

June Health & Home Visiting Committee

Legislative Updates

Budget

- The final budget, approved by the legislature this week, contains nearly \$250 million in new state funding for child care, preschool and home visiting services and the Early Intervention (EI) program. It also includes money to fund first-year operations for the newly-created Illinois Department of Early Childhood.
- \$158.5 million (27.3%) increase for the child care system at Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS) for Smart Start Workforce Grants, Quality Contracts, apprenticeships and Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) caseload growth
- \$75 million (11.1%) increase for the Early Childhood Block Grant at Illinois State Board of Education for expansion of Prevention Initiative center-based and home visiting programs, Preschool for All and Preschool for All Expansion programs
- \$6 million (3.8%) increase for the Early Intervention (EI) program at IDHS to accommodate caseload growth, but no additional funding for provider rate increases
- \$5 million (21.8%) increase for evidence-based home visiting programs at IDHS to expand access to services and address compensation improvements
- \$5 million for the ECACE scholarship program, but no additional funding to ensure candidates currently receiving the scholarship can finish their programs
- \$14.2 million in operational funding for the new Illinois Department of Early Childhood

New Department of Early Childhood

- SB1 (led by Sen. Lightford, Rep. Canty) – authorizes the creation of the Department of Early Childhood.
- The Early Childhood Education Act will require the new Department, starting in July of 2026, to administer the Child Care Assistance Program, the Early Intervention program, evidence-based home visiting programs, as well as infant, toddler and preschool programs currently funded by the State Board of Education.
- Fully Operational: Fiscal Year 2027 (July 1, 2026)
- Ways to engage & help shape the new agency
- Transition Advisory Committee (TAC)
 - Open to the public to listen
 - Anyone may provide input/feedback on the TAC meeting via the input/feedback form shared in the meeting.
 - Next Meeting: Tuesday, June 18, 2024 5:30 – 7pm
- Bimonthly Transition Update and Listening Session
 - Additional public input will be gathered in Listening Sessions, held every other month
 - Next Meeting: July 19, 2024, 12:00 – 1:00 PM
- <https://oecd.illinois.gov/early-childhood-education-and-care-transition-planning/transition-advisory-committee.html>

ECE policy

- HB4959 (Rep. Gabel, Sen. Sims) – the FY 2025 budget implementation bill, which, among other provisions, codifies into law the ECACE scholarship program
- HB4951 (Rep. Burke, Sen. Villanueva) – a revenue omnibus bill, which, among other provisions, establishes a permanent state Child Tax Credit for families eligible for the Earned Income Tax Credit and have children under age 12
- HB4491 (Rep. Faver Dias, Sen. Johnson) – allows a child care director or qualified early childhood educator to be present during the opening or closing of the child care program
- SB2675 (Sen. Villivalam, Rep. Croke) – expands eligibility to the Early Childhood Construction Grant (ECCG) program for not-for-profit early childhood providers that rent or lease from another not-for-profit entity

Health and related issues

- HB5142 (Rep. Gabel, Sen. Collins) – requires, among other provisions, private health insurers to cover all pregnancy, postpartum and newborn care services provided by perinatal doulas or licensed certified professional midwives, including home births, home visits and support during labor. Insurance companies would need to cover home visits by board-certified lactation consultants, including the cost of recommended breast pumps, breastfeeding supplies and feeding aids.
- This bill has not yet been sent to the Governor.