

SHB 1624 - S COMM AMD

By Committee on Ways & Means

ADOPTED AS AMENDED 04/11/2017

1 Strike everything after the enacting clause and insert the  
2 following:

3 "NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that children with  
4 the greatest needs benefit significantly from child care programs  
5 that promote stability, quality, and continuity of care. The  
6 legislature recognizes that empirical evidence supports the  
7 conclusion that high quality child care programs consistently yield  
8 more positive outcomes for children, with the strongest positive  
9 impacts on the most vulnerable children.

10 Children in the child welfare system are some of the most  
11 vulnerable children. The legislature finds that a child who  
12 experiences child abuse or neglect is over four times more likely to  
13 abuse substances as an adult and forty-three percent of youth in the  
14 juvenile justice system were involved in the child welfare system.

15 The legislature finds that the child care and development block  
16 grant act of 2014 allows the department of early learning to provide  
17 working connections child care to children in need of, or receiving,  
18 protective services. The legislature further understands that as of  
19 July 1, 2016, authorizations for the working connections child care  
20 subsidy are effective for twelve months.

21 The legislature finds that the children's mental health work  
22 group, in its December 2016 final report, recommended that state  
23 agencies provide at least twelve months of stable child care through  
24 the working connections child care program for certain children  
25 involved in the child welfare system, regardless of the employment  
26 status of their parents or guardians. Many of these child welfare-  
27 involved families are addressing chemical dependency issues, which  
28 require a significant amount of time to overcome. For these reasons,  
29 the legislature intends to allow certain populations of vulnerable  
30 children to be eligible for the working connections child care  
31 subsidy for a minimum of twelve months.

1       **Sec. 2.** RCW 43.215.135 and 2015 3rd sp.s. c 7 s 6 are each  
2 amended to read as follows:

3       (1) The department shall establish and implement policies in the  
4 working connections child care program to promote stability and  
5 quality of care for children from low-income households. These  
6 policies shall focus on supporting school readiness for young  
7 learners. Policies for the expenditure of funds constituting the  
8 working connections child care program must be consistent with the  
9 outcome measures defined in RCW 74.08A.410 and the standards  
10 established in this section intended to promote stability, quality,  
11 and continuity of early care and education programming.

12       (2) As recommended by Public Law 113-186, authorizations for the  
13 working connections child care subsidy shall be effective for twelve  
14 months beginning July 1, 2016, (~~unless an earlier date is provided~~  
15 ~~in the omnibus appropriations act~~) except that for a change in the  
16 ongoing status of the child's parent as working or attending a job  
17 training or education program that is not temporary, assistance shall  
18 be discontinued after a minimum of three months.

19       (3) As a condition of receiving a child care subsidy or a working  
20 connections child care subsidy, the applicant or recipient must seek  
21 child support enforcement services from the department of social and  
22 health services, division of child support, unless the department  
23 finds that the applicant or recipient has good cause not to  
24 cooperate. For the purposes of this subsection, "good cause" includes  
25 consideration of the safety of domestic violence victims.

26       (4) Existing child care providers serving nonschool-age children  
27 and receiving state subsidy payments must complete the following  
28 requirements to be eligible for a state subsidy under this section:

29       (a) Enroll in the early achievers program by August 1, 2016;

30       (b) Complete level 2 activities in the early achievers program by  
31 August 1, 2017; and

32       (c) Rate at a level 3 or higher in the early achievers program by  
33 December 31, 2019. If a child care provider rates below a level 3 by  
34 December 31, 2019, the provider must complete remedial activities  
35 with the department, and rate at a level 3 or higher no later than  
36 June 30, 2020.

37       (~~(4)~~) (5) Effective July 1, 2016, a new child care provider  
38 serving nonschool-age children and receiving state subsidy payments  
39 must complete the following activities to be eligible to receive a  
40 state subsidy under this section:

1 (a) Enroll in the early achievers program within thirty days of  
2 receiving the initial state subsidy payment;

3 (b) Complete level 2 activities in the early achievers program  
4 within twelve months of enrollment; and

5 (c) Rate at a level 3 or higher in the early achievers program  
6 within thirty months of enrollment. If a child care provider rates  
7 below a level 3 within thirty months from enrollment into the early  
8 achievers program, the provider must complete remedial activities  
9 with the department, and rate at a level 3 or higher within six  
10 months of beginning remedial activities.

11 ~~((+5))~~ (6) If a child care provider does not rate at a level 3  
12 or higher following the remedial period, the provider is no longer  
13 eligible to receive state subsidy under this section.

14 ~~((+6))~~ (7) If a child care provider serving nonschool-age  
15 children and receiving state subsidy payments has successfully  
16 completed all level 2 activities and is waiting to be rated by the  
17 deadline provided in this section, the provider may continue to  
18 receive a state subsidy pending the successful completion of the  
19 level 3 rating activity.

20 ~~((+7))~~ (8) The department shall implement tiered reimbursement  
21 for early achievers program participants in the working connections  
22 child care program rating at level 3, 4, or 5.

23 ~~((+8))~~ (9) The department shall account for a child care  
24 copayment collected by the provider from the family for each  
25 contracted slot and establish the copayment fee by rule.

26 (10) The department shall establish and implement policies in the  
27 working connections child care program to allow eligibility for  
28 families with children who:

29 (a) In the last six months have:

30 (i) Received child protective services as defined and used by  
31 chapters 26.44 and 74.13 RCW;

32 (ii) Received child welfare services as defined and used by  
33 chapter 74.13 RCW; or

34 (iii) Received services through a family assessment response as  
35 defined and used by chapter 26.44 RCW;

36 (b) Have been referred for child care as part of the family's  
37 case management as defined by RCW 74.13.020; and

38 (c) Are residing with a biological parent or guardian.

39 (11) Children who are eligible for working connections child care  
40 pursuant to subsection (10) of this section do not have to keep

1 receiving services through the department of social and health  
2 services to maintain twelve-month authorization but the authorization  
3 shall be discontinued after a minimum of three months if there is a  
4 change in the ongoing status of the child's parent as working or  
5 attending a job training or education program that is not temporary.  
6 The department of social and health services' involvement with the  
7 family referred for working connections child care ends when the  
8 family's child protective services, child welfare services, or family  
9 assessment response case is closed.

10 NEW SECTION. Sec. 3. This act takes effect December 1, 2018.

11 NEW SECTION. Sec. 4. If specific funding for the purposes of  
12 this act, referencing this act by bill or chapter number, is not  
13 provided by June 30, 2017, in the omnibus appropriations act, this  
14 act is null and void."

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15 On page 1, line 2 of the title, after "children;" strike the  
16 remainder of the title and insert "amending RCW 43.215.135; creating  
17 new sections; and providing an effective date."

EFFECT: Adds language specifying that for individuals who experience a nontemporary change in their status as working or attending a job training or education program, assistance shall be discontinued after three months. This requirement is also extended to the children who have been involved in the child welfare system in the last 6 months and are authorized to receive 12 months of service.

Adds language specifying that as a condition of receiving a child care subsidy, an applicant or recipient must seek child support enforcement unless DSHS finds that the applicant or recipient has good cause not to cooperate. Good cause includes consideration of the safety of domestic violence victims.

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