

# LEGISLATIVE BILL 48

Approved by the Governor June 4, 2025

Introduced by McKinney, 11.

A BILL FOR AN ACT relating to public health and welfare; to amend section 68-996, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement, 2024; to establish a Family Resource and Juvenile Assessment Center Pilot Program as prescribed; to change provisions relating to the Medicaid Managed Care Excess Profit Fund; to provide an operative date; and to repeal the original section.

Be it enacted by the people of the State of Nebraska,

**Section 1.** (1)(a) The Department of Health and Human Services shall establish a Family Resource and Juvenile Assessment Center Pilot Program in cities of the metropolitan class areas.

(b) The pilot program shall: (i) Operate twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, (ii) be developed in partnership with local grassroots organizations, community stakeholders, and advisors representing youth and families impacted by the juvenile justice system, and (iii) terminate five years after the operative date of this act.

(2) A Family Resource and Juvenile Assessment Center means a facility designed to provide support, assessment, and intervention services for youth and families involved in, or at risk of, entering the juvenile justice system. The goal of the centers is to offer comprehensive, community-based solutions that address underlying issues contributing to juvenile delinquency, including family dynamics, mental health, substance abuse, and educational challenges.

**Sec. 2.** The pilot program established pursuant to section 1 of this act shall:

(1) Provide comprehensive support resources to prevent youth from entering or escalating within the juvenile justice system;

(2) Minimize individual and community harm by addressing issues before they lead to greater involvement with social services, family services, and adult criminal justice systems; and

(3) Foster community trust and engagement by integrating culturally relevant services delivered by, and for, the communities served.

**Sec. 3.** (1) The Department of Health and Human Services shall designate a designation process for family resource and juvenile assessment centers to ensure adherence to high-quality standards in service delivery, staff qualifications, and organizational effectiveness.

(2) A center seeking designation shall complete a comprehensive self-assessment based on the national Standards of Quality for Family Strengthening and Support or a similar benchmark framework and shall submit an application and the self-assessment to the department for review.

(3) The department shall conduct site visits and staff interviews as part of the review process to verify self-assessment findings and confirm compliance with designation standards.

(4) A center that meets the designation criteria will receive official designation. A center that does not meet the designation criteria shall receive feedback and technical assistance so that such center may improve and reapply for designation.

(5) Two centers shall be selected for the pilot program established pursuant to section 1 of this act.

**Sec. 4.** To receive designation as a family resource and juvenile assessment center under section 3 of this act, an applicant shall meet the following criteria: (1) Offer a range of core services, including parenting support, youth counseling, economic success initiatives, early childhood programs, conflict resolution, mental health services, and substance abuse prevention; (2) employ professionals trained in family support principles, cultural competency, trauma-informed care, and the strengthening families framework; (3) develop partnerships with local grassroots organizations to provide culturally relevant services, outreach, and trust-building within the community; (4) demonstrate a clear, effective organizational framework that supports service delivery, continuous quality improvement, and sustainable operations; and (5) implement data collection processes to assess service impact and outcomes for youth and families, ensuring program adjustments based on feedback.

**Sec. 5.** (1) Each family resource and juvenile assessment center shall host multiple community providers, grassroots organizations, and embedded community navigators to assess and serve the immediate and ongoing needs of youth and families.

(2) Each center shall provide assessments and services free of charge to families and maintain active membership in the National Assessment Center Association.

(3) The purpose of the assessment shall be to (a) enable youth and families to discuss a family's unique dynamic, challenges, and goals in a safe, culturally respectful environment, (b) identify the origin of presenting issues and provide comprehensive service referrals in partnership with local

organizations and businesses, and (c) engage youth and families in creating tailored action plans for long-term success.

**Sec. 6.** (1) Each family resource and juvenile assessment center shall integrate culturally relevant and trauma-informed services, including (a) tutoring, (b) mentoring from community leaders, including those with lived experience in the justice system, (c) conflict resolution and anger management training, (d) mental health and wellness services provided by culturally sensitive professionals, (e) social skills and job-readiness training, (f) financial literacy programs, (g) youth and family counseling, (h) cognitive behavioral therapy, (i) drug and substance abuse prevention and intervention, and (j) food and clothing assistance and resource navigation.

(2) Each center shall establish community partnerships to provide apprenticeships, vocational training, and mentorship opportunities with local businesses, trades, and community organizations.

**Sec. 7.** Each family resource and juvenile assessment center shall (1) have a youth advisory council and parent advisory board composed of community members to provide ongoing feedback to ensure services remain relevant, effective, and responsive, (2) host regular outreach events, workshops, and open houses in partnership with schools, faith-based groups, and community organizations, to create a bridge for preventive engagement with at-risk youth and their families, and (3) employ individuals with established community ties and lived experience to guide youth and families through available services, act as mentors, and assist with follow-up to ensure sustained engagement.

**Sec. 8.** Each family resource and juvenile assessment center shall implement a data collection system to assess program effectiveness, track youth and family outcomes, and incorporate feedback directly from those served. The data collected shall be used to adjust and refine services, with a focus on measuring progress toward keeping youth out of the juvenile justice system and achieving positive life outcomes.

**Sec. 9.** Each family resource and juvenile assessment center shall offer ongoing support to youth after they complete the initial service period. This support may include alumni mentoring programs, periodic check-ins, or additional family resources as youth transition into adulthood or exit from other systems of care.

**Sec. 10.** Funding for family resource and juvenile assessment centers shall be allocated to prioritize partnerships with local grassroots organizations and businesses to sustain services and provide direct community investment. Subject to available funds, each designated center shall receive up to five hundred thousand dollars per center annually from the Medicaid Managed Care Excess Profit Fund. If such funds are not available from the Medicaid Managed Care Excess Profit Fund, no General Funds may be used. No more than ten percent of funds appropriated for the Family Resource and Juvenile Assessment Center Pilot Program, up to fifty thousand dollars per year, shall be used to administer the pilot program.

**Sec. 11.** The Department of Health and Human Services shall conduct an annual evaluation of the Family Resource and Juvenile Assessment Center Pilot Program's impact on youth and family well-being, community trust, and reduction in juvenile justice system involvement to inform future program developments under sections 1 to 11 of this act.

**Sec. 12.** Section 68-996, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement, 2024, is amended to read:

68-996 (1) The Medicaid Managed Care Excess Profit Fund is created. The fund shall contain money returned to the State Treasurer pursuant to subdivision (3) of section 68-995.

(2) The fund shall first be used to offset any losses under subdivision (2) of section 68-995 and then to provide for (a) services addressing the health needs of adults and children under the Medical Assistance Act, including filling service gaps, (b) providing system improvements, (c) providing evidence-based early intervention home visitation programs, (d) providing medical respite services, (e) translation and interpretation services, (f) providing coverage for continuous glucose monitors as described in section 68-911, (g) providing other services sustaining access to care, (h) services under the Nebraska Prenatal Plus Program, (i) and providing grants pursuant to the Intergenerational Care Facility Incentive Grant Program, and (j) the Family Resource and Juvenile Assessment Center Pilot Program as determined by the Legislature. The fund shall only be used for the purposes described in this section.

(3) Any money in the fund available for investment shall be invested by the state investment officer pursuant to the Nebraska Capital Expansion Act and the Nebraska State Funds Investment Act. Beginning October 1, 2024, any investment earnings from investment of money in the fund shall be credited to the General Fund.

**Sec. 13.** This act becomes operative on September 1, 2025.

**Sec. 14.** Original section 68-996, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement, 2024, is repealed.