

WEST VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE

2026 REGULAR SESSION

Introduced

House Bill 5189

By Delegates Canterbury, Cooper, Pritt, and Campbell

[Introduced February 04, 2026; referred to the
Committee on Health and Human Resources]

1 A BILL to amend the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, by adding a new section,
2 designated §49-2-815, relating to the establishment of a pilot program for the use of mobile
3 devices in child abuse and neglect investigations; setting forth effective date; setting forth
4 requirements for system; setting forth term of pilot program; and requiring reporting.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of West Virginia:

ARTICLE 2. STATE RESPONSIBILITIES FOR CHILDREN.

§49-2-815. Pilot program for the use of technology in child abuse and neglect investigations.

1 (a) Beginning October 1, 2027, the department shall implement a pilot project for two
2 counties requiring the use of mobile device including, but not limited to, a computer or tablet to
3 access the department's case management system in order to assist child protective service
4 workers to conduct child abuse and neglect investigations contemporaneously with the
5 investigation.

6 (b) The department shall determine which counties shall participate in the pilot program.

7 (c) The department shall develop policies to implement the pilot program which shall
8 include, at a minimum, the following:

9 (1) The mobile device shall have an operating system that is customized for child welfare
10 casework;

11 (2) The operating system on the mobile device shall allow a child protective services
12 worker to create a contemporaneous, digital record of all components of the investigation;

13 (3) The mobile device shall automatically and securely upload to the department's server
14 on a daily basis;

15 (4) The operating system used in the mobile device shall be interoperable with existing
16 department programs to allow relevant quality metrics to be extracted from the operating system
17 into standard reports to be analyzed for systemic improvement; and

18 (5) The mobile device shall be used on at least 70 percent of the cases in the pilot counties

19 during the time period being studied.

20 (d) The quality metrics shall be extracted on a monthly basis and analyzed by the secretary
21 and members of his or her staff charged with systemic improvement of the child welfare system.

22 (e) The pilot program shall terminate five years from the time the department fully
23 implements the pilot program in two counties.

24 (f) The department shall file annual reports beginning July 1, 2028, and July 1 annually
25 thereafter, with the Legislative Oversight Commission on Health and Human Resources
26 Accountability to provide a program update on the status of the pilot program, including metrics on
27 the use of the technology.

NOTE: The purpose of this bill is to require the Department of Human Services to provide child welfare workers with mobile technology that will permit them to conduct investigations and create a digital record. This will upload to the system automatically and reduce the need for a child protective services worker to input data manually into a system. This will enhance service delivery to children. This data will allow managers to have real time access to data to conduct quality improvement analysis.

Strike-throughs indicate language that would be stricken from a heading or the present law and underscoring indicates new language that would be added.