

FINAL BILL REPORT

SHB 2441

C 338 L 20
Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Improving access to temporary assistance for needy families.

Sponsors: House Committee on Appropriations (originally sponsored by Representatives Entenman, Fitzgibbon, Senn, Gregerson, Kilduff, Stonier, Davis, Macri, Ortiz-Self, Riccelli, Pettigrew, Pollet, Goodman, Wylie and Doglio).

House Committee on Human Services & Early Learning
House Committee on Appropriations
Senate Committee on Human Services, Reentry & Rehabilitation
Senate Committee on Ways & Means

Background:

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) is a federal block grant that 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 Program activities that are identified through an assessment and documented in the recipient'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 search training, and vocational training programs.

The TANF program is administered by the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS).

Work Participation and Sanctions.

Federal law and state rules require a reduction or termination of a family's TANF benefits if an individual in the family refuses to participate in work requirements, unless the individual meets criteria to be exempt from mandatory work participation or has good cause to not participate. This reduction of assistance is referred to as noncompliance sanction.

A family's TANF grant is reduced by one person's share or 40 percent, whichever is more, when a recipient is in noncompliance sanction status. After two months in noncompliance sanction status, the family's grant is terminated.

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.

The DSHS may waive sanction policies if the recipient refuses to participate in work for good cause. Examples of good cause refusal to participate include when the recipient is a parent or other relative personally caring for a child under age 6 and appropriate care necessary for the recipient to participate is not available or when the recipient is a parent of a child under age 2.

Summary:

If a recipient refuses to engage in work activities, the DSHS must reduce the family's grant by the recipient's share or 40 percent, whichever is greater, after two months of continuous noncompliance. After 12 months of noncompliance, the DSHS must terminate the grant. The DSHS is required to waive sanction policies for recipients who refuse to engage in work for good cause.

Votes on Final Passage:

House	57	41	
Senate	32	17	(Senate amended)
House	56	41	(House concurred)

Effective: July 1, 2021