

# Illinois Increases Access to Free Dental Care for Children

Gov Monitor

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## **New Laws Clear Hurdles for Voluntary Dental Care and Helps Illinois Schools Develop Healthy Practices.**

Governor Pat Quinn today signed a bill into law that makes it easier for licensed dentists who live out-of state to provide voluntary care to low-income Illinois families.

He also signed legislation to create a shared database to help Illinois' schools to improve their nutritional and physical activity policies and programs.

“Keeping Illinois’ children and families healthy is one of my most important duties,” said Governor Quinn. “This important legislation will help more families see a dentist and help our school districts develop better healthy practices for our children.”

House Bill 3061 allows the state to issue temporary permits to dentists and dental hygienists who are licensed in other states and will provide free care in Illinois.

To qualify for a permit, the dentist or dental hygienist must meet Illinois’ dental standards and intend to provide voluntary care. The temporary permit may not exceed 10 days.

The law will help encourage more dentists to treat low-income families at free clinics throughout Illinois. The legislation was sponsored by Rep. David Miller (D-Dolton) and Sen. Pamela Althoff (R-Crystal Lake) and passed the Illinois General Assembly unanimously. It takes effect immediately.

Governor Quinn also signed a new law that requires the State Board of Education to develop and maintain a nutritional and physical activity best practices database for use in schools and school districts.

The database will contain the results of any wellness-related fitness testing done by local school districts, as well as information on successful nutrition and physical activity programs and policies implemented by school districts.

The database will be accessible to all local school districts and will serve as an important tool for developing policies and programs to improve the health of Illinois' children. Senate Bill 3706 was sponsored by Sen. Linda Holmes (D-Aurora) and Rep. LaShawn Ford (D-Chicago) and takes effect immediately.

Governor Quinn also signed Senate Bill 3025, which amends the Dental Practice Act. The legislation takes effect immediately and was sponsored by Sen. A.J. Wilhelmi (D-Joliet) and Rep. John Fritchey (D-Chicago).