
SUBSTITUTE SENATE BILL 6411

State of Washington

58th Legislature

2004 Regular Session

By Senate Committee on Children & Family Services & Corrections
(originally sponsored by Senators Brandland, Rasmussen, Sheahan,
Hargrove, Swecker, Brown, Jacobsen, McAuliffe, Regala, Eide, Kline,
Kohl-Welles and Winsley)

READ FIRST TIME 02/25/04.

1 AN ACT Relating to reducing hunger; amending RCW 74.08A.010 and
2 74.08.025; adding a new section to chapter 74.04 RCW; and creating a
3 new section.

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

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature recognizes that hunger and
6 food insecurity are serious problems in the state. Since the United
7 States department of agriculture began to collect data on hunger and
8 food insecurity in 1995, Washington has been ranked each year within
9 the top five states with the highest levels of hunger. A significant
10 number of these households classified as hungry are families with
11 children.

12 The legislature recognizes the correlation between adequate
13 nutrition and a child's development and school performance. The
14 legislature also recognizes that improved access to federal nutrition
15 and assistance programs, such as the federal food stamp program, can be
16 a critical factor in enabling recipients to gain the ability to support
17 themselves and their families. This is an important step towards self-
18 sufficiency and decreased long-term reliance on governmental assistance
19 and will serve to strengthen families in this state.

1 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 74.04 RCW
2 to read as follows:

3 (1) To the maximum extent allowable by federal law, the department
4 shall implement simplified reporting for the food stamp program by
5 October 31, 2004.

6 (2) For the purposes of this section, "simplified reporting" means
7 the only change in circumstance that a recipient of a benefit program
8 must report between eligibility reviews is an increase of income that
9 would result in ineligibility for the benefit program. Every six
10 months the assistance unit must either complete a semiannual report or
11 participate in an eligibility review.

12 **Sec. 3.** RCW 74.08A.010 and 1997 c 58 s 103 are each amended to
13 read as follows:

14 (1) A family that includes an adult who has received temporary
15 assistance for needy families for sixty months after July 27, 1997,
16 shall be ineligible for further temporary assistance for needy families
17 assistance.

18 (2) For the purposes of applying the rules of this section, the
19 department shall count any month in which an adult family member
20 received a temporary assistance for needy families cash assistance
21 grant unless the assistance was provided when the family member was a
22 minor child and not the head of the household or married to the head of
23 the household.

24 (3) The department shall refer recipients who require specialized
25 assistance to appropriate department programs, crime victims' programs
26 through the department of community, trade, and economic development,
27 or the crime victims' compensation program of the department of labor
28 and industries.

29 (4) The department may exempt a recipient and the recipient's
30 family from the application of subsection (1) of this section by reason
31 of hardship or if the recipient meets the family violence options of
32 section 402(A)(7) of Title IVA of the federal social security act as
33 amended by P.L. 104-193. The number of recipients and their families
34 exempted from subsection (1) of this section for a fiscal year shall
35 not exceed twenty percent of the average monthly number of recipients
36 and their families to which assistance is provided under the temporary
37 assistance for needy families program.

1 (5) The department shall not exempt a recipient and his or her
2 family from the application of subsection (1) of this section until
3 after the recipient has received fifty-two months of assistance under
4 this chapter.

5 (6) To the maximum extent allowable by federal law, beginning on
6 October 31, 2005, the department shall provide transitional food stamp
7 assistance for a period of five months to a household that ceases to
8 receive temporary assistance for needy families assistance. If
9 necessary, the department shall extend the household's food stamp
10 certification until the end of the transition period.

11 **Sec. 4.** RCW 74.08.025 and 1997 c 58 s 101 are each amended to read
12 as follows:

13 (1) Public assistance may be awarded to any applicant:

14 (a) Who is in need and otherwise meets the eligibility requirements
15 of department assistance programs; and

16 (b) Who has not made a voluntary assignment of property or cash for
17 the purpose of qualifying for an assistance grant; and

18 (c) Who is not an inmate of a public institution except as a
19 patient in a medical institution or except as an inmate in a public
20 institution who could qualify for federal aid assistance: PROVIDED,
21 That the assistance paid by the department to recipients in nursing
22 homes, or receiving nursing home care, may cover the cost of clothing
23 and incidentals and general maintenance exclusive of medical care and
24 health services. The department may pay a grant to cover the cost of
25 clothing and personal incidentals in public or private medical
26 institutions and institutions for tuberculosis. The department shall
27 allow recipients in nursing homes to retain, in addition to the grant
28 to cover the cost of clothing and incidentals, wages received for work
29 as a part of a training or rehabilitative program designed to prepare
30 the recipient for less restrictive placement to the extent permitted
31 under Title XIX of the federal social security act.

32 (2) Any person otherwise qualified for temporary assistance for
33 needy families under this title who has resided in the state of
34 Washington for fewer than twelve consecutive months immediately
35 preceding application for assistance is limited to the benefit level in
36 the state in which the person resided immediately before Washington,
37 using the eligibility rules and other definitions established under

1 this chapter, that was obtainable on the date of application in
2 Washington state, if the benefit level of the prior state is lower than
3 the level provided to similarly situated applicants in Washington
4 state. The benefit level under this subsection shall be in effect for
5 the first twelve months a recipient is on temporary assistance for
6 needy families in Washington state.

7 (3) Any person otherwise qualified for temporary assistance for
8 needy families who is assessed through the state alcohol and substance
9 abuse program as drug or alcohol-dependent and requiring treatment to
10 become employable shall be required by the department to participate in
11 a drug or alcohol treatment program as a condition of benefit receipt.

12 (4) In order to be eligible for temporary assistance for needy
13 families (~~and food stamp program~~) benefits, any applicant with a
14 felony conviction after August 21, 1996, involving drug use or
15 possession, must: (a) Have been assessed as chemically dependent by a
16 chemical dependency program approved under chapter 70.96A RCW and be
17 participating in or have completed a coordinated rehabilitation plan
18 consisting of chemical dependency treatment and vocational services;
19 and (b) have not been convicted of a felony involving drug use or
20 possession in the three years prior to the most current conviction.

21 (5) Pursuant to 21 U.S.C. 862a(d)(1), the department shall exempt
22 individuals from the eligibility restrictions of 21 U.S.C. 862a(a)(2)
23 to ensure eligibility for federal food assistance.

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