
HOUSE BILL 1754

State of Washington

61st Legislature

2009 Regular Session

By Representatives Pettigrew, Walsh, Goodman, Kagi, Roberts, Priest, Dunshee, Sullivan, Appleton, Green, Kenney, Morrell, Nelson, and Ormsby

Read first time 01/28/09. Referred to Committee on Early Learning & Children's Services.

1 AN ACT Relating to promoting continuity of care for children
2 enrolled in early learning and care programs receiving working
3 connections child care subsidies; amending RCW 74.08A.340; adding a new
4 section to chapter 43.215 RCW; and creating a new section.

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

6 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that continuity of
7 care in children's early learning and preschool environments promotes
8 the positive attachments and nurturing relationships children need for
9 healthy development across multiple domains. The legislature also
10 finds that the primary mechanisms through which children acquire school
11 readiness skills are the social relationships children form with their
12 caregivers. The legislature further finds that when subsidized child
13 care systems are structured to promote continuity of care for children,
14 low-income parents are also supported in their efforts to achieve goals
15 relating to education, employment, self-sufficiency, and asset
16 building. Supporting parents in these efforts can improve the family's
17 well-being and reduce reliance on public supports. The legislature
18 intends to reform components of Washington's subsidized child care
19 system by developing and implementing a system of subsidized child care

1 that promotes continuity of care for children; is affordable for
2 parents needing financial assistance; and is uncomplicated and
3 predictable for providers.

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 43.215 RCW
5 to read as follows:

6 (1) The department shall establish and implement policies for the
7 working connections child care program. Policies for the expenditure
8 of funds constituting the working connections child care program shall
9 be consistent with the outcome measures defined in RCW 74.08A.410 and
10 the standards established in this section intended to promote
11 continuity of care for children.

12 (2) Eligibility determinations and authorizations for working
13 connections subsidies shall be effective for twelve months unless a
14 parent or caregiver reports a change in circumstances necessitating
15 reauthorization prior to the end of the twelve-month period. This
16 requirement shall be phased in as follows:

17 (a) Beginning in fiscal year 2010, the twelve-month authorization
18 will take effect for parents with children enrolled in an early
19 childhood education and assistance program, a head start program, or an
20 early head start program; and

21 (b) Beginning in fiscal year 2012, the twelve-month authorization
22 will take effect for all parents with children enrolled in a program
23 receiving a working connections subsidy.

24 (3) The maximum amount of the working connections monthly parent
25 copay for all children combined in the parent's household shall be not
26 more than ten percent of the household's monthly gross income. This
27 standard shall be phased in as follows according to the program in
28 which the child is enrolled at the time of eligibility determination
29 under subsection (2) of this section:

30 (a) Beginning in fiscal year 2010, the ten percent copay limit will
31 take effect for parents with children enrolled in an early childhood
32 education and assistance program, a head start program, or an early
33 head start program; and

34 (b) Beginning in fiscal year 2012, the ten percent copay limit will
35 take effect for all parents with children enrolled in a program of care
36 receiving a working connections subsidy.

1 (4) Beginning in fiscal year 2010, the number of child absence days
2 for which a provider is eligible to receive a working connections
3 subsidy for a child's care shall be not fewer than ten days each month.

4 **Sec. 3.** RCW 74.08A.340 and 2008 c 329 s 922 are each amended to
5 read as follows:

6 The department of social and health services shall operate the
7 Washington WorkFirst program authorized under RCW 74.08A.200 through
8 74.08A.330, 43.330.145, 43.215.545, and 74.25.040, and chapter 74.12
9 RCW within the following constraints:

10 (1) The full amount of the temporary assistance for needy families
11 block grant, plus qualifying state expenditures as appropriated in the
12 biennial operating budget, shall be appropriated to the department each
13 year in the biennial appropriations act to carry out the provisions of
14 the program authorized in RCW 74.08A.200 through 74.08A.330,
15 43.330.145, 43.215.545, and 74.25.040, and chapter 74.12 RCW.

16 (2)(a) The department may expend funds defined in subsection (1) of
17 this section in any manner that will effectively accomplish the outcome
18 measures defined in RCW 74.08A.410 with the following exception:
19 Beginning with the 2007-2009 biennium, funds that constitute the
20 working connections child care program, child care quality programs,
21 and child care licensing functions.

22 (b) Beginning in the 2007-2009 fiscal biennium, the legislature
23 shall appropriate and the departments of early learning and social and
24 health services shall expend funds defined in subsection (1) of this
25 section that constitute the working connections child care program,
26 child care quality programs, and child care licensing functions in a
27 manner that is consistent with section 2 of this act and the outcome
28 measures defined in RCW 74.08A.410.

29 (c) No more than fifteen percent of the amount provided in
30 subsection (1) of this section may be spent for administrative
31 purposes. For the purpose of this subsection, "administrative
32 purposes" does not include expenditures for information technology and
33 computerization needed for tracking and monitoring required by P.L.
34 104-193. The department shall not increase grant levels to recipients
35 of the program authorized in RCW 74.08A.200 through 74.08A.330 and
36 43.330.145 and chapter 74.12 RCW, except as authorized in the omnibus
37 appropriations act for the 2007-2009 biennium.

1 (3) The department shall implement strategies that accomplish the
2 outcome measures identified in RCW 74.08A.410 that are within the
3 funding constraints in this section. Specifically, the department
4 shall implement strategies that will cause the number of cases in the
5 program authorized in RCW 74.08A.200 through 74.08A.330 and 43.330.145
6 and chapter 74.12 RCW to decrease by at least fifteen percent during
7 the 1997-99 biennium and by at least five percent in the subsequent
8 biennium. The department may transfer appropriation authority between
9 funding categories within the economic services program in order to
10 carry out the requirements of this subsection.

11 (4) The department shall monitor expenditures against the
12 appropriation levels provided for in subsection (1) of this section.
13 The department shall quarterly make a determination as to whether
14 expenditure levels will exceed available funding and communicate its
15 finding to the legislature. If the determination indicates that
16 expenditures will exceed funding at the end of the fiscal year, the
17 department shall take all necessary actions to ensure that all services
18 provided under this chapter shall be made available only to the extent
19 of the availability and level of appropriation made by the legislature.

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