

AN ACT concerning government.

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

Section 1. Short title. This Act may be cited as the Family Justice Centers Act.

Section 5. Findings. The General Assembly finds and declares that:

(1) Underreporting of domestic violence, sexual violence, stalking, and human trafficking to service providers, law enforcement, and protective agencies is detrimental to the health, safety, and welfare of the State of Illinois. Survivors have stressed the need for collaborative implementation of resources and interagency communication and assessment of policies and procedures to allow for intentional process improvement in the delivery of and response to survivors.

(2) To support survivors and their children and encourage the development of partnerships to close gaps and implement best practices, entities must work collaboratively and actively to build a trauma-informed, survivor-centered community response to prevent domestic violence, child abuse, sexual violence, stalking, and human trafficking.

(3) The enactment of the Family Justice Centers Act promotes the health and safety of survivors of domestic violence, sexual violence, stalking, and human trafficking and provides alternative ways for survivors to seek services in a trauma-informed, survivor-centered, coordinated manner.

(4) In recent years, Illinois has experienced an upward trend in domestic violence incidents, including increased contacts to the Illinois Domestic Violence Hotline and higher rates of domestic-related homicides. Contacts to the Illinois Domestic Violence Hotline rose 26% from 2023 to 2024 to a total of 59,704 contacts, which is 140% higher than in 2019, according to Measuring Safety: Gender Based Violence in Illinois 2024, Illinois Domestic Violence Hotline Report, published in June 2025 by The Network: Advocating Against Domestic Violence. This rising rate of reports, coupled with the reality that many incidents go unreported, demonstrates the need for a State response.

(5) Given the intimate and personal nature of sexual violence, advocacy services are necessary to support survivors of sexual assault by providing comprehensive assistance that addresses immediate and long-term needs. The State of Illinois should continue to support these programs, which have faced declining funds in recent years.

(6) In 2025, the Illinois General Assembly passed the Illinois Statewide Trauma-Informed Response to Human Trafficking Act, recognizing the need for a comprehensive response to human trafficking in the State. This Act requires agencies to investigate and respond in a survivor-centered, trauma-informed manner to increase the detection of survivors and provide a survivor-centered, trauma-informed response when survivors present for services.

(7) The Family Justice Center framework offers a comprehensive and collaborative approach to addressing domestic violence, sexual violence, stalking, and human trafficking. Family Justice Centers bring together professionals and services under one roof, providing a safe and supportive environment for survivors and ensuring a coordinated and effective response.

(8) Children's Advocacy Centers were established in Illinois by Public Act 86-276 and are governed by the Children's Advocacy Center Act. In response to the need for a formal, comprehensive, integrated, and multidisciplinary approach to child maltreatment, Children's Advocacy Centers provide subject-matter expertise that complements Family Justice Centers. This Act is intended to enhance collaboration and sharing of expertise and is not meant to supersede the expertise of Children's Advocacy Centers. Domestic violence, sexual

violence, and child abuse are forms of community violence that require coordinated responses. Family Justice Centers and Children's Advocacy Centers should work collaboratively.

(9) Family Justice Centers minimize the need for survivors to navigate multiple agencies, to travel to multiple locations, and to repeat their stories. They offer services shown to improve access to services, increase hope and well-being, reduce recantation, reduce homicides, and increase successful prosecution of offenders.

(10) Creating Family Justice Centers is essential to provide multiagency, multidisciplinary support and services to survivors of domestic violence, sexual violence, stalking, and human trafficking; to ensure survivors can access all needed services; to enhance survivor safety; to increase offender accountability; and to reduce the number of times survivors are questioned and examined and the number of places survivors must go to receive assistance.

Section 10. Definitions. As used in this Act:

"Domestic violence" means any act of abuse as defined in the Illinois Domestic Violence Act of 1986.

"Human trafficking" means an act as set forth in Section 10-9 of the Criminal Code of 2012, including recruiting,

harboring, transporting, providing, or obtaining a person for labor or services through force, fraud, or coercion.

"Sexual violence" means physical sexual acts attempted or perpetrated against a person's will or when a person is incapable of giving consent, including, without limitation, rape, sexual assault, sexual battery, sexual abuse, and sexual coercion.

"Stalking" has the meaning given to that term in the Stalking No Contact Order Act. "Stalking" includes, without limitation, the following conduct:

- (1) following a person;
- (2) conducting surveillance of the person;
- (3) appearing at the person's home, work, or school without a reasonable purpose under the circumstances;
- (4) making unwanted phone calls;
- (5) sending unwanted mail;
- (6) sending unwanted messages via social media;
- (7) sending unwanted text messages;
- (8) leaving objects for the person;
- (9) vandalizing the person's property;
- (10) injuring a pet; or
- (11) using any electronic tracking system or acquiring tracking information to determine the person's location, movements, or travel patterns.

Section 15. Family Justice Centers.

(a) A city, county, State, community-based nonprofit organization, or a combination of these entities may establish a multiagency, multidisciplinary Family Justice Center to assist survivors of domestic violence, sexual violence, stalking, and human trafficking, to ensure that survivors are able to access needed services in one location, to enhance survivor safety, to increase offender accountability, and to improve access to services.

(b) A Family Justice Center is a multiagency, multidisciplinary service center where public and private agencies assign staff members on a full-time or part-time basis to provide services to survivors of domestic violence, sexual violence, stalking, and human trafficking from one location, to reduce the number of times survivors must repeat their accounts, to reduce the number of places survivors must go for help, and to increase access to services and support for survivors and their children. A Family Justice Center shall, as appropriate, partner with other agencies to provide services.

(c) Staff members at a Family Justice Center may include, but are not limited to:

(1) domestic violence providers recognized by the Department of Human Services;

(2) rape crisis organizations as defined in Section 8-802.1 of the Code of Civil Procedure;

(3) civil legal service providers, in accordance with

memoranda of understanding developed by the Family Justice Center;

(4) legal advocacy providers, in accordance with memoranda of understanding developed by the Family Justice Center;

(5) mental health care providers, in accordance with memoranda of understanding developed by the Family Justice Center;

(6) housing providers, in accordance with memoranda of understanding developed by the Family Justice Center;

(7) substance-use counselors, in accordance with memoranda of understanding developed by the Family Justice Center;

(8) Family Justice Center administrative personnel;

(9) medical personnel;

(10) local Children's Advocacy Centers;

(11) law enforcement;

(12) the State's Attorney's office and victim-witness personnel;

(13) supervised volunteers of partner agencies; and

(14) other professional agencies serving survivors of domestic violence, sexual violence, stalking, or human trafficking, in accordance with memoranda of understanding developed by the Family Justice Center.

(d) If Department of Children and Family Services personnel are present on site at a Family Justice Center, they

shall only interact with a survivor receiving services from the Family Justice Center upon the survivor's request.

(e) This Section does not abrogate existing laws regarding privacy or information sharing. Family Justice Center staff members shall comply with the laws governing their respective professions.

(f) Survivors shall not be required to participate with law enforcement, the Department of Children and Family Services, or the criminal justice system to receive services at a Family Justice Center. A Family Justice Center shall establish memoranda of understanding with law enforcement, the Department of Children and Family Services, and State's Attorneys' offices to facilitate collaboration, improved processes, and systems change for the benefit of survivors and the health, safety, and well-being of the community.

(g) Each Family Justice Center shall consult with statewide and local community-based domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, and human trafficking agencies, in partnership with survivors and their advocates, in the operation of the Family Justice Center. Each Family Justice Center shall establish procedures for ongoing input, feedback, and evaluation by survivors and community-based survivor service providers and advocates.

(h) Each Family Justice Center shall develop operating agreements, policies, and procedures, in collaboration with local community-based survivor service providers and local

survivors, to ensure coordinated services and to enhance the safety of survivors and professionals at the Family Justice Center, including participants in affiliated survivor-centered support or advocacy groups. Each Family Justice Center shall maintain a formal survivor feedback, complaint, and input process to address concerns about services or the conduct of any Family Justice Center professionals, agency partners, or volunteers.

(i) Each Family Justice Center shall provide survivors with educational materials relating to rights available under Illinois law.

(j) Each Family Justice Center shall maintain a survivor's informed, specific, and time-limited consent. The consent policy, and the sharing of any details gathered from the survivor, the survivor's family, or other sources shall follow all State and federal laws, including, but not limited to, the Violence Against Women Act of 1994, so as to protect the confidentiality of information gathered and any documents in a survivor's file, including, but not limited to, medical records, legal records, survivor counselor records, and any other information gathered during intake or throughout the period of engagement with the survivor. Each Family Justice Center shall develop privacy policies and procedures consistent with State and federal privacy and confidentiality laws and the Fair Information Practice Principles adopted by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security in Privacy Policy

Guidance Memorandum 2008-01.

(k) A Family Justice Center shall obtain informed, written, time-limited consent from a survivor before sharing information obtained from the survivor with any staff member or agency partner, except that a Family Justice Center shall inform the survivor that information shared with staff members or partner agencies may be shared with the Department of Children and Family Services or a peace officer without the survivor's consent if there is a mandatory duty to report or if the survivor is a danger to self or others. A Family Justice Center shall obtain written acknowledgment that the survivor has been informed of this policy.

(l) Consent by a survivor to share information within a Family Justice Center under this Section shall not be construed as a universal waiver of any evidentiary privilege that makes confidential communications or documents between the survivor and a service provider, including, without limitation, any lawyer, advocate, rape crisis counselor, or domestic violence counselor, and including protections under applicable State and federal law, such as the Address Confidentiality for Victims of Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault, Human Trafficking, or Stalking Act; and Sections 8-802, 8-802.1, and 8-802.2 of the Code of Civil Procedure. Any oral or written communication or document authorized by the survivor to be shared for the purposes of enhancing safety and providing more effective and efficient services shall not

be disclosed to any third party, unless authorized by the survivor or required by State or federal law or court order.

(m) An individual staff member, volunteer, or agency that has survivor information governed by this Section shall not be required to disclose that information unless the survivor has consented to the disclosure or the disclosure is consistent with applicable State law regarding crime victims' rights.

(n) A disclosure of information consented to by the survivor in a Family Justice Center, made for the purposes of clinical assessment, risk assessment, safety planning, or service delivery, shall not be deemed a waiver of any privilege or confidentiality provision contained in any other law of this State.

(o) In addition to any other required training, each Family Justice Center shall maintain a training program with mandatory training of not less than 16 hours per year for all persons providing services at the Family Justice Center, including, but not limited to, training on evidentiary privileges, confidentiality provisions, information sharing, risk assessment, safety planning, survivor advocacy, and high-risk case response.