
ENGROSSED SUBSTITUTE SENATE BILL 6559

State of Washington

58th Legislature

2004 Regular Session

By Senate Committee on Children & Family Services & Corrections
(originally sponsored by Senators Stevens and Hargrove)

READ FIRST TIME 02/09/04.

1 AN ACT Relating to provision of cash grants, case staffing, and
2 work requirements to families eligible for temporary assistance for
3 needy families; amending RCW 74.08A.260; and creating a new section.

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

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** It remains the intent of the legislature
6 that all applicants to the Washington WorkFirst program shall be
7 focused on obtaining paid, unsubsidized employment. The focus of the
8 Washington WorkFirst program continues to be work for all recipients.
9 The key principles of the state temporary assistance for needy families
10 program must be to help move people from welfare to work; to be a
11 short-term transitional experience, not a way of life; and to assist
12 families to receive the child care and health care they need to protect
13 their children as they move from welfare to work. A statewide
14 partnership of state agencies, public education, business, and
15 nongovernmental providers are in place in Washington to provide
16 families with services and opportunities to gain competitive
17 employment. The legislature recognizes that there will always be
18 families while working hard to find work, need assistance over a longer
19 period. It is the intent of the legislature to ensure that these

1 families have available to them continuing assistance and other
2 services and resources that will assist in gaining competitive
3 employment while those who are uncooperative and malingering no longer
4 receive a cash grant.

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

7 (1) Each recipient shall be assessed after determination of program
8 eligibility and before referral to job search. Assessments shall be
9 based upon factors that are critical to obtaining employment, including
10 but not limited to education, availability of child care, history of
11 family violence, history of substance abuse, and other factors that
12 affect the ability to obtain employment. Assessments may be performed
13 by the department or by a contracted entity. The assessment shall be
14 based on a uniform, consistent, transferable format that will be
15 accepted by all agencies and organizations serving the recipient.
16 Based on the assessment, an individual responsibility plan shall be
17 prepared that: (a) Sets forth an employment goal and a plan for moving
18 the recipient immediately into employment; (b) contains the obligation
19 of the recipient to become and remain employed; (c) moves the recipient
20 into whatever employment the recipient is capable of handling as
21 quickly as possible; and (d) describes the services available to the
22 recipient to enable the recipient to obtain and keep employment. If
23 the assessment in this subsection indicates the recipient is able to
24 engage in job search, he or she shall participate in job search for
25 thirty days before receiving the cash benefit portion of public
26 assistance. If the recipient has been aggressively participating in a
27 local job search prior to application by making at least three job
28 contacts each day or fifteen job contacts each week and documented by
29 providing copies of completed job applications or verification of job
30 interviews, the thirty-day waiting period or a portion shall be waived.

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

34 (3) ~~If a recipient ((refuses to engage in work and work activities~~
35 ~~required by the department, the family's grant shall be reduced by the~~
36 ~~recipient's share, and may, if the department determines it~~
37 ~~appropriate, be terminated)) has refused to engage in work and work~~

1 activities as required by the department, without good cause, the
2 sanction shall be a reduction of cash benefits by forty percent and
3 mandatory designation of a protective payee. A protective payee is a
4 person or an employee of an agency who manages client cash benefits to
5 provide for basic needs such as housing, utilities, clothing, child
6 care, and food. Before cash benefits are reduced by forty percent and
7 sent to a protective payee, the department shall conduct a case
8 staffing to determine whether the recipient has good cause for
9 nonparticipation provided in RCW 74.08A.270. The recipient and his or
10 her chosen representative shall be allowed to attend this case
11 staffing. The cash benefit portion of the public assistance shall be
12 restored and protective payee discontinued the first of the following
13 month after the recipient resumes full and active participation as
14 required for twelve, full, consecutive weeks.

15 ~~(4) ((The department may waive the penalties required under~~
16 ~~subsection (3) of this section, subject to a finding that the recipient~~
17 ~~refused to engage in work for good cause provided in RCW 74.08A.270))~~
18 The department shall sanction a recipient who has: (a) Received
19 temporary assistance for needy families for sixty months, as provided
20 under RCW 74.08A.010; and (b) refused to engage in work and work
21 activities as required by the department, without good cause. The
22 sanction for refusing to engage in work without good cause shall be a
23 reduction of cash benefits by forty percent and mandatory designation
24 of a protective payee. A protective payee is a person or an employee
25 of an agency who manages client cash benefits to provide for basic
26 needs such as housing, utilities, clothing, child care, and food.
27 Before cash benefits are reduced by forty percent and sent to a
28 protective payee, the department shall conduct a case staffing to
29 determine whether the recipient has good cause for nonparticipation
30 provided in RCW 74.08A.270. The recipient and his or her chosen
31 representative shall be allowed to attend this case staffing. The cash
32 benefit portion of the public assistance shall be restored and
33 protective payee discontinued the first of the following month after
34 the recipient resumes full and active participation as required for
35 twelve, full, consecutive weeks.

36 (5) In implementing this section, the department shall assign the
37 highest priority to the most employable clients, including adults in

1 two-parent families and parents in single-parent families that include
2 older preschool or school-age children to be engaged in work
3 activities.

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

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