

FINAL BILL REPORT

2SHB 1303

C 97 L 19
Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Improving access and completion for students at institutions of higher education, especially at community and technical colleges, by removing restrictions on subsidized child care.

Sponsors: House Committee on Appropriations (originally sponsored by Representatives Shewmake, Eslick, Pollet, Griffey, Riccelli, Senn, Appleton, Dolan, Frame, Paul, Goodman, Robinson, Springer, Lekanoff, Macri, Thai, Tharinger, Stanford, Bergquist, Jinkins, Leavitt and Ormsby).

House Committee on Human Services & Early Learning
House Committee on Appropriations
Senate Committee on Early Learning & K-12 Education
Senate Committee on Ways & Means

Background:

Working Connections Child Care.

The Working Connections Child Care (WCCC) program provides subsidized child care for low-income families and is funded through federal Child Care and Development Funds (CCDF), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), and state general funds. In state fiscal year 2017, approximately 13 percent of participating WCCC program households were also TANF recipients.

To be eligible, an applicant must have a household income at or below 200 percent of the federal poverty guideline and be engaged in approved work activities unless the family has received child welfare, child protective, or family assessment response (FAR) services in the previous six months. Historically, the average monthly caseload of the WCCC program has been capped in the state operating budget at 33,000 households.

The Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) is the designated lead agency for administration of the CCDF program and sets policy for the WCCC program. The Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) determines eligibility for the WCCC program and authorizes the amount of care a household may receive. Effective July 1, 2019, all duties related to the WCCC program will transfer from the DSHS to the DCYF.

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.

WorkFirst.

The TANF program provides temporary cash assistance, subsidized childcare, and work programs for low-income families. With limited exceptions, adult TANF recipients must participate in one or more WorkFirst activities that are identified in the participant's Individual Responsibility Plan (IRP). These activities may include paid and unpaid employment-based training programs, career development, community service, work skills assessment and job hunting training, and vocational training programs.

A person participating in WorkFirst may be eligible for WCCC benefits for approved activities in his or her IRP.

Working Connections Child Care for Students.

A person under the age of 22 who is not participating in WorkFirst may be eligible for the WCCC program for high school or a General Educational Development (GED) program without a minimum number of work hours. A person who is age 22 or older must work either an average of 20 or more hours per week in unsubsidized employment or an average of 16 or more hours per week in a paid federal or state work study program.

There is a lifetime limit of 24 months of WCCC benefits for participation in adult basic education, English as a second language, or high school or GED completion. Working Connections Child Care benefits for vocational education are limited to 36 months in a person's lifetime. The vocational education program must lead to a degree or certificate in a specific occupation and be offered by a public or private technical college or school, a community college, or a tribal college.

Summary:

Beginning August 1, 2020, the DCYF may not require a person or consumer to meet work requirements as a condition of receiving WCCC benefits when he or she is a full-time student of a community, technical, or tribal college and is pursuing a certificate in nursing, early childhood education, a mental health profession, or paraeducation. The student must be attending school full-time and must be maintaining passing grades and be in good standing pursuant to the college attendance requirements.

In the event of a waitlist for the WCCC, no changes are intended to be made regarding how applicants are prioritized as a result of eliminating work requirements for students. A community or technical college is not required to expand any of its existing child care facilities, and any additional child care services provided by a community or technical college must be provided within existing resources and existing facilities.

Votes on Final Passage:

House	90	6
Senate	43	4

Effective: July 28, 2019