

# FINAL BILL REPORT

## ESHB 1808

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C 206 L 17  
Synopsis as Enacted

**Brief Description:** Providing support for foster youth in obtaining drivers' licenses and automobile liability insurance.

**Sponsors:** House Committee on Transportation (originally sponsored by Representatives Clibborn, McDonald, Kagi, Caldier, Senn, Graves, Lovick, Dent, McBride, Farrell, Wylie, Slatter, Macri, Doglio, Robinson, Ortiz-Self, Ormsby, Sells, Fey, Frame, Muri, Riccelli, Springer, Jinkins, Gregerson, Stanford and Pollet).

**House Committee on Transportation**  
**Senate Committee on Human Services, Mental Health & Housing**  
**Senate Committee on Transportation**

### **Background:**

A child who is considered "dependent" or part of the child welfare system may remain in foster care until the age of 18. The Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) foster care services include: (1) determination of needs the of the child; (2) determination of the need for foster care; (3) placement of the child in the type of foster care setting that best meets the child's needs; (4) referral of a child to a private child placement agency or institution to meet the child's specific needs; (5) medical services according to the rules of the DSHS's medical program; (6) reimbursement for the care of a child in a licensed family foster home; (7) purchase of care from a licensed private child-placing agency, behavioral rehabilitation services provider, or maternity home; and (8) supervision of the foster care placement by direct supervision through departmental social work services, or indirect supervision through evaluation of periodic reports from private child-placing agencies, rehabilitation services providers, or maternity homes with which the DSHS has contractual arrangements.

The DSHS provides licensed foster parents with a monthly foster care maintenance payment to assist licensed foster parents in meeting the needs of their foster child. A basic rate payment is paid to foster parents to help cover the cost of food, clothing, shelter, and personal incidentals.

The DSHS also operates the extended foster care program, which allows individuals who are dependent in foster care at age 18 to receive services if they are: (1) enrolled in a secondary

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education or equivalent program; (2) enrolled and participating in a postsecondary academic or postsecondary vocational program, or have applied for and can demonstrate an intention to enroll in a postsecondary academic or vocational program in a timely manner; (3) participating in a program or activity designed to promote employment or remove barriers to employment; (4) engaged in employment for 80 or more hours per month; or (5) not able to engage in the above activities due to a documented medical condition.

For eligible youth that choose to participate in the extended foster care program after they turn 18 years old, the dependency court action will continue. Eligible youth may also choose to participate in extended foster care after they turn 18 years old and until they turn 19 years old through a voluntary placement agreement with the DSHS. The services youth may receive through the extended foster care program include foster care placement or supervised independent living setting placement, medical (including mental health benefits), dental benefits, independent living skills training, case management through the DSHS, and referrals to community resources.

The Department of Licensing (DOL) requires individuals under the age of 18 to obtain an instruction permit and to complete a driver training education course to be eligible to obtain an intermediate driver's license. This requirement does not apply to individuals 18 years of age or older. The fee for a learner's permit is \$25. Fees for a new intermediate or standard driver's license total \$89. Private driver training schools and some high schools offer driver training education courses. The costs of a driver training education course and the knowledge and driving tests vary by provider. Motor vehicle liability insurance rates also vary.

### **Summary:**

Subject to the availability of funds appropriated for the purpose, the DSHS is required to contract with a private nonprofit organization to work collaboratively with independent living providers and the DSHS to provide driver's license support to foster youth. The organization will be selected through a competitive application process. Support in navigating the driver's license process must be provided to foster youth between 15 and 21 years old. That support must include: (1) reimbursement of fees necessary for a foster youth to obtain a driver's instruction permit, an intermediate license, and a standard or enhanced driver's license, including any required examination fees; (2) reimbursement of fees for a driver training education course if the foster youth is under the age of 18; and (3) reimbursement of the increase in motor vehicle liability insurance costs foster parents, relative placements, or other foster placements who add a foster youth to their motor vehicle liability insurance policy, with a funding preference given to reimbursement of motor vehicle liability insurance costs for foster youth who practice safe driving and avoid moving violations and at-fault collisions.

The selected nonprofit organization must submit a report to the DSHS and the appropriate committees, of the Legislature, including the Transportation Committee by December 1, 2019, which documents the number of foster youth served by the program; the average cost per youth served; negative outcomes of the program reported by foster youth, including any foster parent's inappropriate use of a foster youth's ability to drive; and recommendations for future policy, statutory, or funding changes necessary to improve the effectiveness of the program.

For this act to take effect, specific funding must be provided for it in the 2017-2019 Transportation Budget.

**Votes on Final Passage:**

House 95 3

Senate 47 1

**Effective:** July 23, 2017