



General Assembly

January Session, 2025

Raised Bill No. 7102

LCO No. 5240



Referred to Committee on HUMAN SERVICES

Introduced by:
(HS)

AN ACT CONCERNING MATERNAL AND INFANT HEALTH CARE.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

- 1 Section 1. (*Effective July 1, 2025*) (a) As used in this section, (1) "birth
2 center" has the same meaning as provided in section 19a-490 of the
3 general statutes, and (2) "birthing hospital" has the same meaning as
4 provided in section 19a-490ee of the general statutes. The Commissioner
5 of Health Strategy, in consultation with the Commissioners of Social
6 Services and Public Health, shall develop a strategic plan to increase the
7 number of birth centers and birthing hospitals located in areas of the
8 state with a high percentage of Medicaid recipients and limited access
9 to birth centers and birthing hospitals.
- 10 (b) The strategic plan developed pursuant to subsection (a) of this
11 section shall include (1) barriers to opening birth centers and birthing
12 hospitals, (2) incentives that may be offered by the state to facilitate the
13 opening of more such centers and hospitals, and (3) an evaluation of best
14 practices nation-wide to facilitate the opening and sustainability of such
15 centers and hospitals.

16 (c) Not later than December 1, 2025, the Commissioner of Health
17 Strategy shall file a report, in accordance with the provisions of section
18 11-4a of the general statutes, with the joint standing committees of the
19 General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to
20 appropriations and the budgets of state agencies, human services and
21 public health. The report shall include recommendations and an
22 estimate of any state appropriations that may be needed to facilitate the
23 opening of more birth centers and birthing hospitals in underserved
24 areas of the state.

25 Sec. 2. (*Effective July 1, 2025*) The Commissioner of Social Services,
26 within available appropriations, shall increase Medicaid reimbursement
27 rates for doulas as part of the bundled payment for maternity services
28 established pursuant to section 17b-277d of the general statutes. Not
29 later than December 1, 2025, the commissioner shall file a report, in
30 accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes,
31 with the joint standing committees of the General Assembly having
32 cognizance of matters relating to appropriations and the budgets of state
33 agencies, public health and human services on (1) any increase in
34 Medicaid reimbursement rates for doulas, and (2) the impact on the
35 number of doulas providing care to Medicaid recipients.

36 Sec. 3. Section 17b-27c of the general statutes is repealed and the
37 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2025*):

38 (a) There is established a CFI Council to approve the work of the CFI,
39 including, but not limited to, implementation of CFI objectives through
40 a strategic plan developed by the CFI. The council shall actively
41 participate in efforts that further CFI objectives, including, but not
42 limited to: (1) Fostering collaboration between state agencies that
43 provide services for fathers and families; (2) (A) coordinating
44 comprehensive services, (B) ensuring the continuity of services, (C)
45 heightening the impact of services, and (D) avoiding duplication of
46 services; [and] (3) supporting fathers of children eligible or formerly
47 eligible for services under the temporary assistance for needy families

48 block grant; and (4) expanding the role of fathers in supporting maternal
49 health.

50 (b) The membership of the council shall consist of:

51 (1) The Commissioner of Social Services, or the commissioner's
52 designee;

53 (2) The Commissioner of Children and Families, or the
54 commissioner's designee;

55 (3) The Commissioner of Correction, or the commissioner's designee;

56 (4) The Commissioner of Early Childhood, or the commissioner's
57 designee;

58 (5) The Commissioner of Education, or the commissioner's designee;

59 (6) The Commissioner of Developmental Services, or the
60 commissioner's designee;

61 (7) The Commissioner of Housing, or the commissioner's designee;

62 (8) The Labor Commissioner, or the commissioner's designee;

63 (9) The Commissioner of Mental Health and Addiction Services, or
64 the commissioner's designee;

65 (10) The Commissioner of Public Health, or the commissioner's
66 designee;

67 (11) The Commissioner of Veterans Affairs, or the commissioner's
68 designee;

69 (12) The chairperson of the Board of Pardons and Parole, or the
70 chairperson's designee;

71 (13) The director of the Support Enforcement Services Division and
72 the executive director of the Court Support Services Division of the

73 Judicial Branch, or their designees;

74 (14) The Chief Family Support Magistrate, or the Chief Family
75 Support Magistrate's designee;

76 (15) The chancellor of the Connecticut State Colleges and
77 Universities, or the chancellor's designee;

78 (16) The director of the Office of Child Support Services within the
79 Department of Social Services, or the director's designee; and

80 (17) Eleven members appointed by the Commissioner of Social
81 Services, including:

82 (A) One with expertise in the area of legal assistance to low-income
83 populations;

84 (B) One representative of the Governor's Workforce Council;

85 (C) One representative of a regional workforce development board;

86 (D) One member with expertise in family relations;

87 (E) One or more representatives of a local fatherhood program;

88 (F) One member with expertise in male mental and physical health;

89 (G) One member representing the interests of custodial parents;

90 (H) One member representing the interests of noncustodial parents;

91 (I) One member representing the interests of children;

92 (J) One member with expertise in the area of domestic violence; and

93 (K) One member with expertise in child development.

94 (c) The Commissioner of Social Services shall serve as a chairperson
95 of the council and shall designate a cochairperson from among the

96 membership of the council. The commissioner shall convene the council
97 not later than June 26, 2022, and the council shall meet at least quarterly
98 thereafter. The commissioner shall fill any vacancy of seats under
99 subdivision (17) of subsection (b) of this section.

100 (d) The Commissioner of Social Services may designate a working
101 group from among the members of the council to carry out specific
102 duties required under this section and section 17b-27b. The
103 commissioner shall seek the advice and participation of any person,
104 organization or state or federal agency the commissioner deems
105 necessary to carry out the provisions of this section and section 17b-27b.

106 (e) The Commissioner of Social Services, in consultation with the
107 council and within available resources, shall apply for any available
108 federal and private funds for programs that promote CFI objectives in
109 accordance with this section and section 17b-27b. The commissioner
110 shall award grants from any such available funds to entities that provide
111 (1) employment and training opportunities for low-income fathers to
112 increase the earning capacity of such fathers; (2) classes in parenting and
113 financial literacy; and (3) other support services and programs that
114 promote responsible parenting, expanding the role of fathers in
115 supporting maternal health, economic stability and communication and
116 interaction between fathers and their children.

117 (f) Applicants for grants provided pursuant to subsection (e) of this
118 section shall apply to the Commissioner of Social Services at such time
119 and in such manner as prescribed by the commissioner. The
120 commissioner shall, in consultation with the council, establish criteria
121 for eligibility for grants and for the awarding of grants. At a minimum,
122 the commissioner shall require grantees to (1) implement accountability
123 measures and results-based outcomes as a condition of being awarded
124 a grant; (2) leverage funds through existing resources and collaboration
125 with community-based and nonprofit organizations; and (3) consult
126 with experts in domestic violence to ensure that, when appropriate, the
127 programs and services provided to fathers and families pursuant to this

128 section and section 17b-27b address issues concerning domestic
129 violence.

130 (g) Not later than December 1, 2022, and annually thereafter, the
131 commissioner, in consultation with the council, shall report, in
132 accordance with section 11-4a, to the joint standing committees of the
133 General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to
134 appropriations and the budgets of state agencies, human services and
135 children on the grant program's effectiveness in achieving CFI
136 objectives.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	<i>July 1, 2025</i>	New section
Sec. 2	<i>July 1, 2025</i>	New section
Sec. 3	<i>July 1, 2025</i>	17b-27c

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Sec. 2	<i>July 1, 2025</i>	New section
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Statement of Purpose:

To develop a strategy to increase birth centers and birthing hospitals in underserved regions of the state with a high percentage of Medicaid recipients, increase Medicaid reimbursement for doulas and expand the role of fathers in supporting maternal and infant health.

[Proposed deletions are enclosed in brackets. Proposed additions are indicated by underline, except that when the entire text of a bill or resolution or a section of a bill or resolution is new, it is not underlined.]