
HOUSE BILL 1691

State of Washington

56th Legislature

1999 Regular Session

By Representatives Tokuda, Boldt, Kagi and Santos

Read first time 02/02/1999. Referred to Committee on Children & Family Services.

1 AN ACT Relating to job retention and wage progression for WorkFirst
2 participants; and amending RCW 74.08A.280 and 74.08A.410.

3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

4 **Sec. 1.** RCW 74.08A.280 and 1997 c 58 s 315 are each amended to
5 read as follows:

6 (1) The legislature finds that moving those eligible for assistance
7 to self-sustaining employment is a goal of the WorkFirst program. It
8 is the intent of WorkFirst to aid a participant's progress to self-
9 sufficiency by allowing flexibility within the state-wide program to
10 reflect community resources, the local characteristics of the labor
11 market, and the composition of the caseload. Program success will be
12 enhanced through effective coordination at regional and local levels,
13 involving employers, labor representatives, educators, community
14 leaders, local governments, and social service providers.

15 (2) The department, through its regional offices, shall collaborate
16 with employers, recipients, frontline workers, educational
17 institutions, labor, private industry councils, the work force training
18 and education coordinating board, community rehabilitation employment
19 programs, employment and training agencies, local governments, the

1 employment security department, and community action agencies to
2 develop work programs that are effective and work in their communities.
3 For planning purposes, the department shall collect and make accessible
4 to regional offices successful work program models from around the
5 United States, including the employment partnership program,
6 apprenticeship programs, microcredit, microenterprise, self-employment,
7 and W-2 Wisconsin works. Work programs shall incorporate local
8 volunteer citizens in their planning and implementation phases to
9 ensure community relevance and success.

10 (3) To reduce administrative costs and to ensure equal state-wide
11 access to services, the department may develop contracts for state-wide
12 welfare-to-work services. These state-wide contracts shall support
13 regional flexibility and ensure that resources follow local labor
14 market opportunities and recipients' needs.

15 (4) The secretary shall establish WorkFirst service areas for
16 purposes of planning WorkFirst programs and for distributing WorkFirst
17 resources. Service areas shall reflect department regions.

18 (5) By July 31st of each odd-numbered year, a plan for the
19 WorkFirst program shall be developed for each region. The plan shall
20 be prepared in consultation with local and regional sources, adapting
21 the state-wide WorkFirst program to achieve maximum effect for the
22 participants and the communities within which they reside. Local
23 consultation shall include to the greatest extent possible input from
24 local and regional planning bodies for social services and work force
25 development. The regional and local administrator shall consult with
26 employers of various sizes, labor representatives, training and
27 education providers, program participants, economic development
28 organizations, community organizations, tribes, and local governments
29 in the preparation of the service area plan. The plan shall
30 incorporate provisions relating to job retention services and wage
31 progression services available to current participants of temporary
32 assistance for needy families and those who have left the program
33 through employment. The plan shall include measurable performance
34 goals and specific mechanisms for tracking former participants.

35 (6) The secretary has final authority in plan approval or
36 modification. Regional program implementation may deviate from the
37 state-wide program if specified in a service area plan, as approved by
38 the secretary.

1 **Sec. 2.** RCW 74.08A.410 and 1997 c 58 s 702 are each amended to
2 read as follows:

3 (1) The WorkFirst program shall develop outcome measures for use in
4 evaluating the WorkFirst program authorized in chapter 58, Laws of
5 1997, which may include but are not limited to:

6 (a) Caseload reduction;

7 (b) Recidivism to caseload after two years;

8 (c) Job retention;

9 (d) Earnings;

10 (e) Reduction in average grant through increased recipient
11 earnings; (~~and~~)

12 (f) Placement of recipients into private sector, unsubsidized jobs;
13 and

14 (g) Wage progression history following former temporary assistance
15 for needy families participants for at least two years.

16 (2) The department shall establish measurable wage goals for
17 participants transitioning from WorkFirst to unsubsidized employment.

18 (3) The department shall require that contractors for WorkFirst
19 services collect outcome measure information and report outcome
20 measures to the department regularly. The department shall develop
21 benchmarks that compare outcome measure information from all
22 contractors to provide a clear indication of the most effective
23 contractors. Benchmark information shall be published quarterly and
24 provided to the legislature, the governor, and all contractors for
25 WorkFirst services.

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