



Ohio Revised Code

Section 5180.21 [Former R.C. 3701.61, amended and renumbered by H.B. 33, 135th General Assembly, effective 1/1/2025] Help me grow program.

Effective: September 30, 2025

Legislation: House Bill 96

(A) The department of children and youth shall establish the help me grow program as the state's evidence-based parent support program that encourages early prenatal and well-baby care, as well as provides parenting education to promote the comprehensive health and development of children. The program shall provide home visiting services to families with a pregnant woman or child under five years of age that meet the eligibility requirements established in rules adopted under this section. Home visiting services shall be provided through evidence-based home visiting models or innovative, promising home visiting models recommended by the children and youth advisory council created under section 5180.04 of the Revised Code.

(B) Families shall be referred to the appropriate home visiting services through the central intake and referral system created under section 5180.22 of the Revised Code.

(C) To the extent possible, the goals of the help me grow program shall be consistent with the goals of the federal home visiting program, as specified by the maternal and child health bureau of the health resources and services administration in the United States department of health and human services or its successor.

(D) The director of children and youth shall enter into an interagency agreement with one or more state agencies, including the department of developmental disabilities, department of job and family services, department of medicaid, commission on minority health, Ohio fatherhood commission, and children's trust fund board, to implement the help me grow program, to ensure coordination of early childhood programs, and to maximize reimbursement for the help me grow program from any federal source.

In addition to creating the central intake and referral system as described in section 5180.22 of the Revised Code, the department of children and youth shall ensure there is a consistent comprehensive screening and connection program to support the coordination of home visiting services across the



state, including through the department of health, department of developmental disabilities, department of job and family services, department of medicaid, and commission on minority health. Following the program's establishment, the department of children and youth shall evaluate the program's effectiveness in coordinating home visiting services at least once annually.

(E) The director may distribute help me grow program funds through contracts, grants, or subsidies to entities providing services under the program.

(F) As a condition of receiving payments for home visiting services, providers shall report to the director data on the program performance indicators, specified in rules adopted under division (G) of this section, that are used to assess progress toward achieving all of the following:

(1) The benchmark domains established for the federal home visiting program, including improvement in maternal and newborn health; reduction in child injuries, abuse, and neglect; improved school readiness and achievement; reduction in crime and domestic violence; and improved family economic self-sufficiency;

(2) Improvement in birth outcomes and reduction in stillbirths, as that term is defined in section 5180.12 of the Revised Code;

(3) Reduction in tobacco use by pregnant women, new parents, and others living in households with children.

The providers shall report the data in the format and within the time frames specified in the rules.

The director shall prepare an annual report on the data received from the providers. Each report shall include an evaluation addressing the number of families and children served, the number and type of services provided, health and developmental outcomes for participating families and children, and variation in outcomes between the types of home visiting programs specified in division (B)(3) of section 5180.22 of the Revised Code. The director shall submit the report to the general assembly in accordance with section 101.68 of the Revised Code and make the report available on the internet web site maintained by the department of children and youth.



(G) Pursuant to Chapter 119. of the Revised Code, the director shall adopt rules that are necessary and proper to implement this section. The rules shall specify all of the following:

- (1) Subject to division (H) of this section, eligibility requirements for home visiting services;
- (2) Eligibility requirements for providers of home visiting services;
- (3) Standards and procedures for the provision of program services, including data collection, program monitoring, and program evaluation;
- (4) Procedures for appealing the denial of an application for program services or the termination of services;
- (5) Procedures for appealing the denial of an application to become a provider of program services or the termination of the department's approval of a provider;
- (6) Procedures for addressing complaints;
- (7) The program performance indicators on which data must be reported by providers of home visiting services under division (F) of this section, which, to the extent possible, shall be consistent with federal reporting requirements for federally funded home visiting services;
- (8) The format in which reports must be submitted under division (F) of this section and the time frames within which the reports must be submitted;
- (9) Criteria for payment of approved providers of program services;
- (10) Any other rules necessary to implement the program.

(H) When adopting rules required by division (G)(1) of this section, the director shall specify that families residing in the urban and rural communities specified in rules adopted under section 3701.142 of the Revised Code and families in the child welfare system are to receive priority over other families for home visiting services.



(I) The department, in collaboration with the departments of job and family services and medicaid, shall propose strategies to increase the workforce capacity of home visiting service providers and parenting support professionals, including efforts to incentivize and retain such providers and professionals in this state.