S-4359.2

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**SUBSTITUTE SENATE BILL 6135**

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**State of Washington 68th Legislature 2024 Regular Session**

**By** Senate Human Services (originally sponsored by Senators C. Wilson, Hasegawa, Kuderer, Randall, and Saldaña)

AN ACT Relating to programs for eligible recipients of temporary assistance for needy families; adding a new section to chapter 74.04 RCW; and creating new sections.

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

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  (1) The legislature finds that during the great recession many of Washington's most economically vulnerable families were the most negatively impacted, not only by the loss of jobs but also by the cuts to social safety net programs and supports. For example, the post temporary assistance for needy families support services offer families who exit temporary assistance for needy families and are employed at least 20 hours per week assistance with items needed to help the parents stay employed and bridge some of the negative impacts that occur when temporary assistance for needy families benefits end. Services include expenses like car repairs, gas, work clothing, and tools for up to 12 months after the temporary assistance for needy families grant ended.

(2) The legislature further finds that this benefit was cut during the great recession and has since been restored to three months. Given the meaningful impact this program has on families, the legislature finds and resolves to reinstate support services to its original 12 months of support.

(3) Additionally, the transitional work bonus program offered a one-time bonus option for employed temporary assistance for needy families households with low cash grants who voluntarily exited temporary assistance for needy families. The legislature resolves to reinstate the transitional work expense bonus program.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  A new section is added to chapter 74.04 RCW to read as follows:

(1) Beginning March 1, 2026, and subject to the availability of amounts appropriated for this specific purpose, the department shall provide a transitional work expense bonus for clients voluntarily exiting the temporary assistance for needy families program pursuant to this chapter.

(2) The amount of the transitional work expense bonus shall be $2,000. Subject to amounts appropriated for this specific purpose, this amount may be adjusted every two years according to an inflationary increase. The inflationary increase must be calculated by applying generally recognized inflation indices consistent with those considered under RCW 74.04.770(2)(a).

(3) To be eligible for the transitional work expense bonus, a household must:

(a) Receive a temporary assistance for needy families or state family assistance grant of $200 or less per month;

(b) Voluntarily stop receiving their temporary assistance for needy families or state family assistance grant;

(c) Have never received a transitional work expense bonus before; and

(d) Include an adult recipient of temporary assistance for needy families.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  By September 1, 2024, the department of social and health services shall adopt rules as necessary to increase post temporary assistance for needy families support services from three months to 12 months for former recipients working 20 hours or more a week, with access to any support service needed to assist with job retention. The rules must require that support services are to be provided through electronic benefit transfer cards when feasible.

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