

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Olympia Washington

Bil Analysis

Bill No. SSB 5768
(See SHB 1941)

Creating supported employment programs
Brief title

Public Arg: 3/26/97

Comm. Comm/Labor (Orig Sen. Horn/Thibaudeau)
Sponsor

Staff Contact Bill Lynch
Comm. on Govt. Admin.
Phone: 786-7092

BACKGROUND:

In 1986 the Legislature recognized that people with developmental disabilities have high rates of unemployment and created a joint select committee to investigate barriers to employment for this segment of our population. As a result of recommendations by the joint select committee several bills were enacted by the Legislature in 1987 to help address this problem. These bills included the establishment of a disability accommodation fund to help state agencies and institutions of higher education accommodate jobsite and equipment needs of people with disabilities requiring the Department of Employment Security to give particular and special attention to service people with disabilities and requiring the Department of Employment Security to establish an information clearinghouse for use by private and public sector employers and persons of disability.

The package of legislation adopted by the Legislature did not include the requirement for state agencies to designate staff persons who would be responsible for information and resource referrals to people with disabilities.

SUMMARY:

The Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS), the Department of Personnel (DOP), and the Office of Financial Management (OFM) must identify agencies that have positions and funding conducive to implementing a supported employment program. The DOP and the DSHS are required to educate, encourage, and assist state agencies in implementing supported employment programs after consulting with supported employment providers, associations, and interested parties.

Cont.

Each state agency required to implement a supported employment program must designate a coordinator to serve as the liaison between the agency and the Department of Personnel regarding supported employment. The coordinator is responsible for information and resource referrals regarding the agency's supported employment program. The agency is also responsible for submitting an annual report to the DSHS, the DOP, and the OFM. The annual report must describe the program in place, indicate the number of persons placed in supported employment positions, and evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the program.

The DOP is responsible for providing human resources technical assistance to agencies implementing supported employment programs. The DOP must make available, at the request of the Legislature, an annual report evaluating the progress of the program.

Any supported employment positions do not count against an agency's allotted full-time equivalent employee positions and cannot displace employees or abrogate any reduction-in-force acts.

Supported employment is defined as employment for individuals with developmental disabilities who may require on-the-job training and long-term support in order to fulfill their job duties successfully. This program offers the same wages and benefits as similar non-supported employment positions.

FISCAL NOTE: Available.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.