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SENATE BILL 5625

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State of Washington

56th Legislature

1999 Regular Session

By Senators Kohl-Welles, Fairley, Winsley, Brown, Thibaudeau, Kline, Patterson, Fraser, Franklin, Gardner, Rasmussen, B. Sheldon, Snyder and Horn

Read first time 01/29/1999. Referred to Committee on Labor & Workforce Development.

1 AN ACT Relating to work requirements under the temporary assistance  
2 for needy families program; amending RCW 74.08A.010, 74.08A.260, and  
3 74.08A.270; adding new sections to chapter 74.08A RCW; and creating a  
4 new section.

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

6 **Sec. 1.** RCW 74.08A.010 and 1997 c 58 s 103 are each amended to  
7 read as follows:

8 (1) A family that includes an adult who has received temporary  
9 assistance for needy families for sixty months after July 27, 1997,  
10 shall be ineligible for further temporary assistance for needy families  
11 assistance.

12 (2) For the purposes of applying the rules of this section, the  
13 department shall count any month in which an adult family member  
14 received a temporary assistance for needy families cash assistance  
15 grant unless the assistance was provided when the family member was a  
16 minor child and not the head of the household or married to the head of  
17 the household or the recipient received a deferral under section 2 of  
18 this act.

1 (3) The department shall refer recipients who require specialized  
2 assistance to appropriate department programs, crime victims' programs  
3 through the department of community, trade, and economic development,  
4 or the crime victims' compensation program of the department of labor  
5 and industries.

6 (4) The department may exempt a recipient and the recipient's  
7 family from the application of subsection (1) of this section by reason  
8 of hardship or if the recipient meets the family violence options of  
9 section 402(A)(7) of Title IVA of the federal social security act as  
10 amended by P.L. 104-193. The number of recipients and their families  
11 exempted from subsection (1) of this section for a fiscal year shall  
12 not exceed twenty percent of the average monthly number of recipients  
13 and their families to which assistance is provided under the temporary  
14 assistance for needy families program.

15 (5) The department shall not exempt a recipient and his or her  
16 family from the application of subsection (1) of this section until  
17 after the recipient has received fifty-two months of assistance under  
18 this chapter.

19 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 74.08A RCW  
20 to read as follows:

21 (1) Each recipient approved to receive temporary assistance for  
22 needy families shall be subject to an employability screen as a  
23 condition of eligibility. If the employability screen determines the  
24 recipient meets the criteria specified in RCW 74.08A.270 for a good  
25 cause exemption to work requirements the department shall defer the  
26 work requirement under RCW 74.08A.260.

27 (2) All recipients not deferred shall be placed in the job search  
28 component. Failure to participate in the job search component shall  
29 result in sanctions as provided in RCW 74.08A.260. If a recipient  
30 fails to find employment during the job search component, the  
31 department may refer the recipient to those work activities that are  
32 directly related to improving the recipient's employability.

33 (3) The department shall adopt rules providing for the review of  
34 recipients granted deferrals under this section.

35 **Sec. 3.** RCW 74.08A.260 and 1997 c 58 s 313 are each amended to  
36 read as follows:

1 Recipients who have not obtained a deferral under section 2 of this  
2 act or paid, unsubsidized employment (~~(by the end of the job search~~  
3 ~~component authorized in section 312 of this act))~~ shall be referred to  
4 a work activity.

5 (1) Each recipient shall be assessed immediately upon completion of  
6 the job search component. Assessments shall be based upon factors that  
7 are critical to obtaining employment, including but not limited to  
8 education, employment strengths, and employment history. Assessments  
9 may be performed by the department or by a contracted entity. The  
10 assessment shall be based on a uniform, consistent, transferable format  
11 that will be accepted by all agencies and organizations serving the  
12 recipient. Based on the assessment, an individual responsibility plan  
13 shall be prepared that: (a) Sets forth an employment goal and a plan  
14 for moving the recipient immediately into employment; (b) contains the  
15 obligation of the recipient to become and remain employed; (c) moves  
16 the recipient into whatever employment the recipient is capable of  
17 handling as quickly as possible; and (d) describes the services  
18 available to the recipient to enable the recipient to obtain and keep  
19 employment.

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

23 (3) If a recipient refuses to engage in work and work activities  
24 required by the department, the family's grant shall be reduced by the  
25 recipient's share, and may, if the department determines it  
26 appropriate, be terminated.

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

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

35 (6) In consultation with the recipient, the department or  
36 contractor shall place the recipient into a work activity that is  
37 available in the local area where the recipient resides.

1       **Sec. 4.** RCW 74.08A.270 and 1997 c 58 s 314 are each amended to  
2 read as follows:

3       Good cause reasons for failure to participate in WorkFirst program  
4 components include: (1) Situations where the recipient is a parent or  
5 other relative personally providing care for a child under the age of  
6 six years, and formal or informal child care, or day care for an  
7 incapacitated individual living in the same home as a dependent child,  
8 is necessary for an individual to participate or continue participation  
9 in the program or accept employment, and such care is not available,  
10 and the department fails to provide such care; or (2) (~~until June 30,~~  
11 ~~1999,~~) if the recipient is a parent with a child under the age of one  
12 year. A parent may only receive this exemption for a total of twelve  
13 months, which may be consecutive or nonconsecutive; or (3) (~~after June~~  
14 ~~30, 1999, if the recipient is a parent with a child under three months~~  
15 ~~of age~~) if the recipient is a victim of domestic violence; or (4) if  
16 the recipient is meeting the twenty-hour work requirement and still  
17 receiving a grant; or (5) if the recipient is incapacitated; or (6) if  
18 the recipient is caring for an incapacitated child; or (7) if the  
19 recipient is over the age of fifty-five and is the grandparent or  
20 nonparent relative of the dependent child.

21       NEW SECTION. **Sec. 5.** A new section is added to chapter 74.08A RCW  
22 to read as follows:

23       Recipients who are not required to meet work requirements under RCW  
24 74.08A.270 shall receive grants, child care, and related services that  
25 are not supported by the temporary assistance for needy families block  
26 grant.

27       NEW SECTION. **Sec. 6.** If any part of this act is found to be in  
28 conflict with federal requirements that are a prescribed condition to  
29 the allocation of federal funds to the state, the conflicting part of  
30 this act is inoperative solely to the extent of the conflict and with  
31 respect to the agencies directly affected, and this finding does not  
32 affect the operation of the remainder of this act in its application to  
33 the agencies concerned. Rules adopted under this act must meet federal  
34 requirements that are a necessary condition to the receipt of federal  
35 funds by the state.

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