

LEGISLATURE OF NEBRASKA
ONE HUNDRED NINTH LEGISLATURE
SECOND SESSION

LEGISLATIVE BILL 962

Introduced by McKinney, 11.

Read first time January 12, 2026

Committee: Judiciary

- 1 A BILL FOR AN ACT relating to public health and welfare; to adopt the
- 2 Youth Reentry and Transitional Support Act; to provide an operative
- 3 date; and to declare an emergency.
- 4 Be it enacted by the people of the State of Nebraska,

1 **Section 1.** Sections 1 to 6 of this act shall be known and may be
2 cited as the Youth Reentry and Transitional Support Act.

3 **Sec. 2.** For purposes of the Youth Reentry and Transitional Support
4 Act:

5 (1) Aftercare coordinator means a staff person responsible for
6 continuity of care and case management from intake through twelve months
7 after a youth has exited or transitioned from a juvenile detention
8 facility, group home, residential treatment program, or probation
9 supervision;

10 (2) Community-based provider means a nonprofit or local governmental
11 entity contracting with the Department of Health and Human Services, the
12 Office of Juvenile Services, or the Office of Probation Administration to
13 deliver transition, mentoring, or employment support;

14 (3) Credible messenger means an individual who has lived experience
15 in the justice or foster care system and who is trained in mentorship and
16 restorative justice practices;

17 (4) Individualized employment plan means a customized career plan
18 that:

19 (a) Is developed jointly by a counselor employed by the Division of
20 Rehabilitation Services of the State Department of Education, the youth,
21 and an aftercare coordinator; and

22 (b) Identifies employment, credentialing, and job placement steps
23 for the youth;

24 (5) Transition plan means a written, individualized plan developed
25 collaboratively by the Department of Health and Human Services, the
26 Office of Juvenile Services, the Office of Probation Administration, the
27 youth, and the youth's family or guardian within sixty days after
28 admission to custody the of, or supervision by, any such department or
29 office; and

30 (6) Youth means any individual under twenty-one years of age who is
31 exiting or transitioning from a juvenile detention facility, group home,

1 residential treatment program, or probation supervision.

2 **Sec. 3.** (1) The Department of Health and Human Services, in
3 coordination with the Office of Juvenile Services, the Office of
4 Probation Administration, and the Division of Rehabilitation Services of
5 the State Department of Education, shall establish the Youth Reentry and
6 Transitional Support Program. The program shall provide for the following
7 for each youth:

8 (a) Initiate transition and employment planning within thirty days
9 after a youth's intake or adjudication;

10 (b) Assign an aftercare coordinator to each eligible youth;

11 (c) Require the Office of Probation Administration to collaborate
12 with juvenile detention facility staff to co-develop and execute
13 transition plans for any youth under probation supervision;

14 (d) Provide up to twelve months of aftercare and coaching following
15 release or discharge;

16 (e) Ensure continuity of behavioral health and medicaid services;

17 (f) Enroll eligible youth in programs and services offered by the
18 Division of Rehabilitation Services of the State Department of Education;

19 (g) Develop an individualized employment plan identifying career and
20 training pathways;

21 (h) Utilize credible messenger mentoring; and

22 (i) Coordinate with family resource centers to align family and
23 community support.

24 (2) Transition plans shall include:

25 (a) A housing stabilization strategy and safe placement;

26 (b) A school reentry or educational advancement plan;

27 (c) Provisions for continuity of behavioral health and medicaid
28 services;

29 (d) Plans and processes to obtain identification documents and
30 public benefits;

31 (e) Family engagement and restorative justice objectives consistent

1 with reforms enacted in Laws 2025, LB50; and

2 (f) A communication protocol ensuring probation officers, case
3 managers, and aftercare coordinators meet jointly with the youth at least
4 once every thirty days during the first ninety days following the youth's
5 exit or transition from a juvenile detention facility, group home,
6 residential treatment program, or probation supervision.

7 **Sec. 4.** (1) Each participating agency shall implement the Youth
8 Reentry and Transitional Support Act within its existing duties, staff,
9 and appropriations.

10 (2) The Department of Health and Human Services and Office of
11 Juvenile Services shall align existing case management, child welfare,
12 and medicaid resources to support services under the act.

13 (3) The Office of Probation Administration shall integrate
14 transition planning into probation supervision and existing community-
15 based programs.

16 (4) The Division of Rehabilitation Services of the State Department
17 of Education shall deliver vocational rehabilitation and employment
18 services through existing federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity
19 Act and pre-employment transition services funding.

20 (5) The Department of Labor may assist with workforce placement and
21 apprenticeships using existing programs.

22 (6) Community-based organizations may partner with participating
23 agencies through existing grants, contracts, or volunteer programs
24 without additional state appropriations.

25 (7) No new General Fund appropriation is authorized under the Youth
26 Reentry and Transitional Support Act. All participating agencies shall
27 absorb any costs incurred using current appropriations or available
28 federal, philanthropic, or reallocated funds.

29 **Sec. 5.** (1) The Department of Health and Human Services shall, in
30 consultation with the Office of Juvenile Services, the Office of
31 Probation Administration, and the Division of Rehabilitation Services of

1 the State Department of Education, electronically submit an annual report
2 to the Judiciary, Education, and the Health and Human Services Committees
3 of the Legislature detailing:

4 (a) Numbers of youth served and completion rates;

5 (b) Education, housing, and employment outcomes; and

6 (c) Estimated savings from reduced recidivism or out-of-home
7 placements.

8 (2) The report shall identify any existing federal or private
9 funding leveraged to support implementation of the Youth Reentry and
10 Transitional Support Act.

11 **Sec. 6.** The Department of Health and Human Services, the Office of
12 Juvenile Services, the Office of Probation Administration, the Division
13 of Rehabilitation Services of the State Department of Education, and the
14 Department of Labor shall adopt and promulgate rules and regulations that
15 provide for:

16 (1) Establishing maximum caseloads of one aftercare coordinator per
17 fifteen youth;

18 (2) Defining joint responsibilities in implementing the Youth
19 Reentry and Transitional Support Act between the Office of Probation
20 Administration and juvenile detention facilities;

21 (3) Setting minimum training standards for credible messengers and
22 staff responsible for implementing the Youth Reentry and Transitional
23 Support Act;

24 (4) Defining allowable expenditures for housing and employment
25 supports;

26 (5) Creating interagency protocols with schools, courts, child
27 welfare service providers and agencies, and law enforcement agencies for
28 continuity of services; and

29 (6) Annually tracking of the number of youth who have obtained
30 employment or secondary education opportunities and the outcomes of such
31 employment or education opportunities at three-month, six-month, nine-

1 month, and twelve-month intervals, as well as an assessment of the
2 systemic impact of these outcomes on this state's workforce and juvenile
3 justice, corrections, and social services systems.

4 **Sec. 7.** This act becomes operative on July 1, 2026.

5 **Sec. 8.** Since an emergency exists, this act takes effect when
6 passed and approved according to law.