

Minnesota's African American Family Preservation and Child Welfare Disproportionality Act

The State of Minnesota is advancing reforms to its child welfare system to address long-standing disparities and promote equitable outcomes for all children and families.

Passed by the Minnesota Legislature in 2024, the Minnesota African American Family Preservation and Child Welfare Disproportionality Act represents a significant step toward reimagining child protection through the lens of disparity, prevention and family preservation.

Background and purpose

This legislation was enacted in response to the persistent over-representation of African American and other communities of color in Minnesota's child welfare system. In 2023:

- African American children made up 17% of the child population but accounted for 27% of child protection cases.
- American Indian children comprised 4% of the population but 21% of cases.
- Hispanic children represented 10% of the population and 12.5% of child protection involvement.

The Act centers the lived experiences of African American families while also addressing broader disproportionality. It calls for systemic change across policies, practices, and workforce development, with a focus on prevention and preserving family connections.

Key provisions

Prevention and Family Preservation

Counties must actively pursue strategies that prioritize family preservation, including the use of culturally responsive safety plans, stronger reunification efforts, and oversight of out-of-home placements and terminations of parental rights.

Oversight and Accountability

The Act establishes a permanent African American Child Well-Being Unit and Advisory Council within DCYF to lead implementation, publish annual reports, and provide ongoing guidance.

Data Equity and Transparency

DCYF is required to collect, analyze, and publicly report child welfare data disaggregated by race, culture, socioeconomic status, and disability status to identify and address disparities.

Workforce Development

All child welfare professionals are required to complete cultural competency training. While not mandatory, judges, attorneys, and guardians ad litem are strongly encouraged to participate.

Grant Program

A new \$1 million annual grant program to support community agencies in implementing prevention-focused and culturally responsive services. Hennepin and Ramsey counties each received a one-time \$2.5 million allocation to support early implementation efforts.

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Implementation timeline

July 1, 2024

- DCYF launches the grant program
- African American Child Well-Being Unit and Advisory Council established

January 1, 2025

- Hennepin and Ramsey counties begin a two-year phase-in program
- Compliance portal initiated for tracking implementation

January 1, 2026

- Interim report from the Statewide Work Group due to the Legislature

September 1, 2026

- Statewide Work Group to deliver final implementation plan and best practice recommendations.

January 1, 2027

- Statewide implementation begins: all counties must comply with Act provisions, including data reporting, safety plans, case reviews, and mandatory workforce training

July 1, 2027

- DCYF submits a report to the Legislature on outcomes and lessons from the phase-in program

Statewide Work Group

To ensure a collaborative and informed roll out, the Act establishes a Statewide Work Group composed of representatives from urban and rural counties, legal professionals, and community-based organizations. This group will:

- Monitor and guide the phase-in process
- Assess implementation costs
- Recommend policy and legislative adjustments
- Provide transparency through publicly accessible meetings and updates



Statewide Work Group membership, meeting dates, agendas, minutes and important updates are posted on the [MAAFPCWDA Statewide Work Group engagement site](#).

This centralized hub supports transparency and stakeholder engagement throughout the Act's implementation.

Stay Informed

Ongoing updates, meeting notices, and resources are available through DCYF's [MAAFPCWDA Implementation web page](#). You can also sign up for regular updates via the department's biweekly [MAAFPCWDA newsletter](#).



Learn more about MAAFPCWDA