

Over 180 New Laws To Take Effect In 2023

by Chris Guy

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ALTON - State Representative Amy Elik (R-Alton) wants to inform the public of several new and notable laws set to take effect on January 1st, 2023.

One of these laws establishes a robust and comprehensive safety standard for drivers who transport children and families for the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS). Public Act 102-795, sponsored by Rep. Elik, requires service agencies under contract with DCFS to make sure drivers are properly trained on how to install

and operate a child restraint system, ensure they possess a valid driver's license, have a clean driving record and a properly maintained vehicle, and create lines of communication during the scheduled transport.

“It is absolutely unacceptable that children and families had to rely on transportation providers who were late, or didn't show-up at all. When one of my constituents brought this to my attention, I knew it needed to get taken care of ASAP,” said Rep. Elik. “This law sets a rigorous standard that will make sure foster children and families have access to safe, reliable, and consistent transportation, and I'm thrilled to see this taking effect in 2023.”

Rep. Elik was also the chief House sponsor of Public Act 102-1100, which changes references of “high school equivalency certificate” to “State of Illinois High School Diploma” across Illinois law. This will not only create uniformity and reciprocity with other states' education systems, but it will assist in eliminating the stigma of a high school equivalency certificate versus a high school diploma. To recognize Rep. Elik for her steadfast and unwavering support of this bill, and adult education, the Coalition on Adult Basic Education (COABE) awarded Elik the “Legislative Champion Award” at Lewis and Clark Community College in October.

“This new law, which equates a high school equivalency certificate to a State of Illinois High School Diploma, will create opportunity by encouraging individuals to get their GED,” explained Elik. “People take different paths in life, and it's important we recognize these educational achievements for what they truly are, equal. This new legislation will help erase the stigma associated with getting a GED, and I am very proud to have spearheaded it in the House.”

Additionally, several other new and notable laws are set to take effect on January 1, 2023. These laws, supported by Rep. Elik, include the issuing of Gold Star license plates, recognizing and celebrating Illinois agriculture, and supporting foster children as they transition in or out of the foster care system.

Gold Star License Plates

Public Act 102-796, House Bill 5078

The Secretary of State shall issue Gold Star license plates to any Illinois resident who is a surviving widow, widower, parent, child, stepchild, child through adoption, sibling or half-sibling of a person who served in the U.S. Armed Forces and lost his or her life while serving in peacetime or war. No registration fee for a Gold Star license plate shall be required from children of those who lost their lives.

GED Equivalent to a High School Diploma

Public Act 102-1100, Senate Bill 3792

This new law erases the stigma of a high school equivalency diploma versus a high school diploma, and also reduces the cost of GED exams for adult education students. This change recognizes the equal value of a State of Illinois High School Diploma and will aid Illinois graduates in establishing reciprocity with educational requirements in other states.

Better Data Collection for Veterans' Programs

Public Act 102-961, House Bill 4998

DHS will be required to review and collect data on the number of military veterans receiving services or benefits under its emergency food and housing programs, and submit a report to the General Assembly each year with its findings. This new law will help evaluate whether state programs to assist veterans are working as well as they could.

Foster Children's Rights

Public Act 102-810, House Bill 5418

In the Foster Children's Bill of Rights Act, the list of rights is expanded to include new items designed to support children transitioning in and out of the foster care system.

Sweet Corn Appreciation Day

Public Act 102-1068, House Bill 4766

August 1 of each year will be Sweet Corn Appreciation Day to recognize and celebrate the importance of sweet corn, and family farmers, to Illinois agriculture.

Military Presentation of State Flag

Public Act 102-1083, Senate Bill 3459

When any Illinois resident (currently only members of the Illinois National Guard) dies while on State Active Duty, the Adjutant General, or the Assistant Adjutant Generals for

Army or Air, or a designee of the Adjutant General, may (currently shall) present one state flag of Illinois to the next of kin of the deceased who receives the United States burial flag, or that person's designee, as soon as is practicable.

Making Apprenticeships More Accessible

Public Act 102-803, House Bill 5225

This legislation creates a 5-year pilot program, subject to appropriation, to provide subsidies to individuals participating in a registered apprenticeship program, pre-apprenticeship program or work-based learning program. These subsidies can be used to pay for transportation, child care, housing, digital technology, education, mental health services, substance abuse services, income support and work-related supplies.

School Bus Traffic Safety Penalty

Public Act 102-859, Senate Bill 3793

This new law adds community service as a penalty for those who fail to stop or who pass a school bus when it is receiving and/or dropping off students. It also adds community service as a penalty to those who exceed 20 mph in a school zone.

Stroke Awareness Campaign

Public Act 102-1070, House Bill 5014

IDPH will now partner with Governors State University in establishing a 12-month campaign focused on promoting stroke awareness for communities determined to be at risk for strokes, particularly within Chicago's Southland community.

To view a brief summary of all new laws taking effect on January 1, 2023, click [here](#)

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