



KEEP KIDS
First

Child Welfare Provider Laws

**Keeping Kids First by Ensuring
All Providers Can Serve**

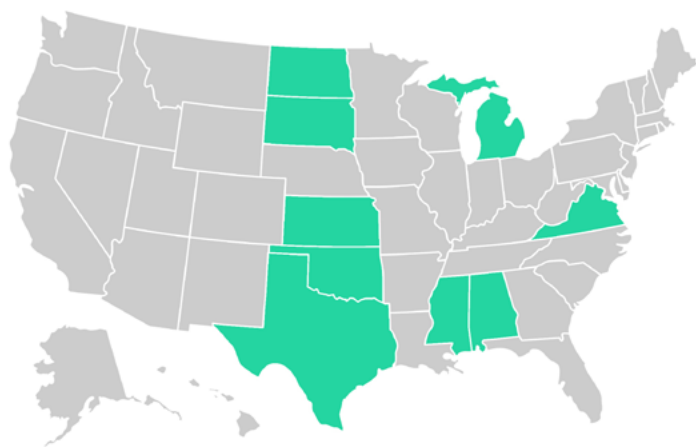
Because of the increasing threats to faith-based providers that undermine the goal to help as many kids as possible find a forever home, several state legislatures have enacted laws that protect the ability of these providers to continue to serve kids and families in the state.

How do child welfare provider laws work?

Child welfare provider laws ensure that adoption and foster care providers remain free to work with the state to find loving, forever homes for kids. They prohibit any state or local government agencies or officials from discriminating against providers—such as by denying them a license to operate in the state or funding to provide adoption and foster care services because of a provider’s religious beliefs or moral convictions.

Where have child welfare provider laws been enacted?

Nine states have passed laws that protect all adoption and foster care providers from government discrimination based on their religious or moral beliefs. The U.S. Congress is also considering legislation that would protect providers from discrimination by federal agencies.



States with Child Welfare Provider Laws

What is the impact of these laws?

The net result of child welfare provider laws is that children and families get more options as more religious organizations enter the market place.

- ▶ Children get more providers working to place them in a nurturing home;
- ▶ Birth moms have more options for placing their child;
- ▶ More families are recruited and trained to participate in foster care; and

Child welfare provider laws ensure valuable providers remain available to serve the most vulnerable in our midst.

- ▶ The state reaps millions of dollars in social and economic benefit from the charitable services provided by these organizations.

Why should we protect child welfare providers?

- ▶ **Every child deserves a chance to be raised in a loving family.** There are over 400,000 children in the foster care system. Child welfare provider laws ensure valuable providers remain available to serve the most vulnerable in our midst.
- ▶ **No child welfare provider should be prevented from serving children and families because the government doesn't like their religious beliefs.** Lawmakers have an obligation to ensure that providers who serve our most vulnerable are not ejected simply because of their beliefs.
- ▶ **Respect for a diversity of opinions is a benchmark of American society.** Protecting a diversity of private providers and their ability to operate according to their values—and with families who share those values—makes it more likely that the greatest possible number of children will be connected with permanent, loving families.



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