

Support \$6 Million in New GRF Funding to Implement Improved Lead Poisoning Prevention Rules

Fewer children will suffer the debilitating consequences of an entirely preventable disease

On February 22, 2019, updated and improved rules for the Lead Poisoning Prevention Code (77 Ill. Adm. Code 845) were published that commit Illinois to be a national leader in preventing childhood lead poisoning.

In his FY20 budget proposal, Governor Pritzker included a total of \$17 million for the Lead Poisoning Prevention Program, including \$6 million in new GRF, so that the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) will have adequate resources to implement the new rules. In FY19, approximately \$10 million was appropriated for the program.

What the new rules do: Adopts the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reference value of 5 µg/dL (“micrograms per deciliter”) or more to define an elevated blood lead level (EBL) that requires action by IDPH and/or one of its delegate agencies. Numerous other improvements are included, such as requiring best practices for inspection procedures.

Illinois is now one of just a handful of states that mandate the provision of both nurse case management and environmental investigative follow-up for all children with an elevated blood lead level of 5 µg/dL or more. Under the new rules, these services are mandated by state law.

The impact on IDPH and delegate agencies: More than 6,000 additional children, aged 0-6, with an EBL will be able to receive both nurse case management to reduce their blood lead level and have their home, school and/or child care center inspected to identify lead hazards that need to be abated. Under the previous rules, only about 1,000 children would be eligible for both services.

The benefits for children: Far fewer Illinois children—disproportionately children of color and low-income—with a proven exposure to an environmental neurotoxin will suffer from the debilitating consequences of an entirely preventable disease. Lead poisoning is linked to brain damage, health issues, developmental delay, and behavioral problems. *Public health experts agree that no level of lead exposure is safe.*

The benefits for Illinois: Lead poisoning prevention is a cost-effective solution that will make Illinois safer. Each dollar invested in lead hazard control yields returns between \$17-\$221, through reduced crime, increased taxable income, lower healthcare costs and other social and economic benefits. (Source: *Childhood lead poisoning: conservative estimates of the social and economic benefits of lead hazard control* E Gould - Environmental Health Perspectives, 2009 – www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov)

Supporters include: Civitas ChildLaw Center, Loyola University Chicago School of Law; Cook County Health; Elevate Energy; Erie Family Health Center; Health Justice Innovations, LLC; Health Justice Project, Loyola University Chicago School of Law; Health & Medicine Policy Research Group; Housing Action Illinois; Illinois Public Health Association; Legal Council for Health Justice; Metropolitan Tenants Organization, National Center for Healthy Housing and the Sargent Shriver National Center on Poverty Law



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