

CERTIFICATION OF ENROLLMENT

**SUBSTITUTE HOUSE BILL 1624**

Chapter 9, Laws of 2017

65th Legislature  
2017 3rd Special Session

WORKING CONNECTIONS CHILD CARE--ELIGIBILITY--VULNERABLE CHILDREN

EFFECTIVE DATE: December 1, 2018

Passed by the House June 29, 2017  
Yeas 80 Nays 14

FRANK CHOPP

**Speaker of the House of Representatives**

Passed by the Senate June 29, 2017  
Yeas 43 Nays 6

CYRUS HABIB

**President of the Senate**

Approved July 6, 2017 1:52 PM

JAY INSLEE

**Governor of the State of Washington**

CERTIFICATE

I, Bernard Dean, Chief Clerk of the House of Representatives of the State of Washington, do hereby certify that the attached is **SUBSTITUTE HOUSE BILL 1624** as passed by House of Representatives and the Senate on the dates hereon set forth.

BERNARD DEAN

**Chief Clerk**

FILED

July 7, 2017

**Secretary of State  
State of Washington**

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**SUBSTITUTE HOUSE BILL 1624**

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Passed Legislature - 2017 3rd Special Session

**State of Washington                      65th Legislature                      2017 Regular Session**

**By** House Appropriations (originally sponsored by Representatives Senn, Dent, Kagi, Lytton, Farrell, Pettigrew, Hudgins, Goodman, Frame, and Slatter)

READ FIRST TIME 02/24/17.

1            AN ACT Relating to working connections child care eligibility for  
2 vulnerable children; amending RCW 43.215.135; creating new sections;  
3 and providing an effective date.

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

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

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

17           The legislature finds that the child care and development block  
18 grant act of 2014 allows the department of early learning to provide  
19 working connections child care to children in need of, or receiving,  
20 protective services. The legislature further understands that as of

1 July 1, 2016, authorizations for the working connections child care  
2 subsidy are effective for twelve months.

3 The legislature finds that the children's mental health work  
4 group, in its December 2016 final report, recommended that state  
5 agencies provide at least twelve months of stable child care through  
6 the working connections child care program for certain children  
7 involved in the child welfare system, regardless of the employment  
8 status of their parents or guardians. Many of these child welfare-  
9 involved families are addressing chemical dependency issues, which  
10 require a significant amount of time to overcome. For these reasons,  
11 the legislature intends to allow certain populations of vulnerable  
12 children to be eligible for the working connections child care  
13 subsidy for a minimum of twelve months.

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

16 (1) The department shall establish and implement policies in the  
17 working connections child care program to promote stability and  
18 quality of care for children from low-income households. These  
19 policies shall focus on supporting school readiness for young  
20 learners. Policies for the expenditure of funds constituting the  
21 working connections child care program must be consistent with the  
22 outcome measures defined in RCW 74.08A.410 and the standards  
23 established in this section intended to promote stability, quality,  
24 and continuity of early care and education programming.

25 (2) As recommended by Public Law 113-186, authorizations for the  
26 working connections child care subsidy shall be effective for twelve  
27 months beginning July 1, 2016, unless an earlier date is provided in  
28 the omnibus appropriations act.

29 (3) Existing child care providers serving nonschool-age children  
30 and receiving state subsidy payments must complete the following  
31 requirements to be eligible for a state subsidy under this section:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

15 (5) If a child care provider does not rate at a level 3 or higher  
16 following the remedial period, the provider is no longer eligible to  
17 receive state subsidy under this section.

18 (6) If a child care provider serving nonschool-age children and  
19 receiving state subsidy payments has successfully completed all level  
20 2 activities and is waiting to be rated by the deadline provided in  
21 this section, the provider may continue to receive a state subsidy  
22 pending the successful completion of the level 3 rating activity.

23 (7) The department shall implement tiered reimbursement for early  
24 achievers program participants in the working connections child care  
25 program rating at level 3, 4, or 5.

26 (8) The department shall account for a child care copayment  
27 collected by the provider from the family for each contracted slot  
28 and establish the copayment fee by rule.

29 (9) The department shall establish and implement policies in the  
30 working connections child care program to allow eligibility for  
31 families with children who:

32 (a) In the last six months have:

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

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

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

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

1       (c) Are residing with a biological parent or guardian.  
2       (10) Children who are eligible for working connections child care  
3 pursuant to subsection (9) of this section do not have to keep  
4 receiving services through the department of social and health  
5 services to maintain twelve-month authorization. The department of  
6 social and health services' involvement with the family referred for  
7 working connections child care ends when the family's child  
8 protective services, child welfare services, or family assessment  
9 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.

Passed by the House June 29, 2017.  
Passed by the Senate June 29, 2017.  
Approved by the Governor July 6, 2017.  
Filed in Office of Secretary of State July 7, 2017.

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