
HOUSE BILL 2519

State of Washington 63rd Legislature 2014 Regular Session

By Representatives Senn, Walsh, Kagi, Hunter, Roberts, Tharinger, Haigh, Goodman, and Freeman

Read first time 01/20/14. Referred to Committee on Early Learning & Human Services.

1 AN ACT Relating to connecting children involved in the child
2 welfare system to quality early care and education programming;
3 amending RCW 43.215.405; adding new sections to chapter 26.44 RCW; and
4 adding a new section to chapter 43.215 RCW.

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

6 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** A new section is added to chapter 26.44 RCW
7 to read as follows:

8 (1) The family assessment response worker shall assess for child
9 safety and child well-being when collaborating with a family to
10 determine the need for child protective services child care or early
11 learning services.

12 (2) The family assessment response child care program shall only
13 subsidize child care or early learning programs that are enrolled in
14 the early achievers program described in RCW 43.215.100 and rate at
15 level three, four, or five unless one of the following conditions is
16 met:

17 (a) The family lives in an area with no local programs that rate at
18 level three, four, or five in the early achievers program; or

1 (b) The local child care and early learning programs that rate at
2 level three, four, or five in the early achievers program are not able
3 to meet the needs of the child.

4 (3)(a) Child care and early learning service referrals provided by
5 the family assessment response worker shall prioritize the following
6 programs:

7 (i) Programs located in close proximity to the child's home of
8 origin;

9 (ii) Licensed child care programs that receive state subsidy
10 pursuant to RCW 43.215.135;

11 (iii) Early childhood education and assistance programs;

12 (iv) Head start and early head start programs;

13 (v) Programs that offer full workday child care and early learning
14 opportunities;

15 (vi) Programs that have existing relationships with local child
16 welfare offices; and

17 (vii) Programs with the capacity to provide child care or early
18 learning services to the child after the closure of the family
19 assessment response case.

20 (b) The family assessment response worker must document when a
21 referral is made to a child care or early learning program that does
22 not meet the characteristics of a prioritized program described in this
23 section. The documentation must include the name of the child care or
24 early learning program and the reason the program was selected.

25 (4) At least fifteen days prior to closing the family assessment
26 response case, the family assessment worker shall meet with the child's
27 parent or caregiver to discuss child care and early learning services.
28 If the family plans to use child care or early learning services, the
29 family assessment worker shall work with the family to complete the
30 following activities:

31 (a) Contact the child's early learning or child care provider to
32 secure the service;

33 (b) Complete eligibility processes for a state subsidized child
34 care or early learning program; and

35 (c) Confirm that the child was determined eligible for the program.

36 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 26.44 RCW
37 to read as follows:

1 (1) The department shall collaborate with the department of early
2 learning to complete two reports that examine child care and early
3 learning services provided during family assessment response cases.
4 Data collection must commence with the first cohort of families
5 receiving family assessment response services. The report must include
6 information specific to only family assessment response cases and
7 document the following:

8 (a) The number of children receiving child care or early learning
9 services;

10 (b) The reason why a referral was made to child care or early
11 learning services;

12 (c) The child care or early learning program type a child attended;

13 (d) The early achievers rating for the program;

14 (e) The child's attendance;

15 (f) The duration of attendance during the open family assessment
16 response case;

17 (g) The duration of attendance after the closure of the family
18 assessment response case;

19 (h) The number of families electing to not use child care or early
20 learning programming after the closure of the family assessment
21 response case.

22 (2) The first report is due to the appropriate committees of the
23 legislature by January 2, 2015. The second report is due to the
24 appropriate committees of the legislature by January 2, 2016.

25 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** A new section is added to chapter 43.215 RCW
26 to read as follows:

27 (1) Children who received family assessment response services
28 pursuant to RCW 26.44.260 are eligible for the working connections
29 child care program described in RCW 43.215.135 for a twelve-month
30 enrollment period and may not be deemed ineligible due to any change in
31 circumstance.

32 (2) Eligibility begins the day the family assessment response case
33 is closed by the department of social and health services, children's
34 administration.

35 (3) Parents or caregivers must redetermine eligibility for the
36 working connections child care program described in RCW 43.215.135

1 after twelve months from the time the family assessment response case
2 closed.

3 **Sec. 4.** RCW 43.215.405 and 2013 2nd sp.s. c 16 s 4 are each
4 amended to read as follows:

5 Unless the context clearly requires otherwise, the definitions in
6 this section apply throughout RCW 43.215.400 through ((43.215.450,
7 43.215.455, 43.215.456,)) 43.215.457((7)) and 43.215.900 through
8 43.215.903.

9 (1) "Advisory committee" means the advisory committee under RCW
10 43.215.420.

11 (2) "Approved programs" means those state-supported education and
12 special assistance programs which are recognized by the department as
13 meeting the minimum program rules adopted by the department to qualify
14 under RCW 43.215.400 through 43.215.450 and 43.215.900 through
15 43.215.903 and are designated as eligible for funding by the department
16 under RCW 43.215.430 and 43.215.440.

17 (3) "Comprehensive" means an assistance program that focuses on the
18 needs of the child and includes education, health, and family support
19 services.

20 (4) "Department" means the department of early learning.

21 (5) "Eligible child" means a child not eligible for kindergarten
22 whose family income is at or below one hundred ten percent of the
23 federal poverty level, as published annually by the federal department
24 of health and human services, and includes a child whose family is
25 eligible for public assistance, and who is not a participant in a
26 federal or state program providing comprehensive services; children
27 whose parent or caregiver has completed family assessment response
28 services outlined in RCW 26.44.260 are eligible; a child who is
29 eligible for special education due to disability under RCW 28A.155.020;
30 and may include children who are eligible under rules adopted by the
31 department if the number of such children equals not more than ten
32 percent of the total enrollment in the early childhood program.
33 Priority for enrollment shall be given to children from families with
34 the lowest income, children ((in foster care)) involved in the child
35 welfare system, or to eligible children from families with multiple
36 needs.

- 1 (6) "Family support services" means providing opportunities for
2 parents to:
- 3 (a) Actively participate in their child's early childhood program;
 - 4 (b) Increase their knowledge of child development and parenting
5 skills;
 - 6 (c) Further their education and training;
 - 7 (d) Increase their ability to use needed services in the community;
 - 8 (e) Increase their self-reliance.

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