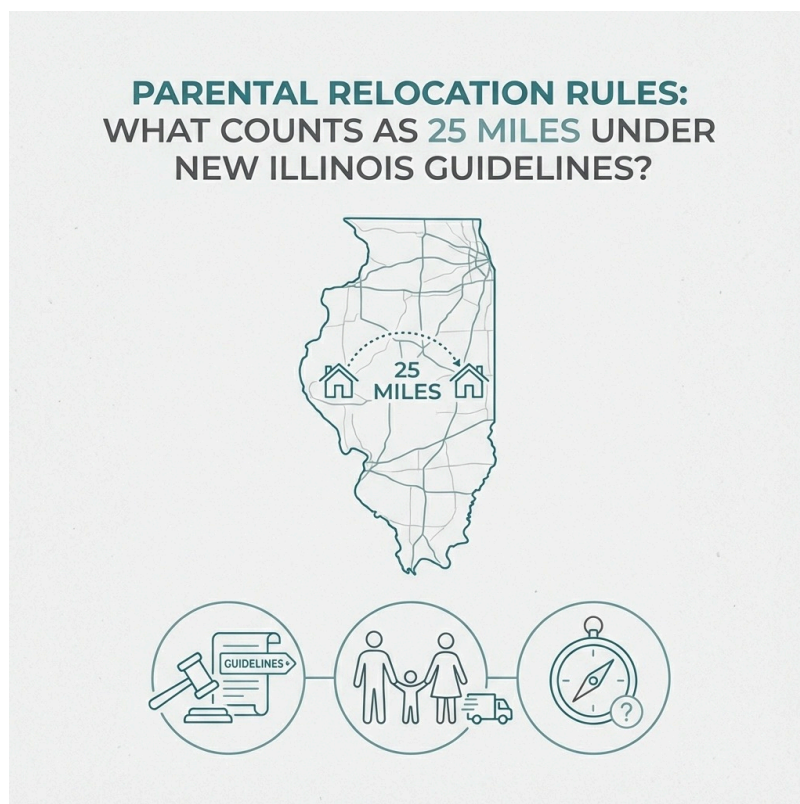


# Parental Relocation Rules: What Counts as 25 Miles Under New Illinois Guidelines?

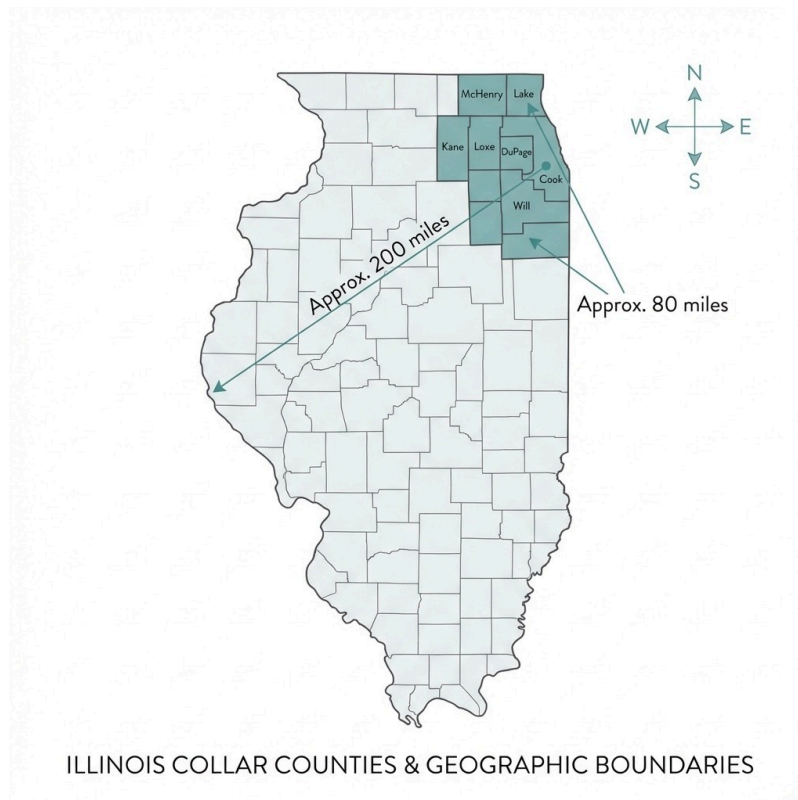


When divorced or separated parents consider relocating with their children, Illinois law establishes specific distance thresholds that determine whether court approval is required. Understanding these regulations is essential for parents in McHenry, Lake, and Kane counties, where the 25-mile rule applies.

## Understanding Illinois Relocation Distance Thresholds

Illinois uses a two-tier system for parental relocation requirements based on geographic location. Parents residing in collar counties: including Cook, DuPage, Kane, Lake, McHenry, and Will Counties: must adhere to a 25-mile limit. Parents in all other Illinois counties operate under a 50-mile threshold.

The 25-mile measurement is calculated as driving distance using online mapping services and surface roads, with courts required to use the shortest available route when multiple options exist. This standardized approach, clarified in early 2025, ensures consistent application across jurisdictions.



## What Constitutes Relocation Under Illinois Law

Illinois law defines relocation as any change in residence that exceeds the applicable distance threshold from the current home. For parents in collar counties, any move beyond 25 miles triggers specific legal requirements, regardless of whether the relocation remains within Illinois.

The distance calculation begins from the current residence and extends to the proposed new address. Courts measure this distance using the most direct surface route available through standard mapping technology, ensuring objective and consistent determinations.

## Legal Requirements for Parental Relocation

### Written Notice Requirements

When a proposed move exceeds the applicable distance threshold, the relocating parent must provide written notice at least 60 days before the planned relocation date. This notice must be delivered to both the other parent and the court with jurisdiction over the case.

The required notice must include specific information:

- Complete address of the proposed new residence
- Exact date of the planned relocation
- Detailed reasons justifying the move
- Proposed revised parenting time schedule
- Contact information for the new location



### **Primary Considerations:**

- Quality of life improvements for the child
- Educational opportunities at the new location
- Employment prospects for the relocating parent
- Extended family support systems
- Economic advantages of the proposed move

### **Relationship Impact Assessment:**

- Current parenting time arrangements
- Feasibility of maintaining parent-child relationships
- Historical involvement of both parents
- Child's adjustment to current living situation
- Potential disruption to established routines



## **Practical Implications for McHenry County Families**

Parents in McHenry County face unique considerations due to the county's position within the Chicago metropolitan area. The 25-mile restriction often limits relocation options to nearby communities while potentially allowing moves to certain Chicago suburbs.

Understanding these geographic limitations helps parents make informed decisions about employment opportunities, housing choices, and family planning. A qualified divorce attorney Crystal Lake IL

can provide specific guidance based on individual circumstances and proposed relocation destinations.

## Common Relocation Scenarios

### Employment-Related Moves

Career advancement opportunities frequently drive relocation requests. Courts generally view job-related moves favorably when they demonstrate clear financial benefits for the family unit. Documentation of salary increases, benefit improvements, and career advancement potential strengthens relocation petitions.

### Family Support Relocations

Moves designed to provide additional family support: such as proximity to grandparents or extended family: receive judicial consideration. Courts evaluate the practical benefits of such support systems against potential disruption to existing custody arrangements.

### Educational Opportunities

Relocations motivated by superior educational opportunities for children often receive favorable court review. Private school admissions, specialized programs, or significantly better public school districts can justify relocation requests.



## **Enforcement and Violations**

Illinois courts take relocation violations seriously. Parents who move beyond applicable distance thresholds without proper notice, consent, or court approval face potential consequences including:

- Contempt of court charges
- Modification of custody arrangements
- Requirement to return with the child
- Financial penalties and attorney fee awards
- Restricted future relocation rights

## **Strategic Planning for Proposed Relocations**

Successful relocation requires careful planning and legal preparation. Parents considering moves should begin the process well in advance, allowing sufficient time for notice requirements, negotiation, and potential court proceedings.

Documentation plays a crucial role in relocation cases. Maintaining records of employment offers, housing information, school research, and family circumstances strengthens the legal position for court review.

## **Professional Legal Guidance**

Navigating Illinois relocation law requires experienced legal counsel familiar with current statutes and local court practices. Crystal Lake attorney professionals understand the nuances of collar county applications and can provide strategic guidance throughout the process.



Parents facing relocation decisions benefit from early consultation with divorce lawyers McHenry County IL who can assess specific circumstances, evaluate legal options, and develop comprehensive strategies for successful outcomes.

## **Conclusion and Next Steps**

Illinois parental relocation laws establish clear frameworks for protecting children's interests while acknowledging legitimate reasons for family moves. Understanding these requirements ensures compliance with legal obligations and protects parental rights.

Gehris & Associates, LLC brings over 35 years of experience in family law matters, including complex relocation cases. The firm's cost-effective approach and deep understanding of McHenry, Lake, and Kane county practices provide clients with strategic advantages in relocation proceedings.

Parents considering relocation or facing relocation requests should seek immediate legal consultation to protect their interests and ensure proper compliance with Illinois law. Contact Gehris & Associates at 815-893-0020 to discuss your specific situation and explore available legal options.