

By: Senator(s) Wiggins

To: Judiciary, Division A

## SENATE BILL NO. 2769

1 AN ACT TO ENACT THE MISSISSIPPI YOUTH COURT CHANCELLOR ACT OF  
2 2025; TO DEFINE TERMS; TO CREATE YOUTH COURT CHANCELLOR DIVISIONS  
3 WITHIN CERTAIN CHANCERY COURT DISTRICTS; TO CREATE THE OFFICE OF  
4 YOUTH COURT CHANCELLOR IN EACH OF THE DESIGNATED CHANCERY  
5 DISTRICTS; TO PROVIDE THAT ALL CAUSES AND DOCKETS IN THE  
6 DESIGNATED CHANCERY DISTRICTS, OTHER THAN THOSE CAUSES AND DOCKETS  
7 WITHIN A COUNTY YOUTH COURT ESTABLISHED UNDER SECTION 43-21-107,  
8 SHALL BE ASSIGNED TO THE YOUTH COURT CHANCELLOR; TO PROVIDE THAT  
9 IN THE CASE OF THE YOUTH COURT CHANCELLOR'S TEMPORARY ABSENCE FROM  
10 THE COUNTY OR DISTRICT, ANOTHER CHANCELLOR WITHIN THE DESIGNATED  
11 CHANCERY DISTRICT MAY TEMPORARILY SERVE IN THE YOUTH COURT  
12 DIVISION; TO PROVIDE THAT IN THE CASE OF ANOTHER CHANCELLOR'S  
13 TEMPORARY ABSENCE FROM THE COUNTY OR DISTRICT, THE YOUTH COURT  
14 CHANCELLOR MAY TEMPORARILY SERVE IN THE OTHER CHANCELLOR'S PLACE;  
15 TO PROVIDE THAT EACH YOUTH COURT CHANCELLOR SHALL RECEIVE AN  
16 OFFICE OPERATING ALLOWANCE; TO AUTHORIZE THE ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE  
17 OF COURTS TO UTILIZE MYCIDS OR ANY OTHER CASE MANAGEMENT AND  
18 ELECTRONIC FILING SYSTEM TO EFFECTUATE THE PURPOSES OF THIS ACT;  
19 TO CREATE IN THE STATE TREASURY A SPECIAL FUND TO BE KNOWN AS THE  
20 CHANCERY YOUTH COURT DIVISION FUND; TO AUTHORIZE, AMONG OTHER  
21 PURPOSES, CAPITAL DISTRIBUTIONS, FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE  
22 DIVISIONS; TO AMEND SECTION 9-5-7, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO  
23 CONFORM; TO CREATE NEW SECTION 9-5-10, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972,  
24 TO CONFORM; TO AMEND SECTIONS 9-5-13, 9-5-15, 9-5-22, 9-5-25,  
25 9-5-29, 9-5-33, 9-5-36, 9-5-38, 9-5-40, 9-5-41 AND 9-5-45,  
26 MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO CONFORM; TO CREATE NEW SECTION  
27 9-5-48, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO CONFORM; TO AMEND SECTION  
28 9-5-50, 9-5-51 AND 9-5-54, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO CONFORM;  
29 TO CREATE NEW SECTION 9-5-56, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO  
30 CONFORM; TO BRING FORWARD SECTIONS 43-21-801 AND 43-21-803,  
31 MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, WHICH ARE PROVISIONS OF LAW RELATED TO  
32 THE YOUTH COURT SUPPORT PROGRAM, FOR THE PURPOSES OF POSSIBLE  
33 AMENDMENT; TO PROVIDE PROCEDURES FOR THE ELECTION OF CANDIDATES  
34 FOR THE CHANCELLORSHIPS CREATED BY THIS ACT; TO REPEAL SECTION



43-21-111, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, WHICH IS THE PROVISION OF LAW  
AUTHORIZING REGULAR AND SPECIAL YOUTH COURT REFEREES; AND FOR  
RELATED PURPOSES.

WHEREAS, House Bill No. 1149, 2023 Regular Session,  
reauthorized the Mississippi Commission on a Uniform Youth Court  
System and Procedures;

WHEREAS, the Commission on a Uniform Youth Court System and  
Procedures presented its report to the Lieutenant Governor C.  
Delbert Hosemann, Jr., the Mississippi Senate, Speaker Jason White  
and the Mississippi House of Representatives on September 16,  
2024; and

WHEREAS, among other recommendations, the Commission on a  
Uniform Youth Court System and Procedures recommended the creation  
of Hybrid Youth Court structure in Mississippi, utilizing existing  
County Youth Courts, Youth Court Divisions within certain Chancery  
Court Districts and abolishing regular or special Youth Court  
referees; NOW, THEREFORE,

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI:

**SECTION 1.** This act shall be known and may be cited as the  
"Mississippi Youth Court Chancellor Act of 2025."

**SECTION 2.** As used in this section, the following terms  
shall have the meaning ascribed herein:

(a) "County youth court" means a youth court  
established under Section 43-21-107.

(b) "Division" means a division established in Section  
3 of this act.



**SECTION 3.**

(1) There is established a Youth Court Chancellor Division within the chancery court of each of the following chancery districts:

- (a) The First Chancery District;
- (b) The Second Chancery District;
- (c) The Third Chancery District;
- (d) The Fourth Chancery District;
- (e) The Sixth Chancery District;
- (f) The Seventh Chancery District;
- (g) The Eighth Chancery District;
- (h) The Ninth Chancery District;
- (i) The Tenth Chancery District;
- (j) The Eleventh Chancery District;
- (k) The Twelfth Chancery District;
- (l) The Thirteenth Chancery District;
- (m) The Fourteenth Chancery District;
- (n) The Fifteenth Chancery District;
- (o) The Sixteenth Chancery District;
- (p) The Seventeenth Chancery District;
- (q) The Eighteenth Chancery District; and
- (r) The Nineteenth Chancery District.

(2) The division shall include, but is not limited to, the following components:

- (a) The Office of Youth Court Chancellor shall be created in each of the designated chancery districts which shall



86 be separate and distinguishable from the other office or offices  
87 of chancellor for the district.

88 (b) All causes and dockets in the designated chancery  
89 districts, other than those causes and dockets within a county  
90 youth court established under Section 43-21-107, shall be assigned  
91 to the youth court chancellor who shall have the right to set  
92 terms in the youth court division of the district.

93 (c) The youth court chancellorship in each designated  
94 chancery district shall be separate and distinct and denominated  
95 for purposes of appointment and election as a separate "Place".  
96 The chancellor to fill the Place for youth court chancellor may be  
97 a resident of any county in the district and shall be by election  
98 to be held in every county within the district.

99 (d) In the case of the youth court chancellor's  
100 temporary absence from the county or district, another chancellor  
101 within the designated chancery district may temporarily serve in  
102 the youth court division. In the case of another chancellor's  
103 temporary absence from the county or district, the youth court  
104 chancellor may temporarily serve in the other chancellor's place.

105 (e) The youth court division of each designated  
106 chancery district shall encompass those counties within the  
107 chancery district without a county youth court established under  
108 Section 43-21-107.

109 (f) The youth court division of each designated  
110 chancery district shall have exclusive jurisdiction over all youth



111 court matters as set forth in Section 43-21-151 in the county or  
112 counties for which it is responsible.

113 (g) Each youth court chancellor shall receive an office  
114 operating allowance and may make application to the Administrative  
115 Office of Courts for additional personnel as set forth in Section  
116 9-1-36.

117 (h) Each designated chancery district shall have one  
118 (1) intake officer who shall carry out the duties of the youth  
119 court intake unit set forth in Title 43, Chapter 21 for those  
120 counties within the chancery district without a county youth court  
121 established under Section 43-21-107. Each intake officer shall be  
122 hired by and be an employee of the Administrative Office of  
123 Courts. Each intake officer shall be housed within an office of a  
124 chancery clerk within the chancery district.

125 (3) The Administrative Office of Courts is authorized to  
126 utilize the Mississippi Youth Court Information Delivery System  
127 (MYCIDS) or any other case management and electronic filing system  
128 to effectuate the purposes of this act regardless of any other  
129 rule or law to the contrary.

130 **SECTION 4.** (1) There is created in the State Treasury a  
131 special fund to be known as the Chancery Youth Court Division  
132 Fund. The fund shall be maintained by the State Treasurer as a  
133 separate and special fund, separate and apart from the General  
134 Fund of the state. Monies in the fund shall be disbursed by the  
135 Administrative Office of Courts for the purpose of providing



funding for the development and implementation of the divisions established by Section 3 of this act. Unexpended amounts remaining in the fund at the end of a fiscal year shall not lapse into the State General Fund, and any interest earned or investment earnings on amounts in the fund shall be deposited into such fund. Monies from the fund shall be distributed by the State Treasurer upon warrants issued by the Administrative Office of Courts.

Monies in the fund shall consist of:

- (a) Monies appropriated by the Legislature;
- (b) The interest accruing to the fund;
- (c) Monies received from the federal government;
- (d) Donations; and/or
- (e) Monies received from such other sources as may be provided by law.

(2) The Administrative Office of Courts is authorized and directed to pay the following expenses from the fund:

- (a) Compensation and expenses of each youth court chancellor the same as every other chancellor within the state;
- (b) Office operating allowance and compensation of support staff of each youth court chancellor the same as every other chancellor within the state;
- (c) Compensation of each intake officer; and
- (d) A capital improvement for each designated chancery district to be used solely for the purpose of establishing the youth court division of the district.



161           **SECTION 5.** Section 9-5-7, Mississippi Code of 1972, is  
162 amended as follows:

163           9-5-7. (1) There shall be \* \* \* five (5) chancellors for  
164 the First Chancery Court District.

165           (2) \* \* \* Four (4) chancellorships shall be separate and  
166 distinct and denominated for purposes of appointment and election  
167 only as "Place One \* \* \*", "Place Two \* \* \*", "Place Three" and  
168 "Place Four \* \* \*". The chancellor to fill Place One must be a  
169 resident of Alcorn, Prentiss or Tishomingo County. The  
170 chancellors to fill Place Two and Place Three must reside in  
171 Itawamba, Lee, Monroe, Pontotoc or Union County. The chancellor  
172 to fill Place Four may be a resident of any county in the  
173 district.

174           (3) One (1) chancellorship shall be separate and distinct  
175 and denominated for purposes of appointment and election as "Place  
176 Five" and shall have the powers and duties provided in Section 3  
177 of this act.

178           (4) Election of the \* \* \* five (5) offices of chancellor  
179 shall be by election to be held in every county within the First  
180 Chancery Court District.

181           **SECTION 6.** The following shall be codified as Section  
182 9-5-10, Mississippi Code of 1972:

183           9-5-10. (1) There shall be two (2) chancellors for the  
184 Second Chancery Court District.



(2) One (1) chancellorship shall be separate and distinct and denominated for purposes of appointment and election only as "Place One".

(3) One (1) chancellorship shall be separate and distinct and denominated for purposes of appointment and election as "Place Two" and shall have the powers and duties provided in Section 3 of this act.

**SECTION 7.** Section 9-5-13, Mississippi Code of 1972, is amended as follows:

**[Until January 1, 2027, this section shall read as follows:]**

9-5-13. (1) There shall be three (3) chancellors for the Third Chancery Court District.

(2) (a) The chancellor of Subdistrict 3-1 shall be elected from DeSoto County. The two (2) chancellors of Subdistrict 3-2 shall be elected from Grenada County, Montgomery County, Panola County, Tate County and Yalobusha County.

(b) For purposes of appointment and election, the three (3) chancellorships shall be separate and distinct. The chancellorship in Subdistrict 3-1 shall be denominated only as "Place One," and the chancellorships in Subdistrict 3-2 shall be denominated only as "Place Two" and "Place Three \* \* \*".

**[From and after January 1, 2027, this section shall read as follows:]**

9-5-13. (1) There shall be \* \* \* five (5) chancellors for the Third Chancery Court District.





(2) (a) The two (2) chancellors of Subdistrict 3-1 shall be elected from DeSoto County. The two (2) chancellors of Subdistrict 3-2 shall be elected from Grenada County, Montgomery County, Panola County, Tate County and Yalobusha County.

(b) For purposes of appointment and election, the four (4) chancellorships shall be separate and distinct and denominated as "Place One \* \* \*", "Place Two \* \* \*", "Place Three" and "Place Four". The chancellorships in Subdistrict 3-1 shall be denominated only as "Place One" and "Place Four" and the chancellorships in Subdistrict 3-2 shall be denominated only as "Place Two" and "Place Three \* \* \*".

(c) One (1) chancellorship shall be separate and distinct and denominated for purposes of appointment and election as "Place Five" and shall have the powers and duties provided in Section 3 of this act.

**SECTION 8.** Section 9-5-15, Mississippi Code of 1972, is amended as follows:

9-5-15. (1) The Fourth Chancery Court District is composed of the following counties:

- (a) Amite County;
- (b) Franklin County;
- (c) Pike County; and
- (d) Walthall County.

(2) (a) There shall be \* \* \* three (3) chancellors for the Fourth Chancery Court District.



235           \* \* \* (b) Two (2) chancellorships shall be separate and  
236 distinct and denominated for purposes of appointment and election  
237 only as "Place One" and "Place Two \* \* \*".

238           (c) One (1) chancellorship shall be separate and  
239 distinct and denominated for purposes of appointment and election  
240 as "Place Three" and shall have the powers and duties provided in  
241 Section 3 of this act.

242       **SECTION 9.** Section 9-5-22, Mississippi Code of 1972, is  
243 amended as follows:

244       9-5-22. (1) There shall be \* \* \* three (3) chancellors for  
245 the Sixth Chancery Court District.

246       (2) \* \* \* (a) Two (2) chancellorships shall be separate and  
247 distinct and denominated for purposes of appointment and election  
248 only as "Place One" and "Place Two \* \* \*".

249       (b) One (1) chancellorship shall be separate and  
250 distinct and denominated for purposes of appointment and election  
251 as "Place Three" and shall have the powers and duties provided in  
252 Section 3 of this act.

253       **SECTION 10.** Section 9-5-25, Mississippi Code of 1972, is  
254 amended as follows:

255       9-5-25. (1) There shall be \* \* \* four (4) chancellors for  
256 the Seventh Chancery Court District.

257       (2) The \* \* \* four (4) chancellorships shall be separate and  
258 distinct.



(3) One (1) chancellor shall be elected from Subdistrict 7-1 and shall be denominated for purposes of appointment and election only as "Place One \* \* \*", and two (2) chancellors shall be elected from Subdistrict 7-2 and shall be denominated for purposes of appointment and election only as "Place Two" and "Place Three \* \* \*".

(4) One (1) chancellor shall be separate and distinct and denominated for purposes of appointment and election as "Place Four" and shall have the powers and duties provided in Section 3 of this act and shall be elected by election to be held in every county within the Seventh Chancery Court District.

**SECTION 11.** Section 9-5-29, Mississippi Code of 1972, is amended as follows:

9-5-29. (1) There shall be \* \* \* five (5) chancellors for the Eighth Chancery Court District.

(2) The four (4) chancellorships shall be separate and distinct and denominated for purposes of appointment and election only as "Place One," "Place Two," "Place Three" and "Place Four."

(3) While there shall be no limitation whatsoever upon the powers and duties of the four (4) chancellors elected under subsection (2) of this section other than as cast upon them by the Constitution and laws of this state, the court in the Eighth Chancery Court District, in the discretion of the senior chancellor, may be divided into four (4) divisions as a matter of



convenience by the entry of an order upon the minutes of the court.

(4) One (1) chancellorship shall be separate and distinct and denominated for purposes of appointment and election as "Place Five" and shall have the powers and duties provided in Section 3 of this act.

**SECTION 12.** Section 9-5-33, Mississippi Code of 1972, is amended as follows:

9-5-33. There shall be \* \* \* four (4) chancellors for the Ninth Chancery Court District. One (1) chancellor shall be elected from each subdistrict. One (1) chancellor shall be separate and distinct and denominated for purposes of appointment and election as "Place Four" and shall have the powers and duties provided in Section 3 of this act.

**SECTION 13.** Section 9-5-36, Mississippi Code of 1972, is amended as follows:

9-5-36. (1) There shall be \* \* \* five (5) chancellors for the Tenth Chancery Court District.

(2) \* \* \* Four (4) chancellorships shall be separate and distinct and denominated for purposes of appointment and election only as "Place One \* \* \*", "Place Two \* \* \*", "Place Three" and "Place Four \* \* \*". The chancellor to fill Place One and Place Four may be a resident of any county in the district. The chancellor to fill Place Two must be a resident of Lamar, Marion,



Pearl River or Perry County. The chancellor to fill Place Three must be a resident of Forrest County.

(3) One (1) chancellorship shall be separate and distinct and denominated for purposes of appointment and election as "Place Five" and shall have the powers and duties provided in Section 3 of this act.

( \* \* \* 4) Election of the \* \* \* five (5) offices of chancellor shall be by election to be held in every county within the Tenth Chancery Court District.

**SECTION 14.** Section 9-5-38, Mississippi Code of 1972, is amended as follows:

9-5-38. There shall be \* \* \* four (4) chancellors for the Eleventh Chancery Court District. The three (3) chancellorships shall be separate and distinct. One (1) chancellor shall be elected from Subdistrict 11-1 and denominated for purposes of appointment and election only as "Place One \* \* \*", one (1) chancellor shall be elected from Subdistrict 11-2 and denominated for purposes of appointment and election only as "Place Two \* \* \*", and one (1) chancellor shall be elected at large from the entire Eleventh Chancery Court District and denominated for purposes of appointment and election only as "Place Three \* \* \*", and one (1) chancellor shall be elected at large from the entire Eleventh Chancery Court District and denominated for purposes of appointment and election as "Place Four" and shall have the powers and duties provided in Section 3 of this act.



**SECTION 15.** Section 9-5-40, Mississippi Code of 1972, is amended as follows:

9-5-40. (1) There shall be \* \* \* three (3) chancellors for the Twelfth Chancery Court District.

(2) \* \* \* Two (2) chancellorships shall be separate and distinct and denominated for purposes of appointment and election only as "Place One" and "Place Two."

(3) One (1) chancellorship shall be separate and distinct and denominated for purposes of appointment and election as "Place Three" and shall have the powers and duties provided in Section 3 of this act.

**SECTION 16.** Section 9-5-41, Mississippi Code of 1972, is amended as follows:

9-5-41. (1) The Thirteenth Chancery Court District is composed of the following counties:

- (a) Covington County;
- (b) Jefferson Davis County;
- (c) Lawrence County;
- (d) Simpson County; and
- (e) Smith County.

(2) There shall be \* \* \* three (3) chancellors for the Thirteenth Chancery Court District.

\* \* \* (3) Two (2) chancellorships shall be separate and distinct and denominated for purposes of appointment and election only as "Place One" and "Place Two \* \* \*".



(4) One (1) chancellorship shall be separate and distinct and denominated for purposes of appointment and election as "Place Three" and shall have the powers and duties provided in Section 3 of this act.

**SECTION 17.** Section 9-5-45, Mississippi Code of 1972, is amended as follows:

9-5-45. (1) There shall be \* \* \* four (4) chancellors for the Fourteenth Chancery Court District.

(2) The four (4) chancellorships shall be separate and distinct.

(3) One (1) chancellor shall be elected from each subdistrict.

(4) One (1) chancellor shall be elected at large from the entire Fourteenth Chancery Court District and denominated for purposes of appointment and election as "Place Four" and shall have the powers and duties provided in Section 3 of this act.

**SECTION 18.** The following shall be codified as Section 9-5-48, Mississippi Code of 1972:

9-5-48. (1) There shall be two (2) chancellors for the Fifteenth Chancery Court District.

(2) One (1) chancellorship shall be separate and distinct and denominated for purposes of appointment and election only as "Place One".

(3) One (1) chancellorship shall be separate and distinct and denominated for purposes of appointment and election as "Place



Two" and shall have the powers and duties provided in Section 3 of this act.

**SECTION 19.** Section 9-5-50, Mississippi Code of 1972, is amended as follows:

9-5-50. (1) There shall be \* \* \* four (4) chancellors for the Sixteenth Chancery Court District.

(2) \* \* \* Three (3) chancellorships shall be separate and distinct and denominated for purposes of appointment and election only as "Place One \* \* \*", "Place Two" and "Place Three \* \* \*".

(3) One (1) chancellorship shall be separate and distinct and denominated for purposes of appointment and election as "Place Three" and shall have the powers and duties provided in Section 3 of this act.

**SECTION 20.** Section 9-5-51, Mississippi Code of 1972, is amended as follows:

9-5-51. (1) The Seventeenth Chancery Court District is composed of the following counties:

- (a) Adams County;
- (b) Claiborne County;
- (c) Jefferson County; and
- (d) Wilkinson County.

(2) The Seventeenth Chancery Court District shall be divided into two (2) subdistricts as follows:

(a) Subdistrict 17-1 shall consist of Claiborne County, Jefferson County, and the following precincts in Adams County:





Airport Carpenter\*, Convention Center\*, Foster Mound, Maryland\*,  
Northside School, Palestine, Pine Ridge, Thompson and Washington\*.

(b) Subdistrict 17-2 shall consist of Wilkinson County  
and the following precincts in Adams County: Beau Pre, Bellemont,  
By-Pass Fire Station, Carpenter\*, Concord, Convention Center\*,  
Courthouse, Duncan Park, Kingston, Liberty Park, Maryland\*,  
Morgantown, Oakland and Washington\*.

(3) There shall be \* \* \* three (3) chancellors for the  
Seventeenth Chancery Court District.

(4) The three (3) chancellorships shall be separate and  
distinct.

(5) One (1) chancellor shall be elected from each  
subdistrict.

(6) One (1) chancellor shall be elected at large from the  
entire Seventeenth Chancery Court District and denominated for  
purposes of appointment and election as "Place Three" and shall  
have the powers and duties provided in Section 3 of this act.

**SECTION 21.** Section 9-5-54, Mississippi Code of 1972, is  
amended as follows:

9-5-54. (1) There shall be \* \* \* three (3) chancellors for  
the Eighteenth Chancery Court District.

(2) \* \* \* Two (2) chancellorships shall be separate and  
distinct and denominated for purposes of appointment and election  
only as "Place One" and "Place Two."



(3) One (1) chancellorship shall be separate and distinct and denominated for purposes of appointment and election as "Place Three" and shall have the powers and duties provided in Section 3 of this act.

**SECTION 22.** The following shall be codified as Section 9-5-56, Mississippi Code of 1972:

9-5-56. (1) There shall be two (2) chancellors for the Nineteenth Chancery Court District.

(2) One (1) chancellorship shall be separate and distinct and denominated for purposes of appointment and election only as "Place One".

(3) One (1) chancellorship shall be separate and distinct and denominated for purposes of appointment and election as "Place Two" and shall have the powers and duties provided in Section 3 of this act.

**SECTION 23.** Section 43-21-801, Mississippi Code of 1972, is brought forward as follows:

43-21-801. (1) There is established the Youth Court Support Program. The purpose of the program shall be to ensure that all youth courts have sufficient support funds to carry on the business of the youth court. The Administrative Office of Courts shall establish a formula consistent with this section for providing state support payable from the Youth Court Support Fund for the support of the youth courts.



455           (a)   (i)   Each regular youth court referee is eligible  
456 for youth court support funds so long as the senior chancellor  
457 does not elect to employ a youth court administrator as set forth  
458 in paragraph (b); a municipal youth court judge is also eligible.  
459 The Administrative Office of Courts shall direct any funds to the  
460 appropriate county or municipality. The funds shall be utilized  
461 to compensate an intake officer who shall be responsible for  
462 ensuring that all intake and case information for the Department  
463 of Human Services - Division of Youth Services, truancy matters,  
464 and the Department of Child Protection Services is entered into  
465 the Mississippi Youth Court Information Delivery System (MYCIDS)  
466 in an accurate and timely manner. If the court already has an  
467 intake officer responsible for entering all cases of the  
468 Department of Human Services - Division of Youth Services, truancy  
469 matters, and the Department of Child Protection Services into  
470 MYCIDS, the regular youth court referee or municipal court judge  
471 may certify to the Administrative Office of Courts that such a  
472 person is already on staff. In such a case, each regular youth  
473 court referee or municipal youth court judge shall have the sole  
474 individual discretion to appropriate those funds as expense monies  
475 to assist in hiring secretarial staff and acquiring materials and  
476 equipment incidental to carrying on the business of the court  
477 within the private practice of law of the referee or judge, or may  
478 direct the use of those funds through the county or municipal  
479 budget for court support supplies or services. The regular youth



480 court referee and municipal youth court judge shall be accountable  
481 for assuring through private, county or municipal employees the  
482 proper preparation and filing of all necessary tracking and other  
483 documentation attendant to the administration of the youth court.

484 (ii) Title to all tangible property, excepting  
485 stamps, stationery and minor expendable office supplies, procured  
486 with funds authorized by this section, shall be and forever remain  
487 in the county or municipality to be used by the judge or referee  
488 during the term of his office and thereafter by his successors.

489 (b) (i) When permitted by the Administrative Office of  
490 Courts and as funds are available, the senior chancellor for  
491 Chancery Districts One, Two, Three, Four, Six, Seven, Nine, Ten,  
492 Thirteen, Fourteen, Fifteen and Eighteen may appoint a youth court  
493 administrator for the district whose responsibility will be to  
494 perform all reporting, tracking and other duties of a court  
495 administrator for all youth courts in the district that are under  
496 the chancery court system. Any chancery district listed in this  
497 paragraph in which a chancellor appoints a referee or special  
498 master to hear any youth court matter is ineligible for funding  
499 under this paragraph (b). The Administrative Office of Courts may  
500 allocate to an eligible chancery district a sum not to exceed  
501 Thirty Thousand Dollars (\$30,000.00) per year for the salary,  
502 fringe benefits and equipment of the youth court administrator,  
503 and an additional sum not to exceed One Thousand Nine Hundred  
504 Dollars (\$1,900.00) for the administrator's travel expenses.



(ii) The appointment of a youth court administrator shall be evidenced by the entry of an order on the minutes of the court. The person appointed shall serve at the will and pleasure of the senior chancellor but shall be an employee of the Administrative Office of Courts.

(iii) The Administrative Office of Courts must approve the position, job description and salary before the position can be filled. The Administrative Office of Courts shall not approve any plan that does not first require the expenditure of the funds from the Youth Court Support Fund before expenditure of county funds is authorized for that purpose.

(iv) Title to any tangible property procured with funds authorized under this paragraph shall be and forever remain in the State of Mississippi.

(c) (i) Each county court is eligible for youth court support funds. The funds shall be utilized to provide compensation to an intake officer who shall be responsible for ensuring that all intake and case information for the Department of Human Services - Division of Youth Services, truancy matters, and the Department of Child Protection Services is entered into the Mississippi Youth Court Information Delivery System (MYCIDS) in an accurate and timely manner. If the county court already has an intake officer or other staff person responsible for entering all cases of the Department of Human Services - Division of Youth Services, truancy matters and the Department of Child Protection



Services into MYCIDS, the senior county court judge may certify that such a person is already on staff. In such a case, the senior county court judge shall have discretion to direct the expenditure of those funds in hiring other support staff to carry on the business of the court.

(ii) For the purposes of this paragraph, "support staff" means court administrators, law clerks, legal research assistants, secretaries, resource administrators or case managers appointed by a youth court judge, or any combination thereof, but shall not mean school attendance officers.

(iii) The appointment of support staff shall be evidenced by the entry of an order on the minutes of the court. The support staff so appointed shall serve at the will and pleasure of the senior county court judge but shall be an employee of the county.

(iv) The Administrative Office of Courts must approve the positions, job descriptions and salaries before the positions may be filled. The Administrative Office of Courts shall not approve any plan that does not first require the expenditure of funds from the Youth Court Support Fund before expenditure of county funds is authorized for that purpose.

(v) The Administrative Office of Courts may approve expenditure from the fund for additional equipment for support staff appointed pursuant to this paragraph if the additional expenditure falls within the formula. Title to any



tangible property procured with funds authorized under this paragraph shall be and forever remain in the county to be used by the youth court and support staff.

(2) (a) (i) The formula developed by the Administrative Office of Courts for providing youth court support funds shall be devised so as to distribute appropriated funds proportional to caseload and other appropriate factors as set forth in regulations promulgated by the Administrative Office of Courts. The formula will determine a reasonable maximum amount per judge or referee per annum that will not be exceeded in allocating funds under this section.

(ii) The formula shall be reviewed by the Administrative Office of Courts every two (2) years to ensure that the youth court support funds provided herein are proportional to each youth court's caseload and other specified factors.

(iii) The Administrative Office of Courts shall have wide latitude in the first two-year cycle to implement a formula designed to maximize caseload data collection.

(b) Application to receive funds under this section shall be submitted in accordance with procedures established by the Administrative Office of Courts.

(c) Approval of the use of any of the youth court support funds distributed under this section shall be made by the Administrative Office of Courts in accordance with procedures established by the Administrative Office of Courts.



580           (3)   (a)   There is created in the State Treasury a special  
581 fund to be designated as the "Youth Court Support Fund," which  
582 shall consist of funds appropriated or otherwise made available by  
583 the Legislature in any manner and funds from any other source  
584 designated for deposit into such fund. Unexpended amounts  
585 remaining in the fund at the end of a fiscal year shall not lapse  
586 into the State General Fund, and any investment earnings or  
587 interest earned on amounts in the fund shall be deposited to the  
588 credit of the fund. Monies in the fund shall be distributed to  
589 the youth courts by the Administrative Office of Courts for the  
590 purposes described in this section.

591                   (b)   (i)   During the regular legislative session held in  
592 calendar year 2007, the Legislature may appropriate an amount not  
593 to exceed Two Million Five Hundred Thousand Dollars  
594 (\$2,500,000.00) to the Youth Court Support Fund.

595                           (ii)   During each regular legislative session  
596 subsequent to the 2007 Regular Session, the Legislature shall  
597 appropriate Two Million Five Hundred Thousand Dollars  
598 (\$2,500,000.00) to the Youth Court Support Fund.

599           (c)   No youth court judge or youth court referee shall  
600 be eligible to receive funding from the Youth Court Support Fund  
601 who has not received annual continuing education in the field of  
602 juvenile justice in an amount to conform with the requirements of  
603 the Rules and Regulations for Mandatory Continuing Judicial  
604 Education promulgated by the Supreme Court or received at least





one (1) hour of annual continuing education concerning oversight of youth court intake officers and MYCIDS. The Administrative Office of Courts shall maintain records of all referees and youth court judges regarding such training and shall not disburse funds to any county or municipality for the budget of a youth court judge or referee who is not in compliance with the judicial training requirements.

(4) Any recipient of funds from the Youth Court Support Fund shall not be eligible for continuing disbursement of funds if the recipient is not in compliance with the terms, conditions and reporting requirements set forth in the procedures promulgated by the Administrative Office of Courts.

(5) The provisions of this section shall stand repealed on July 1, 2026.

**SECTION 24.** Section 43-21-803, Mississippi Code of 1972, is brought forward as follows:

43-21-803. (1) There is established the Tony Gobar Individualized Assessment and Comprehensive Community Intervention Initiative (IACCII) Program for the purposes of:

(a) (i) Providing comprehensive strength-based needs assessments, individualized treatment plans and community-based services for certain youth who would otherwise be committed to the training schools. The IACCII ensures that youth and their families can access necessary services available in their home communities; and



630                   (ii) Providing grants to faith-based organizations  
631 and nonprofit 501(c)(3) organizations that develop and operate  
632 community-based alternatives to the training schools and detention  
633 centers. In order to be eligible for a grant under this  
634 paragraph, a faith-based or nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization in  
635 cooperation with a youth court must develop and operate a juvenile  
636 justice alternative sanction designed for delinquent youths. The  
637 program must be designed to decrease reliance on commitment in  
638 juvenile detention facilities and training schools.

639                   (b) Programs established pursuant to this subsection  
640 must not duplicate existing programs or services and must  
641 incorporate best practices principles and positive behavioral  
642 interventions. The Department of Human Services shall have sole  
643 authority and power to determine the programs to be funded  
644 pursuant to this section.

645                   (2) A faith-based or nonprofit 501(c)(3) must submit an  
646 application to the Department of Human Services. The application  
647 must include a description of the purpose for which assistance is  
648 requested, the amount of assistance requested and any other  
649 information required by the Department of Human Services.

650                   (3) The Department of Human Services shall have all powers  
651 necessary to implement and administer the program established  
652 under this section, and the department shall promulgate rules and  
653 regulations, in accordance with the Mississippi Administrative  
654 Procedures Law, necessary for the implementation of this section.



655           (4)   (a)   There is created in the State Treasury a special  
656 fund to be designated as the "Tony Gobar IACCII Fund," which shall  
657 consist of funds appropriated or otherwise made available by the  
658 Legislature in any manner and funds from any other source  
659 designated for deposit into such fund. Unexpended amounts  
660 remaining in the fund at the end of a fiscal year shall not lapse  
661 into the State General Fund, and any investment earnings or  
662 interest earned on amounts in the fund shall be deposited to the  
663 credit of the fund. Monies in the fund shall be used by the  
664 Division of Youth Services for the purposes described in this  
665 section.

666                   (b)   (i)   During the regular legislative session held in  
667 calendar year 2007, the Legislature may appropriate an amount not  
668 to exceed Two Million Five Hundred Thousand Dollars  
669 (\$2,500,000.00) to the Tony Gobar IACCII Fund.

670                           (ii)   During each regular legislative session  
671 subsequent to the 2007 Regular Session, the Legislature shall  
672 appropriate Two Million Five Hundred Thousand Dollars  
673 (\$2,500,000.00) to the Tony Gobar IACCII Fund.

674           **SECTION 25.** Candidates for the chancellorships created by  
675 this act shall run for those offices in the judicial election of  
676 November 2026. Candidates shall file the intent to be a candidate  
677 as provided by Section 23-15-977, and shall run for office and be  
678 elected as provided in Sections 23-15-974 through 23-15-985, which  
679 is the Nonpartisan Judicial Election Act. The term for the



680   chancellors elected shall begin on January 1, 2027 and shall be as  
681   is provided for chancellors generally.

682           **SECTION 26.**   Section 43-21-111, Mississippi Code of 1972,  
683   which is the provision of law authorizing regular and special  
684   youth court referees, is repealed.

685           **SECTION 27.**   Sections 1 through 25 of this act shall take  
686   effect and be in force from and after January 1, 2026.   Section 26  
687   shall take effect and be in force from and after January 1, 2027.

