



## 104TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

### State of Illinois

2025 and 2026

HB4596

Introduced 2/3/2026, by Rep. Dave Vella

#### SYNOPSIS AS INTRODUCED:

New Act

105 ILCS 5/27-215

815 ILCS 505/2Z

from Ch. 121 1/2, par. 262Z

Creates the Combating Health Misinformation Act. Establishes the Health Misinformation Response Unit within the Department of Public Health to monitor and counter health misinformation. Requires the Department to offer public health literacy grants. Requires the Department of Public Health to recruit and train trusted messengers to assist in communicating accurate health information. Requires certain entities that distribute or communicate health-related information in the State to disclose funding sources, as well as to provide citations for alleged facts. Allows the Department of Public Health to request that information from those entities. Provides that specified entities that knowingly violate certain provisions of the Act commit an unlawful practice under the Consumer Fraud and Deceptive Business Practices Act. Defines terms. Amends the School Code to require health literacy to be taught as part of a comprehensive health education program, in collaboration with the Department of Public Health. Makes conforming changes to the Consumer Fraud and Deceptive Business Practices Act.

LRB104 17387 BDA 30812 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 Combating Health Misinformation Act.

6 Section 5. Definitions. In this Act:

7 "Department" means the Department of Public Health.

8 "Director" means the Director of Public Health.

9 "Unit" means the Health Misinformation Response Unit  
10 created in Section 10.

11 Section 10. Health Misinformation Response Unit.

12 (a) There is created within the Department a new unit  
13 named the Health Misinformation Response Unit. The Director  
14 shall appoint a Unit Head who shall, in coordination with the  
15 Director or the Director's designee, hire or reassign  
16 employees as necessary to effectuate the responsibilities of  
17 the Unit.

18 (b) The Unit shall be responsible for monitoring health  
19 misinformation trends on social media, community forums, and  
20 other web and news sources, and recording all trends noticed.  
21 The Unit shall periodically issue public health advisories to  
22 counter misinformation so identified with facts.

1           (c) The Unit shall also initiate and develop relationships  
2 with universities to research the impacts of health  
3 misinformation and to develop effective countermeasures.

4           Section 15. Public health literacy grants.

5           (a) The Department shall offer financial assistance grants  
6 to community-based organizations, elementary or high schools,  
7 or libraries, to implement health literacy programs to teach  
8 residents how to evaluate medical claims, how to spot medical  
9 misinformation, and how to access trusted care.

10          (b) The Department may fund these grants through funds  
11 appropriated to the Department but not allocated to a specific  
12 purpose or through funds specifically appropriated to fund  
13 public health literacy grants.

14          (c) The Department shall adopt rules as necessary to  
15 create and maintain in accordance with the requirements of  
16 this Section a grant application process for public health  
17 literacy grants.

18          Section 20. Trusted messenger network.

19          (a) The Department shall recruit and train local health  
20 professionals and local community leaders to serve as trusted  
21 messengers to assist in communicating accurate health  
22 information to their communities.

23          (b) The Department shall, no less than once per quarter,  
24 send trusted messengers information on current public health

1 issues, information countering specific trends of health  
2 misinformation, or any other information the Department finds  
3 important for public health.

4 (c) The Department shall also identify for trusted health  
5 messengers an email address and phone number that may be used  
6 by the trusted messengers to contact the Department with  
7 questions or requests for assistance.

8 (d) If the Director finds that a particular trusted  
9 messenger is no longer assisting with communicating  
10 information to the public in a satisfactory manner, the  
11 Director may cease to send information as required by  
12 subsections (b) and (c) of this Section, so long as the  
13 Director provides the trusted messenger with an explanation of  
14 the decision, in writing or by email, first.

15 (e) The Department shall offer quarterly training that is  
16 accessible virtually, that must be attended by all trusted  
17 messengers, and that will include information on current  
18 health misinformation trends and how to counter them and the  
19 importance of providing accurate health information. All  
20 trusted health messengers must attend each training.

21 (f) Trusted messengers shall receive no compensation from  
22 the Department.

23 Section 25. Transparency in health claims.

24 (a) To protect the public health, safety, and general  
25 welfare of the people of the State of Illinois, any

1 corporation, limited liability company, or registered  
2 nonprofit organization that distributes or communicates  
3 health-related information in the State of Illinois shall  
4 disclose its funding sources and, if the distribution or  
5 communication of health-related information claims to present  
6 facts, shall provide citations to sources of all  
7 health-related information that is distributed or  
8 communicated. The disclosure of funding sources required by  
9 this subsection may be provided by inclusion in each  
10 communication or by a prominently placed Uniform Resource  
11 Locator link to a website that details the funding.

12 (b) The Department is authorized to request from any  
13 corporation, limited liability company, or registered  
14 nonprofit organization distributing or communicating  
15 health-related information in the State the funding sources  
16 and citations to any sources of health-related information  
17 used. Any corporation, limited liability company, or  
18 registered nonprofit receiving a request shall provide the  
19 requested information under this subsection within 7 business  
20 days of receiving the request.

21 (c) A corporation, limited liability company, or  
22 registered nonprofit organization that knowingly violates any  
23 provision in this Section commits an unlawful practice under  
24 the Consumer Fraud and Deceptive Business Practices Act. All  
25 remedies, penalties, and authority granted to the Attorney  
26 General by the Consumer Fraud and Deceptive Business Practices

1 Act shall be available to the Attorney General for the  
2 enforcement of this Section.

3 Section 30. The School Code is amended by changing Section  
4 27-215 as follows:

5 (105 ILCS 5/27-215)

6 Sec. 27-215. Comprehensive health education program.

7 (a) In this subsection (a):

8 "Age and developmentally appropriate" means suitable to  
9 particular ages or age groups of children or adolescents,  
10 based on the developing cognitive, emotional, and behavioral  
11 capacity typical for the age or age group.

12 "Consent" means an affirmative, knowing, conscious,  
13 ongoing, and voluntary agreement to engage in interpersonal,  
14 physical, or sexual activity, which can be revoked at any  
15 point, including during the course of interpersonal, physical,  
16 or sexual activity.

17 The program established under this Act shall include, but  
18 not be limited to, the following major educational areas as a  
19 basis for curricula in all elementary and secondary schools in  
20 this State, with applicable Illinois Learning Standards  
21 adopted by the State Board of Education guiding the  
22 instruction in the program:

23 (1) human ecology, health, growth, development,  
24 personal health habits, and nutrition, consistent with the

1 Illinois Learning Standards adopted by the State Board of  
2 Education;

3 (2) the emotional, psychological, physiological,  
4 hygienic, and social responsibilities of family life,  
5 including evidence-based and medically accurate  
6 information regarding sexual abstinence;

7 (3) the prevention and control of disease, including  
8 instruction in grades 6 through 12 on the prevention,  
9 transmission, and spread of AIDS;

10 (4) age and developmentally appropriate sexual abuse,  
11 consistent with Section 10-23.13 of this Code, abuse  
12 during pregnancy, and assault awareness and prevention  
13 education in grades prekindergarten through 12;

14 (5) public health, environmental health, disaster  
15 preparedness education, and safety education;

16 (6) mental health and illness;

17 (7) dental health;

18 (8) cancer education that includes the types of  
19 cancer, signs and symptoms, risk factors, the importance  
20 of early prevention and detection, and information on  
21 where to get help and treatment for cancer; ~~and~~

22 (9) age and developmentally appropriate consent  
23 education; and-

24 (10) health literacy, including how to fact-check  
25 health information found online.

26 The State Board of Education shall collaborate with the

1 Department of Public Health in establishing guidance for  
2 schools in teaching health literacy as required by paragraph  
3 (10).

4 The instruction on mental health and illness must evaluate  
5 the multiple dimensions of health by reviewing the  
6 relationship between physical and mental health to enhance  
7 student understanding, attitudes, and behaviors that promote  
8 health, well-being, and human dignity and must include how and  
9 where to find mental health resources and specialized  
10 treatment in the State. The program shall also provide course  
11 material and instruction to advise pupils of the Abandoned  
12 Newborn Infant Protection Act.

13 Consent education must be age and developmentally  
14 appropriate, and the instruction on age and developmentally  
15 appropriate consent shall require only instruction aligning  
16 with consent as defined in this Section.

17 (b) Notwithstanding the educational areas under subsection  
18 (a), the following areas may also be included as a basis for  
19 curricula in all elementary and secondary schools in this  
20 State: basic first aid (including, but not limited to,  
21 cardiopulmonary resuscitation and the Heimlich maneuver),  
22 heart disease, diabetes, stroke, the prevention of child  
23 abuse, neglect, and suicide, and teen dating violence in  
24 grades 7 through 12.

25 (c) The State Superintendent of Education, in cooperation  
26 with the Department of Children and Family Services, shall

1 prepare and disseminate to all public schools and nonpublic  
2 schools information on instructional materials and programs  
3 about child sexual abuse, which may be used by such schools for  
4 their own or community programs. Such information may also be  
5 disseminated by such schools to parents.

6 (d) No pupil shall be required to take or participate in  
7 any class or course on AIDS or family life instruction or to  
8 receive training on how to properly administer cardiopulmonary  
9 resuscitation or how to use an automated external  
10 defibrillator if his or her parent or guardian submits written  
11 objection thereto, and refusal to take or participate in the  
12 course or program or the training shall not be reason for  
13 suspension or expulsion of the pupil.

14 (Source: P.A. 104-391, eff. 8-15-25.)

15 Section 35. The Consumer Fraud and Deceptive Business  
16 Practices Act is amended by changing Section 2Z as follows:

17 (815 ILCS 505/2Z) (from Ch. 121 1/2, par. 262Z)

18 Sec. 2Z. Violations of other Acts. Any person who  
19 knowingly violates the Automotive Repair Act, the Automotive  
20 Collision Repair Act, the Home Repair and Remodeling Act, the  
21 Dance Studio Act, the Physical Fitness Services Act, the  
22 Hearing Instrument Consumer Protection Act, the Illinois Union  
23 Label Act, the Installment Sales Contract Act, the Job  
24 Referral and Job Listing Services Consumer Protection Act, the

1 Travel Promotion Consumer Protection Act, the Credit Services  
2 Organizations Act, the Automatic Telephone Dialers Act, the  
3 Pay-Per-Call Services Consumer Protection Act, the Telephone  
4 Solicitations Act, the Illinois Funeral or Burial Funds Act,  
5 the Cemetery Oversight Act, the Cemetery Care Act, the Safe  
6 and Hygienic Bed Act, the Illinois Pre-Need Cemetery Sales  
7 Act, the High Risk Home Loan Act, the Payday Loan Reform Act,  
8 the Predatory Loan Prevention Act, the Mortgage Rescue Fraud  
9 Act, subsection (a) or (b) of Section 3-10 of the Cigarette Tax  
10 Act, subsection (a) or (b) of Section 3-10 of the Cigarette Use  
11 Tax Act, the Electronic Mail Act, the Internet Caller  
12 Identification Act, paragraph (6) of subsection (k) of Section  
13 6-305 of the Illinois Vehicle Code, Section 11-1431, 18d-115,  
14 18d-120, 18d-125, 18d-135, 18d-150, or 18d-153 of the Illinois  
15 Vehicle Code, Article 3 of the Residential Real Property  
16 Disclosure Act, the Automatic Contract Renewal Act, the  
17 Reverse Mortgage Act, Section 25 of the Youth Mental Health  
18 Protection Act, the Personal Information Protection Act, ~~or~~  
19 the Student Online Personal Protection Act, or Section 25 of  
20 the Combating Health Misinformation Act commits an unlawful  
21 practice within the meaning of this Act.

22 (Source: P.A. 100-315, eff. 8-24-17; 100-416, eff. 1-1-18;  
23 100-863, eff. 8-14-18; 101-658, eff. 3-23-21.)