

SENATE BILL REPORT

SHB 1624

As Reported by Senate Committee On:
Human Services, Mental Health & Housing, March 20, 2017

Title: An act relating to working connections child care eligibility for vulnerable children.

Brief Description: Concerning working connections child care eligibility for vulnerable children.

Sponsors: House Committee on Appropriations (originally sponsored by Representatives Senn, Dent, Kagi, Lytton, Farrell, Pettigrew, Hudgins, Goodman, Frame and Slatter).

Brief History: Passed House: 3/03/17, 76-21.

Committee Activity: Human Services, Mental Health & Housing: 3/15/17, 3/20/17 [DP-WM, DNP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires the Department of Early Learning to implement policies to allow 12 months of Working Connections Child Care eligibility to families with children who meet certain conditions.
- Provides the child does not need to continue to receive services from the Department of Social and Health Services in order to maintain the 12-month eligibility.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES, MENTAL HEALTH & HOUSING

Majority Report: Do pass and be referred to Committee on Ways & Means.

Signed by Senators O'Ban, Chair; Miloscia, Vice Chair; Darneille, Ranking Minority Member; Carlyle, Hunt and Walsh.

Minority Report: Do not pass.

Signed by Senator Padden.

Staff: Alison Mendiola (786-7444)

Background: Working Connections Child Care (WCCC). The WCCC program is a subsidized childcare program funded through federal Child Care and Development Funds

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

(CCDF) and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF). The Department of Early Learning (DEL) is the designated lead agency for administration of the CCDF program and sets policy for the WCCC.

The Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) determines eligibility for the WCCC and issues childcare subsidy payments to providers. In general, in order to qualify for the WCCC, a family must have a household income at or below 200 percent of the federal poverty level and be working or participating in WorkFirst activities.

Families participating in the WCCC may receive up to 12 months of subsidized childcare and may pay a monthly copayment, depending on the family's income level. A child may not be deemed ineligible during the 12-month period due to a change in the family's circumstances.

DSHS - Child Welfare Services. DSHS provides child welfare services designed to ensure child safety, achieve permanency, and strengthen families. Child welfare services can include voluntary and in-home services, out-of-home care, case management, and other services. Child Protective Services (CPS) is responsible for investigating reported allegations of child abuse or neglect. Reports with low or moderately low risk allegations may receive a Family Assessment Response (FAR) as an alternative to a CPS investigation.

Summary of Bill: Beginning December 1, 2018, DEL must implement policies to allow 12 months of the WCCC eligibility for families with children who:

- are residing with a biological parent or guardian;
- have received child protective services, child welfare services, or a FAR from the DSHS in the previous six months; and
- have a childcare referral as part of the family's case management plan.

A child does not need to continue to receive DSHS services in order to maintain the WCCC eligibility for the full 12 months.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members: No.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect on December 1, 2018; however, there is a null and void clause.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: When children come into the system and child care is part of their plan, there is child care subsidy available through DSHS—however, that ends once the case closes. This bill would allow the child care to continue, providing stability to the child and parents. This assistance helps families get back on their feet while providing children a continuity of care and sense of stability.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Representative Tana Senn, Prime Sponsor; Laurie Lippold, Partners for Our Children; Melissa Johnson, Washington State Association of Headstart & ECEAP; Kimberly Mays, Parent/Contracted Social Services Worker.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: No one.