Emerging adults are disproportionately involved in
8 the criminal justice system. National data consistently
9 show that individuals in this age group have the highest
10 rates of arrest, jail admissions, prison admissions, and
11 rearrest.

12 (2) Developmental psychology and neuroscience studies
13 have shown that judgment, impulse control, and
14 psychosocial maturity may continue developing into the
15 mid-20s. Emerging adults may differ significantly from
16 older adults in risk assessment, susceptibility to peer
17 influence, emotional regulation, and decision-making under
18 stress.

19 (3) Emerging adults may also face elevated rates of
20 mental health disorders, trauma exposure, substance use
21 disorders, unemployment, and housing instability. These
22 vulnerabilities are closely linked to system involvement.

23 (4) Despite these challenges, emerging adults possess

1 strong capacity for change. Their brains retain high
2 neuroplasticity, and appropriate interventions during this
3 developmental period produce greater long-term benefits
4 than comparable interventions for older adults.

5 (5) Traditional adult criminal justice responses can
6 be counterproductive for emerging adults. Adult jails and
7 prisons can be associated with higher rates of
8 victimization, self-harm, long-term disability, and
9 recidivism among this population.

10 (6) States and jurisdictions across the U.S. have
11 created special laws or practices for emerging adults,
12 including extended juvenile jurisdiction, youthful
13 offender statutes, specialized probation units, young
14 adult courts, and correctional units tailored to this age
15 group.

16 (7) Illinois has taken several important steps,
17 including youthful offender parole, the First Time Weapon
18 Offender Program, and the Cook County SEED Program, but it
19 has not comprehensively examined the full spectrum of
20 policies affecting emerging adults.

21 (8) After decades of program based intervention
22 alternatives for juveniles, it is appropriate for the task
23 force to evaluate the efficiency of each of these programs
24 to ensure only those that are reducing criminal behavior
25 and providing for public safety and continues while those
26 that are not providing the expected benefits are phased

1 out.

2 (9) Illinois would benefit from a comprehensive,
3 bipartisan, data-driven review of approaches to emerging
4 adults across the criminal justice system.

5 Section 10. Purpose. The purpose of this Act is to create a
6 bipartisan, bicameral Task Force to study and recommend
7 strategies for developmentally appropriate, cost-effective,
8 and equitable approaches to emerging adults in Illinois that
9 provides opportunities for emerging adults to divert from the
10 criminal justice system.

11 Section 15. Definitions. In this Act:

12 "Department" means the Department of Corrections.

13 "Emerging adult" means an individual who is 18 to 25 years
14 of age.

15 "Task Force" means the Task Force on Emerging Adults in
16 the Criminal Justice System established under this Act.

17 Section 20. Establishment of Task Force. The Task Force on
18 Emerging Adults in the Criminal Justice System is established
19 within the Department and shall be provided staffing,
20 research, and administrative support by the Department.

21 Section 25. Membership.

22 (a) The Task Force shall be bipartisan, bicameral, and

1 include representation from stakeholders in the criminal
2 justice system, organizations that work extensively with young
3 adults, and those with lived experience in the criminal
4 justice system as emerging adults.

5 (b) The Task Force shall consist of the following members:

6 (1) two members of the Senate appointed by the
7 President of the Senate, one of whom shall be designated
8 as co-chair of the Task Force;

9 (2) two members of the Senate appointed by the
10 Minority Leader of the Senate;

11 (3) two members of the House appointed by the Speaker
12 of the House, one of whom shall be designated as co-chair
13 of the Task Force;

14 (4) two members of the House appointed by the Minority
15 Leader of the House; and

16 (5) the following members appointed by the Governor:

17 (A) the Director of the Department or the
18 Director's designee;

19 (B) the Director of Juvenile Justice or the
20 Director's designee;

21 (C) the Director of the Administrative Office of
22 the Illinois Courts or the Director's designee;

23 (D) one circuit court judge with criminal or
24 problem-solving court experience;

25 (E) three State's Attorneys representing counties
26 of varying size;

1 (F) three Public Defenders representing counties
2 of varying size;

3 (G) one representative of a statewide or regional
4 victims' rights organization;

5 (H) two representatives of a municipal police
6 department;

7 (I) two representatives of a sheriff's office that
8 operates a county jail;

9 (J) two representatives of a community-based legal
10 services or holistic defense organization serving
11 emerging adults;

12 (K) one representative of a community-based
13 organization that provides reentry services to
14 returning citizens, including emerging adults;

15 (L) one representative of a community-based
16 organization providing education, workforce
17 development, housing, or behavioral health services to
18 emerging adults;

19 (M) one representative of an employer association,
20 trade group, or major employer who regularly hires and
21 supervises young adults who are ages 18 to 25;

22 (N) one administrator or faculty member from an
23 Illinois community college or public university with
24 expertise in student development or the behavior of
25 emerging adults;

26 (O) one licensed mental health professional or

1 developmental psychologist with expertise in late
2 adolescence and emerging adulthood;

3 (P) two individuals with lived experience of
4 justice involvement for offenses committed between
5 ages 18 and 25, including at least one formerly
6 incarcerated in an adult facility;

7 (Q) the Director of the Sentencing Policy Advisory
8 Committee;

9 (R) a representative of an association that
10 represents attorneys statewide; and

11 (S) a representative of a philanthropic
12 organization with expertise and experience in funding
13 services and policies for justice-involved emerging
14 adults.

15 (c) Members shall serve without compensation but may be
16 reimbursed for reasonable expenses subject to appropriation.

17 (d) Vacancies shall be filled in the manner of original
18 appointment.

19 (e) Membership shall reflect, to the extent practicable,
20 the demographic and geographic diversity of the State.

21 Section 30. Meetings; quorum; public input. The first
22 meeting of the Task Force shall be held within 60 days after
23 the appointment of a majority of its members. Meetings of the
24 Task Force shall be called by the co-chairs. A majority of the
25 members of the Task Force shall constitute a quorum. All

1 meetings of the Task Force shall be subject to the Open
2 Meetings Act. At least 3 public hearings of the Task Force
3 shall be held in different regions of Illinois.

4 Section 35. Duties. The Task Force shall:

5 (1) review Illinois law and practice affecting
6 emerging adults across pretrial, sentencing, corrections,
7 supervision, and reentry;

8 (2) examine emerging adult models in other states and
9 jurisdictions, including the United Nations Standard
10 Minimum Rules for Non-custodial Measures and the United
11 Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Administration of
12 Juvenile Justice;

13 (3) integrate and summarize current developmental
14 research on emerging adults;

15 (4) analyze racial, ethnic, gender, and geographic
16 disparities affecting emerging adults;

17 (5) conduct benefit-cost and fiscal analyses of
18 current practices versus developmentally tailored
19 alternatives;

20 (6) engage stakeholders, including crime survivors,
21 law enforcement organizations, employers, higher education
22 institutions, community organizations, and individuals
23 with lived experience with the criminal justice system;

24 (7) develop recommendations for statutory, policy, and
25 programmatic improvements; and

1 (8) allow any Task Force member to prepare a written
2 dissent or statement of concern regarding any finding or
3 recommendation, which shall be included verbatim in all
4 interim and final reports.

5 Section 40. Reports.

6 (a) No later than January 31, 2027, the Task Force shall
7 submit an interim report to the Governor and the General
8 Assembly summarizing its preliminary findings, analyses, and
9 recommendations. The interim report shall include any written
10 dissents or statements of concern submitted by Task Force
11 members.

12 (b) No later than December 1, 2027, the Task Force shall
13 submit a final report to the Governor and the General
14 Assembly, and the Department shall publish the report on its
15 website. The final report shall include:

- 16 (1) all final findings and recommendations;
17 (2) draft statutory language, where appropriate;
18 (3) estimated fiscal impacts and benefit-cost
19 analyses; and
20 (4) all written dissents or statements of concern
21 submitted by any member, which shall be included in full
22 and published in the public version of the report.

23 (c) Any member may submit a dissent or statement of
24 concern up to 14 days following the adoption of any
25 recommendation. The Department shall publish all dissenting

1 statements alongside majority recommendations.

2 Section 45. Support; cooperation.

3 (a) The Department shall provide staff support, research,
4 data analysis, and administrative assistance to the Task
5 Force.

6 (b) State and local agencies shall cooperate with
7 reasonable requests for data and information, consistent with
8 all confidentiality laws.

9 Section 50. Repeal. This Act is repealed on June 30, 2028.

10 Section 99. Effective date. This Act takes effect upon
11 becoming law.