
**Human Services & Early Learning
Committee**

2SSB 5820

Brief Description: Increasing eligibility for child care and early learning programs for homeless and other vulnerable children.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Ways & Means (originally sponsored by Senators Nguyen, Randall, Hasegawa, Keiser, Hunt, Kuderer and Wilson, C.).

Brief Summary of Second Substitute Bill

- Requires 12-month authorizations for the Working Connections Child Care program for homeless children.

Hearing Date: 3/19/19

Staff: Dawn Eychaner (786-7135).

Background:

Working Connections Child Care.

The Working Connections Child Care (WCCC) program offers subsidies to childcare providers serving families with household incomes at or below 200 percent of the federal poverty guideline. The applicant must be engaged in work or in approved work activities unless the family has received child welfare, child protective, or family assessment response (FAR) services in the previous six months. An eligible WCCC applicant must receive an authorization for 12 months of child care subsidy and may not be deemed ineligible during the 12-month period due to a change in the family's circumstances.

Families experiencing homelessness have a four-month grace period to provide verification of participation in approved work activities.

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 WCCC program is partially funded by the federal Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF). The CCDF rules allow states to designate certain vulnerable populations as "in need of protective services." Work requirements may be waived for these populations. Washington's definition of protective services includes families who are homeless during the designated four-month grace period, children who are homeless because of a disaster, children receiving FAR services, and children in the parental control of a non-needy relative (NNR). An NNR is an adult relative caring for an eligible child in the absence of a biological, adoptive, or stepparent.

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 consumer may receive. Effective July 1, 2019, all duties related to the WCCC program will transfer from the DSHS to the DCYF.

McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act.

The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (McKinney-Vento) requires states and public school districts to ensure that children and youth experiencing homelessness have equal access to public education. The McKinney-Vento defines a homeless child or youth as one lacking a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence.

Summary of Bill:

The DCYF must designate homeless children as a vulnerable population in need of protective services pursuant to federal CCDF rules. Children who are homeless as defined by McKinney-Vento must be allowed eligibility and 12-month authorizations for the WCCC program.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.