
HOUSE BILL 1919

State of Washington

69th Legislature

2025 Regular Session

By Representatives Bergquist, Couture, Schmidt, and Pollet; by request of Governor Ferguson

Read first time 02/10/25. Referred to Committee on Early Learning & Human Services.

1 AN ACT Relating to modifying access to the working connections
2 child care program by expanding access for small business employees
3 and adjusting implementation dates; amending RCW 43.216.810;
4 reenacting and amending RCW 43.216.802; adding a new section to
5 chapter 43.216 RCW; providing an effective date; and declaring an
6 emergency.

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

8 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** A new section is added to chapter 43.216
9 RCW to read as follows:

10 (1) An applicant or consumer is eligible to receive working
11 connections child care benefits for the care of one or more eligible
12 children when:

13 (a) The applicant or household member is employed by a small
14 business;

15 (b) The applicant or consumer's household annual income adjusted
16 for family size does not exceed 75 percent of the state median income
17 at the time of application, or, beginning July 1, 2031, does not
18 exceed 85 percent of the state median income if funds are
19 appropriated for the purpose of RCW 43.216.802(4);

1 (c) The child receiving care is (i) less than 13 years of age, or
2 (ii) less than 19 years of age and either has a verified special need
3 according to department rule or is under court supervision; and

4 (d) The household meets all other program eligibility
5 requirements established in this chapter or in rule by the department
6 in accordance with RCW 43.216.055, 43.216.065, and 43.216.800.

7 (2) The department must adopt a copayment model for benefits
8 granted under this section, which must align with any copayment
9 identified or adopted for households with the same income level under
10 RCW 43.216.804.

11 (3) For the purposes of this section "small business" means any
12 business entity that is owned and operated independently from all
13 other businesses, and that has 50 or fewer employees.

14 **Sec. 2.** RCW 43.216.802 and 2024 c 225 s 1 and 2024 c 67 s 2 are
15 each reenacted and amended to read as follows:

16 (1) It is the intent of the legislature to increase working
17 families' access to affordable, high quality child care and to
18 support the expansion of the workforce to support businesses and the
19 statewide economy.

20 (2) A family is eligible for working connections child care when
21 the household's annual income is at or below 60 percent of the state
22 median income adjusted for family size and:

23 (a) The child receiving care is: (i) Less than 13 years of age;
24 or (ii) less than 19 years of age and has a verified special need
25 according to department rule or is under court supervision; and

26 (b) The household meets all other program eligibility
27 requirements established in this chapter or in rule by the department
28 as authorized by RCW 43.216.055 or 43.216.065 or any other authority
29 granted by this chapter.

30 (3) Beginning July 1, (~~2025~~) 2029, a family is eligible for
31 working connections child care when the household's annual income is
32 above 60 percent and at or below 75 percent of the state median
33 income adjusted for family size and:

34 (a) The child receiving care is: (i) Less than 13 years of age;
35 or (ii) less than 19 years of age and has a verified special need
36 according to department rule or is under court supervision; and

37 (b) The household meets all other program eligibility
38 requirements established in this chapter or in rule by the department

1 as authorized by RCW 43.216.055 or 43.216.065 or any other authority
2 granted by this chapter.

3 (4) Beginning July 1, (~~2027~~) 2031, and subject to the
4 availability of amounts appropriated for this specific purpose, a
5 family is eligible for working connections child care when the
6 household's annual income is above 75 percent of the state median
7 income and is at or below 85 percent of the state median income
8 adjusted for family size and:

9 (a) The child receiving care is: (i) Less than 13 years of age;
10 or (ii) less than 19 years of age and has a verified special need
11 according to department rule or is under court supervision; and

12 (b) The household meets all other program eligibility
13 requirements established in this chapter or in rule by the department
14 as authorized by RCW 43.216.055 or 43.216.065 or any other authority
15 granted by this chapter.

16 (5) Beginning November 1, 2024, when an applicant or consumer is
17 a member of an assistance unit that is eligible for or receiving
18 basic food benefits under the federal supplemental nutrition
19 assistance program or the state food assistance program the
20 department must determine that the household income eligibility
21 requirements in this section are met.

22 (6) The department must adopt rules to implement this section,
23 including an income phase-out eligibility period.

24 (7) The department may not consider the citizenship status of an
25 applicant or consumer's child when determining eligibility for
26 working connections child care benefits.

27 (8) The income eligibility requirements in subsections (2)
28 through (4) of this section do not apply to households eligible for
29 the working connections child care program under RCW 43.216.808,
30 43.216.810, 43.216.812, and 43.216.814.

31 **Sec. 3.** RCW 43.216.810 and 2024 c 67 s 6 are each amended to
32 read as follows:

33 (1) An applicant or consumer is eligible to receive working
34 connections child care benefits for the care of one or more eligible
35 children for the first 12 months of the applicant's or consumer's
36 enrollment in a state registered apprenticeship program under chapter
37 49.04 RCW when:

38 (a) The applicant or consumer's household annual income adjusted
39 for family size does not exceed 75 percent of the state median income

1 at the time of application, or, beginning July 1, ((2027)) 2031, does
2 not exceed 85 percent of the state median income if funds are
3 appropriated for the purpose of RCW 43.216.802(4);

4 (b) The child receiving care is: (i) Less than 13 years of age;
5 or (ii) less than 19 years of age and either has a verified special
6 need according to department rule or is under court supervision; and

7 (c) The household meets all other program eligibility
8 requirements established in this chapter or in rule by the department
9 in accordance with RCW 43.216.055, 43.216.065, and 43.216.800.

10 (2) The department must adopt a copayment model for benefits
11 granted under this ((subsection-[section])) section, which must align
12 with any copayment identified or adopted for households with the same
13 income level under RCW 43.216.804.

14 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** This act is necessary for the immediate
15 preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of
16 the state government and its existing public institutions, and takes
17 effect July 1, 2025.

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