
HOUSE BILL 2556

State of Washington

66th Legislature

2020 Regular Session

By Representatives Dent, Corry, Eslick, Caldier, Klippert, Jenkin, Griffey, McCaslin, Mosbrucker, Gildon, Dufault, and Tharinger

Read first time 01/15/20. Referred to Committee on Human Services & Early Learning.

1 AN ACT Relating to providing regulatory relief for early learning
2 providers; amending RCW 43.216.110 and 43.216.255; adding new
3 sections to chapter 43.216 RCW; creating a new section; and providing
4 an expiration date.

5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

6 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that a nurturing and
7 loving relationship between an early learning provider and a child
8 the provider cares for is an essential component of early learning
9 and has a strong influence on that child's healthy development.
10 Further, the legislature finds that successfully operating a child
11 care center or licensed family home is becoming more financially
12 challenging as the state's regulatory framework for child care and
13 early learning has grown more comprehensive. Therefore, the
14 legislature intends to provide relief to early learning providers by:
15 (1) Establishing an accessible, affordable instructional program that
16 satisfies licensure requirements; and (2) evaluating the financial
17 impacts of state licensing requirements on providers.

18 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 43.216
19 RCW to read as follows:

1 (1) The department shall implement a fundamentals of instruction
2 program for early learning providers. The objective of the program is
3 to instruct early learning providers on how children learn and
4 interact with high quality early learning professionals. The
5 fundamentals of instruction program must provide the training
6 necessary for early learning providers to meet professional education
7 requirements associated with child care licensure.

8 (2) The program must be provided in a manner that is accessible
9 and affordable to providers and must be made available both online
10 and as a community-based training opportunity. Upon a participant's
11 successful completion of the curriculum and an online or in-person
12 exam, the program must certify the participant as having met
13 education requirements necessary to meet federal and state
14 professional development mandates for all early learning provider
15 positions.

16 (3) The program curriculum must emphasize the role of a classroom
17 teacher in a child's learning and development and must meet federal
18 child care and development fund training and professional development
19 requirements with a focus on:

20 (a) Health and safety training standards;

21 (b) Child development within the state's early learning and
22 development guidelines;

23 (c) Social-emotional behavior intervention models for children
24 ages birth through school age; and

25 (d) Appropriate content for populations of children that include
26 different age groups, English learners, children with developmental
27 delays or disabilities, and Native Americans whose tribes receive
28 federal child care and development fund moneys.

29 (4) In the design and implementation of the fundamentals of
30 instruction program, the department must:

31 (a) Solicit inclusive input and feedback from existing early
32 learning providers statewide, including monolingual and bilingual
33 providers who have a variety of education levels; and

34 (b) Ensure the curriculum and exam include the elements described
35 in subsection (3) of this section and are provided in a manner that
36 strives to be inclusive of a variety of learning levels, languages,
37 and abilities.

38 (5) The department may enter into a contract with an outside
39 organization for the development and provision of the curriculum and
40 exam.

1 (6) Beginning November 1, 2020, the department must report
2 annually to the governor and the legislature on provider
3 participation rates and results of the program.

4 **Sec. 3.** RCW 43.216.110 and 2012 c 149 s 2 are each amended to
5 read as follows:

6 (~~By December 31, 2012, the~~) The department shall adopt core
7 competencies for early care and education professionals and (~~child~~
8 ~~and youth development professionals and develop an implementation~~
9 ~~plan. The department shall~~) incorporate the core competencies into
10 (~~all appropriate professional development opportunities including,~~
11 ~~but not limited to,~~) the quality rating and improvement system(~~(7~~
12 ~~the early childhood education and assistance program, child care~~
13 ~~licensing, and the early support for infants and toddlers program)~~).
14 The purpose of the core competencies is to serve as a foundation for
15 what early care and education professionals (~~and child and youth~~
16 ~~development professionals~~) who are participants in the quality
17 rating and improvement system need to know and do to provide quality
18 care for children. The core competencies must be reviewed and updated
19 every five years. The department may not apply the core competencies
20 to minimum licensing standards.

21 **Sec. 4.** RCW 43.216.255 and 2015 3rd sp.s. c 7 s 3 are each
22 amended to read as follows:

23 (1) (~~No later than November 1, 2016, the~~) The department shall
24 implement a single set of licensing standards for child care and the
25 early childhood education and assistance program. The department
26 shall produce the single set of licensing standards within the
27 department's available appropriations. The (~~new~~) licensing
28 standards must:

29 (a) Provide minimum health and safety standards for child care
30 and preschool programs;

31 (b) (~~Rely on the standards established in the early achievers~~
32 ~~program to address quality issues in participating early childhood~~
33 ~~programs;~~

34 (~~e~~) Take into account the separate needs of family care
35 providers and child care centers; and

36 (~~d~~) (c) Promote the continued safety of child care settings.

37 (2) (~~Private schools~~) Family day care providers and child day
38 care centers that operate early learning programs and do not receive

1 state subsidy payments shall be subject only to the minimum health
2 and safety standards in subsection (1)(a) of this section (~~and the~~
3 ~~requirements necessary to assure a sufficient early childhood~~
4 ~~education to meet usual requirements needed for transition into~~
5 ~~elementary school~~). The state, and any agency thereof, shall not
6 restrict or dictate any specific educational or other programs for
7 early learning programs operated by (~~private schools except for~~
8 ~~programs that receive state subsidy payments~~) licensed family day
9 care providers or child day care centers who do not receive state
10 subsidy payments.

11 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 5.** A new section is added to chapter 43.216
12 RCW to read as follows:

13 (1) The cost of child care regulations work group is established.
14 The work group must study: (a) The financial impacts of department
15 licensing regulations on child care businesses; and (b) direct and
16 indirect costs and benefits to child care providers that are
17 associated with participation in the early achievers quality rating
18 system. The study must include an analysis of costs associated with
19 licensing and early achievers requirements that may have a
20 disproportionate economic impact on child care businesses located in
21 rural areas of the state.

22 (2)(a) The secretary of the department or his or her designee
23 shall convene the first meeting of the work group by July 1, 2020.
24 The work group must meet at least five times between July 1, 2020,
25 and November 30, 2020, and must convene at least two of those
26 meetings in locations east of the crest of the Cascade mountains.

27 (b) The work group must consist of the following twelve voting
28 members:

29 (i) Three licensed family home child care providers selected by a
30 statewide organization representing the interests of family child
31 care providers. At least one family home child care provider must
32 provide child care for children of agricultural workers, speak
33 Spanish as a first language, or be located east of the crest of the
34 Cascade mountains;

35 (ii) Three licensed child care center providers selected by a
36 statewide organization representing the interests of licensed child
37 care centers. At least one child care center provider must provide
38 child care for children of agricultural workers, speak Spanish as a

1 first language, or be located east of the crest of the Cascade
2 mountains;

3 (iii) Two foster parents selected by a statewide organization
4 solely focused on supporting foster parents. At least one foster
5 parent must reside east of the crest of the Cascade mountains; and

6 (iv) Four legislators, consisting of two members of the house of
7 representatives and two members of the senate. The speaker of the
8 house of representatives shall appoint one member to the work group
9 from each of the two largest caucuses in the house of
10 representatives. The president of the senate shall appoint one member
11 to the work group from each of the two largest caucuses in the
12 senate.

13 (3) The work group shall elect its cochairs, one from among the
14 legislative members and one from among the citizen members.

15 (4) The work group may seek input or collaborate with other
16 parties as it deems necessary. The work group may contract with
17 additional persons who have specific technical expertise if such
18 expertise is necessary to carry out the mandates of the study. The
19 work group may enter into such a contract only if an appropriation is
20 specifically provided for this purpose.

21 (5) Legislative members of the work group must be reimbursed for
22 travel expenses in accordance with RCW 44.04.120. Nonlegislative
23 members must be reimbursed for travel expenses according to chapter
24 43.03 RCW.

25 (6) The department shall provide staff support for the work
26 group.

27 (7) The work group must submit its findings and recommendations
28 to the governor and the appropriate committees of the legislature by
29 December 15, 2020.

30 (8) This section expires June 30, 2021.

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