

CS/HB 287

2026

A bill to be entitled
An act relating to public records; amending s. 409.175, F.S.; providing confidentiality and an exemption from public records requirements for the personal identifying and location information of applicants for family foster homes and the names and personal identifying and location information of the spouses, children, and other adult household members of such applicants; providing confidentiality and an exemption from public records requirements for the personal identifying and location information of current and former owners and operators of family foster homes and the names and personal identifying and location information of the spouses, children, and other adult household members of such owners and operators; providing confidentiality and an exemption from public records requirements for the personal identifying and location information of character or neighbor references of a family foster home applicant or a current or former owner or operator of a family foster home; providing for future legislative review and repeal of the exemption; providing a statement of public necessity; providing an effective date.

Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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27 **Section 1. Subsection (16) of section 409.175, Florida**
28 **Statutes, is amended to read:**

29 409.175 Licensure of family foster homes, residential
30 child-caring agencies, and child-placing agencies; public
31 records exemption.—

32 (16) (a)1. The following information held by the Department
33 of Children and Families regarding a family foster home parent
34 applicant and his or her ~~such applicant's~~ spouse, children minor
35 child, and other adult household members ~~member~~ is confidential
36 and exempt from s. 119.07(1) and s. 24(a), Art. I of the State
37 Constitution:

38 a. The home, business, work, child care, or school
39 addresses and telephone numbers;

40 b. Birth dates;

41 c. Medical records;

42 d. The floor plan of the home; and

43 e. Photographs of such persons.

44 2. If a foster parent applicant does not receive a foster
45 parent license, the information made exempt pursuant to this
46 paragraph shall become public 5 years after the date of
47 application, except that medical records shall remain exempt
48 from s. 119.07(1) and s. 24(a), Art. I of the State
49 Constitution.

50 2.3. This exemption applies to information made

51 confidential and exempt by this paragraph before, on, or after
52 the effective date of the exemption.

53 (b)1. The following information held by the Department of
54 Children and Families regarding a current or former owner or
55 operator of a family foster home and his or her licensed foster
56 parent and the foster parent's spouse, children minor child, and
57 other adult household members member is confidential and exempt
58 from s. 119.07(1) and s. 24(a), Art. I of the State
59 Constitution:

60 a. The home, business, work, child care, or school
61 addresses and telephone numbers;

62 b. Birth dates;

63 c. Medical records;

64 d. The floor plan of the home; and

65 e. Photographs of such persons.

66 ~~2. If a foster parent's license is no longer active, the~~
67 ~~information made exempt pursuant to this paragraph shall become~~
68 ~~public 5 years after the expiration date of such foster parent's~~
69 ~~foster care license except that:~~

70 a. ~~Medical records shall remain exempt from s. 119.07(1)~~
71 ~~and s. 24(a), Art. I of the State Constitution.~~

72 b. ~~Exempt information regarding a licensed foster parent~~
73 ~~who has become an adoptive parent and exempt information~~
74 ~~regarding such foster parent's spouse, minor child, or other~~
75 ~~adult household member shall remain exempt from s. 119.07(1) and~~

76 s. 24(a), Art. I of the State Constitution.

77 2.3. This exemption applies to information made
78 confidential and exempt by this paragraph before, on, or after
79 the effective date of the exemption.

80 (c) The name, address, and telephone number of persons
81 providing character or neighbor references regarding a family
82 foster home applicant or a current or former owner or operator
83 of a family foster home ~~foster parent applicants or licensed~~
84 ~~foster parents~~ held by the Department of Children and Families
85 are confidential and exempt from s. 119.07(1) and s. 24(a), Art.
86 I of the State Constitution.

87 (d) This subsection is subject to the Open Government
88 Sunset Review Act in accordance with s. 119.15 and shall stand
89 repealed on October 2, 2031, unless reviewed and saved from
90 repeal through reenactment by the Legislature.

91 **Section 2.** (1) The Legislature finds that it is a public
92 necessity that the home, business, work, child care, or school
93 addresses of family foster home applicants and the spouses,
94 children, and household members of those applicants, along with
95 the birth dates, medical records, home floor plans, and
96 photographs of such persons held by the Department of Children
97 and Families be made confidential and exempt from s. 119.07(1),
98 Florida Statutes, and s. 24(a), Article 1 of the State
99 Constitution. Such identifying and location information can be
100 used to locate family foster home applicants, their family

101 members and household members, and the children placed in the
102 family foster home by the Department of Children and Families to
103 threaten or harm the applicant, the applicant's family and
104 household members, and the foster children; to perpetuate fraud
105 against any of these individuals; or to acquire sensitive
106 personal, financial, medical, and familial information, the
107 release of which could cause great financial harm to the
108 individual.

109 (2) The Legislature finds that the home, business, work,
110 child care, or school addresses of the current or former owner
111 or operator of a family foster home and the spouses, children,
112 and household members of those owners and operators, along with
113 the birth dates, medical records, home floor plans, and
114 photographs of such persons held by the Department of Children
115 and Families be made confidential and exempt from s. 119.07(1),
116 Florida Statutes, and s. 24(a), Article 1 of the State
117 Constitution. Such identifying and location information can be
118 used to locate owners and operators of family foster homes,
119 their family members and household members, and the children
120 placed in the family foster home by the Department of Children
121 and Families to threaten or harm the owner or operator, the
122 owner or operator's family and household members, and the foster
123 children; to perpetuate fraud against any of these individuals;
124 or to acquire sensitive personal, financial, medical, and
125 familial information, the release of which could cause great

126 financial harm to the individual.

127 (3) The Legislature finds that the name, address, and
128 telephone number of persons providing character or neighbor
129 references regarding a family foster home applicant or a current
130 or former owner or operator of a family foster home held by the
131 Department of Children and Families be made confidential and
132 exempt from s. 119.07(1), Florida Statutes, and s. 24(a),
133 Article 1 of the State Constitution. Such identifying and
134 location information can be used to locate character or neighbor
135 references regarding a family foster home applicant or a current
136 or former owner or operator of a family foster home to threaten
137 or harm the character or neighbor reference; to perpetuate fraud
138 against any of these individuals; or to acquire sensitive
139 personal, financial, medical, and familial information, the
140 release of which could cause great financial harm to the
141 individual.

142 (4) Children placed in a family foster home are often
143 removed from the care of their biological parents due to
144 physical, sexual, and emotional abuse; domestic violence; drug
145 use; neglect; and many other reasons for which the state has
146 identified the children are in danger. As such, it is necessary
147 to protect the location of such children from being known,
148 directly or indirectly, by their biological parents until the
149 case has been litigated and the children have been returned to
150 their biological parents upon satisfactory completion of their

151 case plan and having their parenting rights restored. As a
152 result of being the person ultimately responsible for the care
153 of a child who is removed from the home of his or her biological
154 parents, owners and operators of family foster homes may incur
155 the ill will of the biological parents, thus making such owners
156 and operators and their other children targets for acts of
157 revenge. If such identifying and location information is
158 released, the safety of the owners and operators of family
159 foster homes and all children living with them could be
160 seriously jeopardized. Additionally, exposing such information
161 of family foster home applicants and their families may cause a
162 chilling effect on the number of applications received because
163 of the potential exposure of sensitive personal information,
164 thereby reducing the number of foster families willing to foster
165 children. The Legislature further finds that the harm that may
166 result from the release of such personal identifying and
167 location information outweighs any public benefit that may be
168 derived from the disclosure of the information.

169 **Section 3.** This act shall take effect July 1, 2026.