



104TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

State of Illinois

2025 and 2026

SB4188

Introduced 4/16/2026, by Sen. Lakesia Collins

SYNOPSIS AS INTRODUCED:

New Act

Creates the Bereavement Care for All Act. Directs the Department of Public Health to develop a statewide Bereavement Care Strategic Plan and a centralized Bereavement Care Resource and Navigation Hub. Requires the State Board of Education to develop model guidance for school districts regarding grief-informed education. Directs State-funded professional licensing boards to evaluate integration of grief-informed training and education into continuing education requirements. Directs the Department of Public Health to develop screening tools in schools and healthcare settings to identify bereaved children and adults and connect them with appropriate resources. Requires the Department of Public Health to improve data collection regarding bereavement prevalence and disparities and submit a report to the Governor and the General Assembly. Authorizes the Department of Public Health to adopt rules. Contains findings. Defines terms.

LRB104 21434 BDA 36497 b

1 AN ACT concerning health.

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 Bereavement Care for All Act.

6 Section 5. Findings; purpose.

7 (a) The General Assembly finds that:

8 (1) Bereavement is a universal human experience and a
9 significant health, economic, and educational concern
10 affecting communities throughout Illinois.

11 (2) Approximately 1 in 12 Illinois children experience
12 the death of a parent or sibling before age 18, and this
13 number nearly doubles by age 25.

14 (3) Bereavement is associated with increased risk of
15 depression, suicide, substance use disorder, poor school
16 outcomes, workforce instability, chronic disease, and
17 financial hardship.

18 (4) Sudden and unexpected deaths, including suicide,
19 overdose, homicide, maternal mortality, and infant
20 mortality, have reached record levels in Illinois, yet
21 bereavement care remains largely absent from statewide
22 behavioral health planning and funding priorities.

23 (5) Racial disparities in mortality result in

1 disproportionate and earlier, more frequent exposure to
2 loss in Black communities and historically marginalized
3 communities.

4 (6) Institutional systems often fail to identify and
5 respond to bereavement, resulting in fragmented care and
6 missed opportunities for support. In addition, most
7 professionals receive little or no training in
8 grief-informed practices, limiting effective support for
9 grieving individuals and families.

10 (7) Investing in coordinated, equitable, and
11 culturally responsive bereavement care will mitigate
12 immediate and long-term physical, behavioral, educational,
13 and economic consequences of loss.

14 (b) The purpose of this Act is to establish a
15 comprehensive statewide bereavement care strategy to improve
16 access to support, strengthen workforce capacity, reduce
17 disparities, and integrate grief-informed practices across
18 Illinois public systems.

19 Section 10. Definitions. As used in this Act:

20 "Bereavement" means the experience of loss due to death.

21 "Grief-informed" means having policies and practices that
22 recognize the prevalence and impact of bereavement and promote
23 a holistic understanding, compassionate, culturally responsive
24 care, and coordinated access to appropriate supports and
25 resources.

1 "State agency" means any department, board, commission, or
2 authority of the executive branch.

3 Section 15. Bereavement Care Strategic Plan.

4 (a) The Department of Public Health shall develop a
5 statewide Bereavement Care Strategic Plan, in consultation
6 with statewide professional organizations and State agency
7 representatives, including, but not limited to:

8 (1) the Department of Public Health;

9 (2) the Department of Human Services;

10 (3) the State Board of Education;

11 (4) the Department of Healthcare and Family Services;

12 (5) the Department of Children and Family Services;

13 (6) the Illinois Criminal Justice Information
14 Authority;

15 (7) at least 3 community-based bereavement providers;

16 (8) representatives from communities
17 disproportionately impacted by premature death; and

18 (9) at least 2 individuals with lived experience of
19 bereavement.

20 (b) The Strategic plan shall:

21 (1) recommend standards for grief-informed training
22 and protocols;

23 (2) identify gaps in services across geographic
24 regions; and

25 (3) identify funding opportunities, including federal

1 and settlement funds.

2 (c) The Department of Public Health, in consultation with
3 statewide professional organizations and State agency
4 representatives described under subsection (a), shall submit
5 recommendations to the Governor and General Assembly within 18
6 months after the effective date of this Act and shall review
7 and update the Bereavement Care Strategic Plan every 3 years
8 thereafter.

9 Section 20. Statewide Bereavement Resource and Navigation
10 Hub.

11 (a) The Department of Public Health shall establish or
12 designate a centralized Statewide Bereavement Resource and
13 Navigation Hub.

14 (b) The Statewide Bereavement Resource and Navigation Hub
15 shall:

16 (1) maintain a publicly accessible, searchable
17 directory of community-based, culturally responsive
18 bereavement services;

19 (2) provide navigation assistance for families seeking
20 services;

21 (3) include resources related to Social Security
22 survivor benefits and victim compensation;

23 (4) coordinate with 2-1-1 systems and existing health
24 and human service platforms; and

25 (5) prioritize outreach in high-need and underserved

1 regions.

2 Section 25. Grief-informed education and workforce
3 training.

4 (a) The State Board of Education shall develop model
5 guidance for school districts to:

- 6 (1) identify grieving students;
7 (2) establish grief-informed protocols for responding
8 to deaths within their school community;
9 (3) integrate grief awareness into social-emotional
10 learning frameworks.

11 (b) State-funded professional licensing boards shall
12 evaluate integration of, and may integrate, grief-informed
13 training and education into continuing education requirements
14 for:

- 15 (1) educators;
16 (2) mental health professionals;
17 (3) healthcare providers;
18 (4) first responders;
19 (5) criminal justice personnel; and
20 (6) funeral professionals.

21 (c) Education and training under this Section shall
22 prioritize culturally responsive and developmentally
23 appropriate approaches.

24 Section 30. Screening and identification protocols.

1 (a) The Department of Public Health, in consultation with
2 relevant agencies, shall develop model screening tools for use
3 in schools and healthcare settings to identify bereaved
4 children and adults and connect them with appropriate
5 resources.

6 (b) The Department of Public Health shall evaluate the
7 feasibility of adding, and may add, an optional checkbox to
8 death certificates indicating whether the deceased leaves
9 behind dependent children, for purposes of survivor benefit
10 outreach and service connection.

11 (c) Implementation of this Section shall comply with all
12 privacy and confidentiality laws.

13 Section 35. Data; reporting; rules.

14 (a) The Department of Public Health shall improve data
15 collection regarding bereavement prevalence and disparities.

16 (b) The Department of Public Health shall submit a report,
17 concurrently with the recommendations submitted within 18
18 months after the effective date of this Act and every 3 years
19 thereafter under subsection (c) of Section 15, containing
20 summaries of the following information:

- 21 (1) service utilization;
- 22 (2) identified gaps;
- 23 (3) disparities in access; and
- 24 (4) recommendations for further action.

25 (c) The Department of Public Health may adopt any rules

1 necessary to implement and administer this Act.