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**SUBSTITUTE SENATE BILL 6478**

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**State of Washington**

**66th Legislature**

**2020 Regular Session**

**By** Senate Human Services, Reentry & Rehabilitation (originally sponsored by Senators Nguyen, Darneille, Stanford, Saldaña, Dhingra, Das, and Hasegawa)

READ FIRST TIME 02/03/20.

1 AN ACT Relating to revising economic assistance programs by  
2 updating standards of need, revising outcome measures and data  
3 collected, and reducing barriers to participation; reenacting and  
4 amending RCW 74.08A.260; creating new sections; and providing an  
5 effective date.

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

7 **Sec. 1.** RCW 74.08A.260 and 2018 c 126 s 5 and 2018 c 58 s 8 are  
8 each reenacted and amended to read as follows:

9 (1) Each recipient shall be assessed after determination of  
10 program eligibility and before referral to job search. Assessments  
11 shall be based upon factors that are critical to obtaining  
12 employment, including but not limited to education, availability of  
13 child care, history of family violence, history of substance abuse,  
14 and other factors that affect the ability to obtain employment.  
15 Assessments may be performed by the department or by a contracted  
16 entity. The assessment shall be based on a uniform, consistent,  
17 transferable format that will be accepted by all agencies and  
18 organizations serving the recipient.

19 (2) Based on the assessment, an individual responsibility plan  
20 shall be prepared that: (a) Sets forth an employment goal and a plan  
21 for maximizing the recipient's success at meeting the employment

1 goal; (b) considers WorkFirst educational and training programs from  
2 which the recipient could benefit; (c) contains the obligation of the  
3 recipient to participate in the program by complying with the plan;  
4 (d) moves the recipient into full-time WorkFirst activities as  
5 quickly as possible; and (e) describes the services available to the  
6 recipient either during or after WorkFirst to enable the recipient to  
7 obtain and keep employment and to advance in the workplace and  
8 increase the recipient's wage earning potential over time.

9 (3) Recipients who are not engaged in work and work activities,  
10 and do not qualify for a good cause exemption under RCW 74.08A.270,  
11 shall engage in self-directed service as provided in RCW 74.08A.330.

12 (4) If a recipient refuses to engage in work and work activities  
13 required by the department, after two months of continuous  
14 noncompliance, the family's grant (~~(shall)~~) may be reduced by the  
15 recipient's share(~~(, and may, if the department determines it~~  
16 ~~appropriate, be terminated)~~) or by forty percent, whichever is  
17 greater.

18 (5) The department may waive the penalties required under  
19 subsection (4) of this section, subject to a finding that the  
20 recipient refused to engage in work for good cause provided in RCW  
21 74.08A.270.

22 (6) In consultation with the recipient, the department or  
23 contractor shall place the recipient into a work activity that is  
24 available in the local area where the recipient resides.

25 (7) Assessments conducted under this section shall include a  
26 consideration of the potential benefit to the recipient of engaging  
27 in financial literacy activities. The department shall consider the  
28 options for financial literacy activities available in the community,  
29 including information and resources available through the financial  
30 education public-private partnership created under RCW 28A.300.450.  
31 The department may authorize up to ten hours of financial literacy  
32 activities as a core activity or an optional activity under  
33 WorkFirst.

34 (8) Subsections (2) through (6) of this section are suspended for  
35 a recipient who is a parent or other relative personally providing  
36 care for a child under the age of two years. This suspension applies  
37 to both one and two parent families. However, both parents in a two-  
38 parent family cannot use the suspension during the same month.  
39 Nothing in this subsection shall prevent a recipient from  
40 participating in the WorkFirst program on a voluntary basis.

1        NEW SECTION.    **Sec. 2.**    This act takes effect May 1, 2021.

2        NEW SECTION.    **Sec. 3.**    This act applies prospectively only and  
3 not retroactively.

4        NEW SECTION.    **Sec. 4.**    If specific funding for the purposes of  
5 this act, referencing this act by bill or chapter number, is not  
6 provided by June 30, 2020, in the supplemental omnibus appropriations  
7 act, this act is null and void.

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