



OLR RESEARCH REPORT

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YOUTH MENTORING PROGRAMS IN OTHER STATES

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You asked for information about other states' legislation that supports youth mentoring programs.

SUMMARY

We found legislation supporting youth mentoring programs in three states (Colorado, Iowa, and Michigan.) Colorado law establishes a youth services program that provides grants to eligible youth mentoring services and programs. Iowa law defines a certification process by which youth mentoring programs may become eligible for grants through the state Department of Public Health. In Michigan, the law allocates funds to school districts in which youths are enrolled in the state's Michigan Youth Challenge Academy. The Academy provides 12 months of mentoring for attendees.

We also found a 1996 executive order issued by the California governor that resulted in a state employee policy supporting such programs. The policy enables permanent full-time employees to be paid for up to 40 hours of mentoring per year if they meet certain requirements.

Additionally, New Jersey law calls for the establishment of an at-risk youth mentoring program (NJS § 34:15F-1). However, according to the state Department of Labor and Workforce Development, the program was never funded.

Indiana law permits a prosecuting attorney to establish and administer a youth mentoring program (I.C. § 33-39-2-7). However, we were unable to confirm if any Indiana prosecutors have established such a program. We will forward you any additional information we receive.

YOUTH MENTORING LEGISLATION

Colorado

The Colorado legislature established the Tony Grampsas Youth Services (TGYS) program in 1994 “to provide state funding for community-based programs that target youth and their families for intervention services in an effort to reduce incidents of youth crime and violence.” Among other things, the program provides grants to eligible youth mentoring services and programs (CRS § 26-6.8-102.) According to the program’s website, TGYS 2013-14 fiscal year funding comes from the state’s General Fund and “master tobacco settlement dollars.” The money will go to 56 lead agencies, which will use it to support over 100 community organizations. TGYS mentoring program grant recipients for FY 2013-14 include:

1. Big Brothers Big Sisters of Colorado (\$70,022),
2. Colorado I Have A Dream Foundation (\$31,300),
3. Colorado Youth at Risk (\$139,086),
4. YESS Institute (\$51,300), and
5. Mesa Youth Services, Inc. (\$47,050).

For more information about the TGYS Program, visit:
<http://www.colorado.gov/cs/Satellite/CDHS-ChildYouthFam/CBON/1251645046184>

Iowa

In Iowa, youth mentoring programs may be certified to participate in the Iowa Mentoring Partnership, a state government program. Once certified, a program is eligible for grants through the Iowa Department of Public Health. The Iowa Administrative Code defines the youth mentoring program certification process and requirements (IAC 817-8.2(15H).)

In order to be certified, a youth mentoring program must have:

1. a statement of purpose and long range plan;
2. mentor and participant recruitment plans, eligibility screenings, and training curricula; and
3. mentor and mentee orientation.

An eligible program should also have a strategy for matching mentors with mentees; a consistent monitoring process; and a support, recognition, and retention component.

For more information about the Iowa Mentoring Partnership, visit:
<http://www.calhr.ca.gov/PML%20Library/1996-038.pdf>

Michigan

The Michigan Youth Challenge Academy (MYCA), funded by the state and the National Guard Bureau, helps high school dropouts age 16 through 18 to get their GED. Participants spend 22 weeks at Fort Custer in Augusta, Michigan, where they receive 400 hours of classroom instruction and GED preparation. Upon completing the program's residential component, each participant receives assistance from an adult mentor for an additional 12 months. The program is free for eligible youths, and there is no military enrollment obligation.

Michigan law allocates up to \$1.5 million for payments to school districts with youths enrolled in MYCA. To receive payment, an eligible school district must contract with the state Military and Veterans' Affairs Department to ensure that all of the funds are used for the youth challenge program (although it may use up to 3% of the payment for administrative expenses)(MCL § 388.1624c).

For more information about the MYCA, visit:
<http://www.ngycp.org/site/state/mi/node/2262>

CALIFORNIA MENTORING EXECUTIVE ORDER

In 1996, California Governor Pete Wilson issued an executive order ([W-132096](#)) allowing full-time state employees to receive up to 40 hours of paid "mentoring leave" per calendar year. The order resulted in the State Employee Mentoring Leave Policy.

To be eligible for paid mentoring leave under the policy's current guidelines, a state employee must have (1) a permanent appointment, (2) successfully completed his or her probationary period, and (3) committed to mentor a child or youth for one year through an organization that meets certain quality assurance standards. Additionally, in order to be eligible for paid leave, the employee must first devote an equal amount of personal time to mentoring.

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