

# FINAL BILL REPORT

## SHB 1151

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**C 9 L 21**  
Synopsis as Enacted

**Brief Description:** Bolstering economic recovery.

**Sponsors:** House Committee on Housing, Human Services & Veterans (originally sponsored by Representatives Leavitt, Shewmake, Peterson, Bronoske, Entenman, Stonier, Bateman, Chopp, Frame, Hackney, Callan, Pollet, Gregerson, Senn and Johnson, J.).

**House Committee on Housing, Human Services & Veterans**  
**House Committee on Appropriations**  
**Senate Committee on Human Services, Reentry & Rehabilitation**  
**Senate Committee on Ways & Means**

**Background:**

Consolidated Emergency Assistance.

The Consolidated Emergency Assistance Program (CEAP) provides emergency cash assistance to qualifying families with children. The CEAP benefits are limited to a one-time distribution within any 12-month period. The CEAP benefits are intended to alleviate emergent conditions resulting from insufficient income and resources to provide for food, shelter, clothing, medical care, and other necessary items and services. Families must meet income requirements and be ineligible for other cash assistance programs in order to receive the CEAP benefits.

During a state of emergency and pursuant to an order from the Governor, the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) may extend the CEAP to individuals and households without children. In February 2020, Governor Inslee declared a statewide emergency in response to the novel coronavirus. Subsequent gubernatorial proclamations expanded eligibility for CEAP benefits to individuals and families without children. The DSHS created the Disaster Cash Assistance Program (DCAP) to expand the CEAP for this purpose and activated the DCAP in April 2020. The DCAP, and therefore expanded eligibility for households without children, ended in January 2021.

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*This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.*

### Cash and Food Assistance.

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), also referred to as Basic Food, provides food benefits to eligible low-income households. A household is considered categorically eligible for Basic Food when all members of the household receive, or are authorized to receive, payments or services from certain programs or the household income is at or below 200 percent of the federal poverty guideline. The Food Assistance for Legal Immigrants Program (FAP) provides food assistance to legal immigrants who are ineligible for the SNAP.

The Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Program provides a cash benefit for qualifying low-income households with children. Families receiving TANF are categorically eligible for Basic Food. Most TANF recipients are time-limited to a lifetime maximum of five years of benefits. When a household reaches this five-year time limit, the DSHS provides Transitional Food Assistance (TFA) benefits to the family for five months. The TFA program provides temporary food benefits to these eligible households.

### Standards of Need.

The DSHS has established consolidated standards of need for certain cash assistance programs. The standards represent the amount of income required for a household to maintain a minimum and adequate standard of living. The standards are based on the household's size and include basic requirements for food, clothing, shelter, and other household costs. The standards are based on studies of living costs and are updated annually according to inflation. Cash assistance grant amounts cannot exceed the identified need standard. Current cash grant standards are lower than the standard of need.

The DSHS has the authority to adopt a separate standard for shelter provided to a household at no cost. Prior to September 2020, separate need and payment standards were in place for households with shelter provided at no cost. In September 2020, the DSHS adopted rules repealing references to the separate standards and no longer issues reduced grants based on a household having no shelter costs.

### **Summary:**

#### Consolidated Emergency Assistance.

The CEAP benefits may be provided more than once within a 12-month period if established in an order by the Governor.

#### Cash and Food Assistance.

A household is eligible to receive a one-time, state-funded cash benefit in the final month of eligibility when the household's food benefits terminate if the household includes children, is receiving food benefits, and is not simultaneously receiving TANF. Termination may be due to exceeding income limits or if the household voluntarily leaves the food benefit program. The amount of the cash benefit is determined by available funds appropriated for this purpose. Households that receive the cash benefit are also eligible to receive five

months of TFA.

Standards of Need.

By July 1, 2022, the DSHS must use an existing, broadly used national standard and revise the study of living costs that the standards of need for cash assistance are based upon. Cell phone, Internet, and out-of-pocket costs for child care and health care are added to the household budget items that must be included in the study of living costs.

The authority for the DSHS to adopt a separate standard for shelter provided at no cost is eliminated.

**Votes on Final Passage:**

House	82	16
Senate	34	13

**Effective:** March 1, 2021 (Section 1)  
July 25, 2021  
July 1, 2022 (Section 2)