

AN ACT

To amend sections 5101.342, 5180.21, and 5180.22 and to enact sections 5104.291 and 5180.40 of the Revised Code regarding services for infants, children, and parents.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Ohio:

SECTION 1. That sections 5101.342, 5180.21, and 5180.22 be amended and sections 5104.291 and 5180.40 of the Revised Code be enacted to read as follows:

Sec. 5101.342. The Ohio commission on fatherhood shall do both of the following:

(A) Organize a state summit on fatherhood every four years;

(B) Prepare a report each year that does the following:

(1) Identifies resources available to fund fatherhood-related programs and explores the creation of initiatives to do the following:

(a) Build the parenting skills of fathers;

(b) Provide employment-related services for low-income, noncustodial fathers;

(c) Prevent premature fatherhood;

(d) Provide services to fathers who are inmates in or have just been released from imprisonment in a state correctional institution, as defined in section 2967.01 of the Revised Code, or in any other detention facility, as defined in section 2921.01 of the Revised Code, so that they are able to maintain or reestablish their relationships with their families;

(e) Reconcile fathers with their families;

(f) Increase public awareness of the critical role fathers play.

(2) Describes the commission's expectations for the outcomes of fatherhood-related programs and initiatives and the methods the commission uses for conducting annual measures of those outcomes;

(3) Evaluates the number of fathers and children served and the number and types of additional services provided as a result of the recommendations made to the director of job and family services pursuant to section 5101.805 of the Revised Code.

The commission shall submit each report to the general assembly in accordance with section 101.68 of the Revised Code.

(C) Pursuant to section 5101.805 of the Revised Code, the commission may make recommendations to the director of job and family services regarding funding, approval, and implementation of fatherhood programs in this state that meet at least one of the four purposes of the temporary assistance for needy families block grant, as specified in 42 U.S.C. 601.

(D) The portion of the report prepared pursuant to division (B)(2) of this section shall be prepared by the commission in collaboration with the director of children and youth.

(E) The commission shall submit each report prepared pursuant to division (B) of this section to the president and minority leader of the senate, speaker and minority leader of the house of representatives, governor, and chief justice of the supreme court. The first report is due not later than one year after the last of the initial appointments to the commission is made under section 5101.341 of the Revised Code.

Sec. 5104.291. (A) This section establishes standards and conditions for rating the following early learning and development programs in the step up to quality program:

(1) A licensed child care center operating a head start or early head start program;

(2) A licensed child care center accredited by the national association for the education of young children, or its successor organization;

(3) A licensed type A or type B family child care home under contract to provide head start or early head start services;

(4) A licensed type A or type B family child care home accredited by the national association for the education of young children, or its successor organization.

(B)(1) On a periodic basis, the department of children and youth shall do both of the following:

(a) Review head start program performance standards described in 45 C.F.R. Part 1302 and determine which step up to quality program ratings tier corresponds with minimum head start program performance standards;

(b) Review accreditation standards for the national association for the education of young children, or its successor organization, and determine which step up to quality program ratings tier corresponds with minimum accreditation standards.

(2) Beginning July 1, 2025, the department shall rate each program described in divisions (A)(1) to (4) of this section in the step up to quality program ratings tier that the department has determined corresponds with the minimum standards.

(C) The department shall prescribe the manner in which a program shall demonstrate to the department that the program is meeting the requirements of this section.

Sec. 5180.21. (A) The department of children and youth shall establish the help me grow program as the state's evidence-based parent support program that encourages early prenatal and well-baby care, as well as provides parenting education to promote the comprehensive health and development of children. The program shall provide home visiting services to families with a pregnant woman or child under five years of age that meet the eligibility requirements established in rules adopted under this section. Home visiting services shall be provided through evidence-based home visiting models or innovative, promising home visiting models recommended by the Ohio home visiting consortium created under section 5180.23 of the Revised Code.

(B) Families shall be referred to the appropriate home visiting services through the central

intake and referral system created under section 5180.22 of the Revised Code.

(C) To the extent possible, the goals of the help me grow program shall be consistent with the goals of the federal home visiting program, as specified by the maternal and child health bureau of the health resources and services administration in the United States department of health and human services or its successor.

(D) The director of children and youth ~~may~~ shall enter into an interagency agreement with one or more state agencies, including the department of developmental disabilities, department of job and family services, department of medicaid, commission on minority health, Ohio fatherhood commission, and children's trust fund board, to implement the help me grow program ~~and~~, to ensure coordination of early childhood programs, and to maximize reimbursement for the help me grow program from any federal source.

In addition to creating the central intake and referral system as described in section 5180.22 of the Revised Code, the department of children and youth shall ensure there is a consistent comprehensive screening and connection program to support the coordination of home visiting services across the state, including through the department of health, department of developmental disabilities, department of job and family services, department of medicaid, and commission on minority health. Following the program's establishment, the department of children and youth shall evaluate the program's effectiveness in coordinating home visiting services at least once annually.

(E) The director may distribute help me grow program funds through contracts, grants, or subsidies to entities providing services under the program.

(F) As a condition of receiving payments for home visiting services, providers shall report to the director data on the program performance indicators, specified in rules adopted under division (G) of this section, that are used to assess progress toward achieving all of the following:

(1) The benchmark domains established for the federal home visiting program, including improvement in maternal and newborn health; reduction in child injuries, abuse, and neglect; improved school readiness and achievement; reduction in crime and domestic violence; and improved family economic self-sufficiency;

(2) Improvement in birth outcomes and reduction in stillbirths, as that term is defined in section 5180.12 of the Revised Code;

(3) Reduction in tobacco use by pregnant women, new parents, and others living in households with children.

The providers shall report the data in the format and within the time frames specified in the rules.

The director shall prepare an annual report on the data received from the providers. Each report shall include an evaluation addressing the number of families and children served, the number and type of services provided, health and developmental outcomes for participating families and children, and variation in outcomes between the types of home visiting programs specified in division (B)(3) of section 5180.22 of the Revised Code. The director shall submit the report to the

general assembly in accordance with section 101.68 of the Revised Code and make the report available on the internet web site maintained by the department of children and youth.

(G) Pursuant to Chapter 119. of the Revised Code, the director shall adopt rules that are necessary and proper to implement this section. The rules shall specify all of the following:

- (1) Subject to division (H) of this section, eligibility requirements for home visiting services;
- (2) Eligibility requirements for providers of home visiting services;
- (3) Standards and procedures for the provision of program services, including data collection, program monitoring, and program evaluation;
- (4) Procedures for appealing the denial of an application for program services or the termination of services;
- (5) Procedures for appealing the denial of an application to become a provider of program services or the termination of the department's approval of a provider;
- (6) Procedures for addressing complaints;
- (7) The program performance indicators on which data must be reported by providers of home visiting services under division (F) of this section, which, to the extent possible, shall be consistent with federal reporting requirements for federally funded home visiting services;
- (8) The format in which reports must be submitted under division (F) of this section and the time frames within which the reports must be submitted;
- (9) Criteria for payment of approved providers of program services;
- (10) Any other rules necessary to implement the program.

(H) When adopting rules required by division (G)(1) of this section, the ~~department director~~ shall specify that families residing in the urban and rural communities specified in rules adopted under section 3701.142 of the Revised Code and families in the child welfare system are to receive priority over other families for home visiting services.

(I) The department, in collaboration with the departments of job and family services and medicaid, shall propose strategies to increase the workforce capacity of home visiting service providers and parenting support professionals, including efforts to incentivize and retain such providers and professionals in this state.

Sec. 5180.22. (A) The department of children and youth shall create a central intake and referral system for all home visiting programs operating in this state. Through a competitive bidding process, the department of children and youth may select one or more persons or government entities to operate the system. In its oversight of the one or more system operators, the department shall streamline the system to ensure families and children receive services from home visiting programs as described in division (B)(3) of this section.

(B) If the department of children and youth chooses to select one or more system operators as described in division (A) of this section, a contract with any system operator shall require that the system do ~~both~~ all of the following:

- (1) Serve as a single point of entry for access, assessment, and referral of families and

children to appropriate home visiting services based on each family's location of residence;

(2) Use a standardized form or other mechanism to assess ~~for each family member's risk factors and social determinants of health, as well as ensure;~~

(3) Ensure that the family is families and children are referred to the appropriate and receive services from home visiting program, which may include a program that uses programs that are appropriate to their level of needs, including the following:

(a) Programs using home visiting contractors who that provide services within a pathways community HUB that fully or substantially complies with the pathways community HUB certification standards developed certified by the pathways community HUB institute;

(b) Programs that provide services using the early head start home-based option.

(C) The standardized form or other mechanism described in division (B)(2) of this section shall be agreed to by the home visiting consortium created under section 5180.23 of the Revised Code.

(D) A contract entered into under division (B) of this section shall require a system operator to issue an annual report to the department of children and youth that includes data regarding referrals made by the central intake and referral system, costs associated with the referrals, and the quality of services received by families and children who were referred to services through the system. The report shall be distributed to the home visiting consortium created under section 5180.23 of the Revised Code.

(E) Nothing in this section is intended to do any of the following:

(1) Prohibit the department of children and youth from using alternative promotional materials or names for the central intake and referral system;

(2) Require the use of help me grow program promotional materials or names;

(3) Prohibit providers, central coordinators, the department of children and youth, or stakeholders from using the help me grow name for promotional materials for home visiting.

Sec. 5180.40. To increase participation in evidence-based parenting education programs, the department of children and youth shall ensure state departments, agencies, and boards have information to communicate with parents, caregivers, and child care providers about such programs to promote their benefits, including their parenting, caregiving, and educational resources.

SECTION 2. That existing sections 5101.342, 5180.21, and 5180.22 of the Revised Code are hereby repealed.

SECTION 3. (A) As used in this section, "WIC" means the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children established under the "Child Nutrition Act of 1966," 42 U.S.C. 1786.

(B) The Department of Health shall investigate and determine the services and tools available at the federal level and the services and tools implemented in other states that could be

implemented in Ohio to increase access to and use of WIC.

(C) Within sixty days of the effective date of this section, the Department of Health shall submit a report to the General Assembly in accordance with section 101.68 of the Revised Code summarizing the results of the investigation described in division (B) of this section and establishing a plan to increase access to and use of WIC.

(D) Beginning three months after the effective date of this section and continuing until two years after the effective date of this section, the Department of Health shall submit quarterly reports to the General Assembly in accordance with section 101.68 of the Revised Code detailing progress on implementing the plan described in division (C), including:

- (1) Expenditures;
- (2) Changes made to the WIC program;
- (3) The total number of women and children served;
- (4) Any other relevant outcomes;
- (5) Opportunities to further increase the number of women and children served.

SECTION 4. The Department of Medicaid shall study how evidence-based peer-to-peer programming that supports infant vitality can be reimbursed through the Medicaid program. The Department shall submit a report summarizing the results of the study to the General Assembly in accordance with section 101.68 of the Revised Code one year after the effective date of this section.

SECTION 5. (A) Not later than June 30, 2026, the Medicaid Director shall evaluate, clarify, and update the Medicaid program's coverage of evidence-based and evidence-informed mental health and dyadic family therapy services for children and their caregivers, which are intended to improve outcomes for children from birth through five years of age.

The Director shall develop policy and billing guidance for Medicaid providers to do both of the following:

- (1) Improve the use of mental health and dyadic family therapy services for children from birth through age five and their families and other caregivers;
- (2) Encourage use of the Diagnostic Classification of Mental Health and Developmental Disorders of Infancy and Early Childhood published by ZERO TO THREE and known as the "DC:0-5" for assessing and diagnosing infants, toddlers, and young children, and permit use of ICD-10 diagnosis codes, published by the United States Department of Health and Human Services, for Medicaid billing.

(B) Not later than June 30, 2027, the Medicaid Director shall submit a report to the Governor and, in accordance with section 101.68 of the Revised Code, the General Assembly that includes both of the following:

- (1) Information about how the Department of Medicaid has engaged stakeholders to develop the necessary guidance, manuals, training, and billing code use procedures associated with the

Medicaid coverage described under division (A) of this section;

(2) An evaluation of the Medicaid coverage described in division (A) of this section, including:

- (a) The number of families and children served;
- (b) The number and types of services provided;
- (c) Outcome metrics for families and children served.

Speaker _____ *of the House of Representatives.*

President _____ *of the Senate.*

Passed _____, 20____

Approved _____, 20____

Governor:

Sub. H. B. No. 7

135th G.A.

The section numbering of law of a general and permanent nature is complete and in conformity with the Revised Code.

Director, Legislative Service Commission.

Filed in the office of the Secretary of State at Columbus, Ohio, on the ____ day of _____, A. D. 20 ____.

Secretary of State.

File No. _____ Effective Date _____