



102ND GENERAL ASSEMBLY

State of Illinois

2021 and 2022

HB4299

Introduced 1/5/2022, by Rep. Carol Ammons

SYNOPSIS AS INTRODUCED:

20 ILCS 505/41.6 new

Amends the Children and Family Services Act. Requires the Department of Children and Family Services to establish a pilot program for the purpose of addressing racial disparities in the child welfare system in at least 5 counties, which shall be selected to participate on a voluntary basis in the pilot program according to criteria developed by the Department. Provides that the selected counties shall include, at a minimum, one county in southern Illinois, one county in northern Illinois, and one county in a rural area of the State. Requires the participating counties' pilot programs to utilize a blind removal strategy when deciding whether a child should be removed from their parents' home. Provides that a participating county's pilot program may include, but shall not be limited to, a program whereby at any meeting of a Department region or field office during which the removal of a child from the child's home is discussed, certain information is required to be redacted from the case file in preparation for the removal decision, including: (i) the name, gender, race or ethnicity, sexual orientation, religious affiliation or beliefs, and political affiliation or beliefs of the child and the child's parents. Requires the Department to conduct at least one evaluation of the participating counties' pilot programs and their effectiveness after 3 years of implementation and to submit the information for the evaluation in a report to the General Assembly. Requires the evaluation to include monitoring the program's effect on the rate of Black, Native American, and Latinx children who were removed from their homes. Provides that implementation is subject to appropriation. Repeals the new provisions on January 1, 2026.

LRB102 22226 KTG 31356 b

1 AN ACT concerning State government.

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

4 Section 5. The Children and Family Services Act is amended
5 by adding Section 41.6 as follows:

6 (20 ILCS 505/41.6 new)

7 Sec. 41.6. Pilot program to address racial disparities.

8 (a) Finding and declaration. It is the intent of the
9 General Assembly to promote racial equity and advance
10 practices of equity and inclusion in the child welfare system.
11 The General Assembly finds and declares that families from
12 racial and ethnic minority populations are disparately
13 represented nationwide in the child welfare system. It is
14 further the intent of the General Assembly to address the
15 racial disparities in the child welfare system by eliminating
16 bias in the decision-making process determining whether
17 children are removed from their parents' home by utilizing a
18 blind removal strategy.

19 (b) The Department shall establish a pilot program for the
20 purpose of addressing racial disparities in the child welfare
21 system in at least 5 counties, which shall be selected to
22 participate on a voluntary basis in the pilot program
23 according to criteria developed by the Department. In

1 selecting the pilot counties, the Department shall promote
2 diversity among the participating counties in terms of size
3 and geographic location. The counties shall include, at a
4 minimum, one county in southern Illinois, one county in
5 northern Illinois, and one county in a rural area of the State.

6 (c) (1) A program that receives funding in accordance with
7 this Section shall utilize a blind removal strategy when
8 deciding whether a child should be removed from their parents'
9 home.

10 (2) A program that receives funding in accordance with
11 this Section may include, but shall not be limited to, a
12 program whereby at any meeting of a Department region or field
13 office during which the removal of a child from the child's
14 home is discussed, all of the following information shall be
15 redacted from the case file in preparation for the removal
16 decision and may not be referenced:

17 (A) The name of the child and the child's parents.

18 (B) The gender of the child and the child's parents.

19 (C) The race or ethnicity of the child and the child's
20 parents.

21 (D) The sexual orientation of the child and the
22 child's parents.

23 (E) The address of the child and the child's parents.

24 (F) The birth order of the child and the number of
25 children of the parents.

26 (G) The religious affiliation or beliefs of the child

1 and the child's parents.

2 (H) The political affiliation or beliefs of the child
3 and the child's parents.

4 (I) The marital status of the child's parents.

5 (J) The income of the child's parents.

6 (K) The education level of the child's parents.

7 (L) Any prior investigation of the child's parents for
8 child abuse or neglect that resulted in an unsubstantiated
9 finding.

10 (3) All redacted identifying information shall be
11 available for all other purposes throughout the region or
12 field office's involvement with the child, including, but not
13 limited to, evaluations, provision of services, and court
14 proceedings.

15 (d) The Department shall conduct at least one evaluation
16 of the participating counties' pilot programs and their impact
17 and effectiveness after 3 years of implementation, and shall
18 submit the information from the evaluation in a report to the
19 General Assembly. The evaluation shall include, but not be
20 limited to, monitoring the program's effect on the rate of
21 Black, Native American, and Latinx children who were removed
22 from their parents' home.

23 (d) Implementation of this Section is subject to
24 appropriation.

25 (e) This Section is repealed on January 1, 2026.