
**Children & Family Services
Committee**

HB 3110

Brief Description: Expanding parenting provisions in the WorkFirst program.

Sponsors: Representatives Roberts, Darneille, Kagi, Walsh, Pettigrew, Kenney, Green, Hasegawa, Appleton and Ormsby.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Revises the participation requirement under WorkFirst for a parent with a child under the age of one year.

Hearing Date: 1/30/06

Staff: Sydney Forrester (786-7120).

Background:

WorkFirst is Washington's program of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF). Under WorkFirst, recipients of public assistance are assessed prior to referral to job search activities. Information obtained through the assessment is used to develop an individual responsibility plan that includes an employment goal; a plan for obtaining employment as quickly as possible; and a description of services available to enable the recipient to obtain and keep employment.

Unless a good cause exemption applies, recipients of public assistance must be engaged in work or work activities as a condition of continued eligibility. Good cause exemptions include situations where necessary child care is unavailable for a child under six or for an incapacitated dependent child, and situations where a parent has a child under one year of age.

For a recipient claiming a good cause exemption due to parenting a child under one year of age, an assessment is conducted to determine specific service needs or employment barriers. Beginning when the child is three months old, the recipient is required to participate in specified activities for up to twenty hours per week. The specified activities include parenting skills instruction or training, job readiness training, high-school diploma or general educational development (GED) certificate courses, or volunteering in a licensed child-care facility.

Summary of Bill:

For a recipient claiming a good cause exemption due to parenting a child under one year of age, the twenty-hour per week participation requirement is replaced with a requirement that the

caseworker assist the recipient with identifying and accessing appropriate instruction, training, or counseling to improve parenting skills and child well-being.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on 1/23/06.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.