



Legislative Priorities 2022

Each year, our agency actively engages in legislative advocacy in order to communicate the needs of the children, families and individuals we serve. The following are the legislative priorities for Family Resources. *Note items 1-5 are for Iowa, and 6 and 7 are for Illinois.*

1. **Invest \$10 million for services to all victims of violent crime:** Increased funds will help address significant unmet need and reduce disparities in access to services. Iowa invests just \$5 million in state funds to crime victim services and limits funds to domestic and sexual violence services. Homicides increased 40% last year in addition to a surging demand for crime victim services overall. We must invest in all victims.
 - a. Provide \$10 million to victim services
 - b. Amend state budget so funds also support victims of homicide, violent crime, and human trafficking.
2. **Child Welfare and Juvenile Justice:** The State's Child Welfare system is in crisis and Iowa's most vulnerable youth deserve quality and effective services. We must invest in our youth.
 - a. We request that the State of Iowa invests \$6.2 million to support Qualified Residential Treatment Programs and increase the rate per day per child to \$267.
 - b. We request that the State of Iowa invest \$600,000 in Child Welfare Emergency Services and increase the daily rate for a child in shelter to \$224.
3. **Support legislation that would adopt a "Safe Harbor" law to decriminalize juvenile sex trafficking survivors:** Request the Iowa Legislature adopt a Safe Harbor Law, protecting minors against prosecution for any crimes committed while they were trafficked and enact expungement of crimes committed by adult survivors which occurred while being trafficked.
4. **Mental Health Services:**
 - a. Maintain telehealth flexibilities (location/site) established during the Public Health Emergency to expand access to behavioral health services.
 - b. Establish a regular, ongoing Medicaid reimbursement rate review process. Competitive, regularly reviewed reimbursement rates ensure that Iowans have better access to essential services and address workforce shortages.
 - c. Continue to support and adequately fund the children's mental health system and provide appropriate funding to providers employing direct support professionals.
5. **Support amending the Housing Bill H4820:** This bill amendment would help seal eviction records, which would help survivors obtain housing.
6. **Amend the Grant Accountability and Transparency Act (GATA) - Illinois:** Health and human service providers face undue administrative burden under GATA. Regulations and requirements are increasing and as a result the cost of doing business continues to grow, which compounds administrative obligations.
 - a. This bill will amend GATA to ensure grants do not restrict administrative costs to less than 20%.
 - b. This bill will also eliminate any caps on fringe benefits in state contracts, which include but are not limited to the costs of leave (vacation, family-related, sick or military) and employee insurance. This will provide flexibility for providers to offer better benefits to improve employee retention.
7. **Support SB3208 to ensure survivor choice - Illinois:** This bill removes the mandate that medical facilities, physicians, and nurses must call law enforcement when they treat a victim of a sex offense or domestic violence. Removing this requirement allows survivors of sexual assault and domestic violence to seek medical treatment without worrying that law enforcement will be called against their wishes. It empowers survivors to choose to interact with law enforcement when they are ready.