

SSB 6559 - S AMD 669

By Senators Hargrove, Stevens

ADOPTED 02/16/2004

1 Strike everything after the enacting clause and insert the
2 following:

3 "NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** It remains the intent of the legislature
4 that all applicants to the Washington WorkFirst program shall be
5 focused on obtaining paid, unsubsidized employment. The focus of the
6 Washington WorkFirst program continues to be work for all recipients.
7 The key principles of the state temporary assistance for needy families
8 program must be to help move people from welfare to work; to be a
9 short-term transitional experience, not a way of life; and to assist
10 families to receive the child care and health care they need to protect
11 their children as they move from welfare to work. A statewide
12 partnership of state agencies, public education, business, and
13 nongovernmental providers are in place in Washington to provide
14 families with services and opportunities to gain competitive
15 employment. The legislature recognizes that there will always be
16 families while working hard to find work, need assistance over a longer
17 period. It is the intent of the legislature to ensure that these
18 families have available to them continuing assistance and other
19 services and resources that will assist in gaining competitive
20 employment while those who are uncooperative and malingering no longer
21 receive a cash grant.

22 **Sec. 2.** RCW 74.08A.260 and 2003 c 383 s 1 are each amended to read
23 as follows:

24 (1) Each recipient shall be assessed after determination of program
25 eligibility and before referral to job search. Assessments shall be
26 based upon factors that are critical to obtaining employment, including
27 but not limited to education, availability of child care, history of
28 family violence, history of substance abuse, and other factors that
29 affect the ability to obtain employment. Assessments may be performed
30 by the department or by a contracted entity. The assessment shall be

1 based on a uniform, consistent, transferable format that will be
2 accepted by all agencies and organizations serving the recipient.
3 Based on the assessment, an individual responsibility plan shall be
4 prepared that: (a) Sets forth an employment goal and a plan for moving
5 the recipient immediately into employment; (b) contains the obligation
6 of the recipient to become and remain employed; (c) moves the recipient
7 into whatever employment the recipient is capable of handling as
8 quickly as possible; and (d) describes the services available to the
9 recipient to enable the recipient to obtain and keep employment. If
10 the assessment in this subsection indicates the recipient is able to
11 engage in job search, he or she shall participate in job search for
12 thirty days before receiving the cash benefit portion of public
13 assistance. If the recipient has been aggressively participating in a
14 local job search prior to application by making at least three job
15 contacts each day or fifteen job contacts each week and documented by
16 providing copies of completed job applications or verification of job
17 interviews, the thirty-day waiting period or a portion shall be waived.

18 (2) Recipients who are not engaged in work and work activities, and
19 do not qualify for a good cause exemption under RCW 74.08A.270, shall
20 engage in self-directed service as provided in RCW 74.08A.330.

21 (3) ~~If a recipient ((refuses to engage in work and work activities~~
22 ~~required by the department, the family's grant shall be reduced by the~~
23 ~~recipient's share, and may, if the department determines it~~
24 ~~appropriate, be terminated))~~ has refused to engage in work and work
25 activities as required by the department, without good cause, the
26 sanction shall be a reduction of cash benefits by forty percent and
27 mandatory designation of a protective payee. A protective payee is a
28 person or an employee of an agency who manages client cash benefits to
29 provide for basic needs such as housing, utilities, clothing, child
30 care, and food. Before cash benefits are reduced by forty percent and
31 sent to a protective payee, the department shall conduct a case
32 staffing to determine whether the recipient has good cause for
33 nonparticipation provided in RCW 74.08A.270. The recipient and his or
34 her chosen representative shall be allowed to attend this case
35 staffing. The cash benefit portion of the public assistance shall be
36 restored and protective payee discontinued the first of the following

1 month after the recipient resumes full and active participation as
2 required for twelve, full, consecutive weeks.

3 ~~(4) ((The department may waive the penalties required under~~
4 ~~subsection (3) of this section, subject to a finding that the recipient~~
5 ~~refused to engage in work for good cause provided in RCW 74.08A.270))~~

6 The department shall sanction a recipient who has: (a) Received
7 temporary assistance for needy families for sixty months, as provided
8 under RCW 74.08A.010; and (b) refused to engage in work and work
9 activities as required by the department, without good cause. The
10 sanction for refusing to engage in work without good cause shall be a
11 reduction of cash benefits by forty percent and mandatory designation
12 of a protective payee. A protective payee is a person or an employee
13 of an agency who manages client cash benefits to provide for basic
14 needs such as housing, utilities, clothing, child care, and food.
15 Before cash benefits are reduced by forty percent and sent to a
16 protective payee, the department shall conduct a case staffing to
17 determine whether the recipient has good cause for nonparticipation
18 provided in RCW 74.08A.270. The recipient and his or her chosen
19 representative shall be allowed to attend this case staffing. The cash
20 benefit portion of the public assistance shall be restored and
21 protective payee discontinued the first of the following month after
22 the recipient resumes full and active participation as required for
23 twelve, full, consecutive weeks.

24 (5) In implementing this section, the department shall assign the
25 highest priority to the most employable clients, including adults in
26 two-parent families and parents in single-parent families that include
27 older preschool or school-age children to be engaged in work
28 activities.

29 (6) In consultation with the recipient, the department or
30 contractor shall place the recipient into a work activity that is
31 available in the local area where the recipient resides."

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1 On page 1, line 3 of the title, after "families;" strike the
2 remainder of the title and insert "amending RCW 74.08A.260; and
3 creating a new section."

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