AN ACT Relating to revising economic assistance programs by
updating standards of need, revising outcome measures and data
collected, and reducing barriers to participation; amending RCW
74.08.025, 74.08A.410, 74.08A.411, and 74.08A.250; and creating new
sections.

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

Sec. 1. RCW 74.08.025 and 2011 1st sp.s. c 42 s 7 are each
amended to read as follows:

(1) Public assistance may be awarded to any applicant:
(a) Who is in need and otherwise meets the eligibility
requirements of department assistance programs; and
(b) Who has not made a voluntary assignment of property or cash
for the purpose of qualifying for an assistance grant; and
(c) Who is not an inmate of a public institution except as a
patient in a medical institution or except as an inmate in a public
institution who could qualify for federal aid assistance: PROVIDED,
that the assistance paid by the department to recipients in nursing
homes, or receiving nursing home care, may cover the cost of clothing
and incidentals and general maintenance exclusive of medical care and
health services. The department may pay a grant to cover the cost of
clothing and personal incidentals in public or private medical

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institutions and institutions for tuberculosis. The department shall allow recipients in nursing homes to retain, in addition to the grant to cover the cost of clothing and incidentals, wages received for work as a part of a training or rehabilitative program designed to prepare the recipient for less restrictive placement to the extent permitted under Title XIX of the federal social security act.

(2) Any person otherwise qualified for temporary assistance for needy families under this title who has resided in the state of Washington for fewer than twelve consecutive months immediately preceding application for assistance is limited to the benefit level in the state in which the person resided immediately before Washington, using the eligibility rules and other definitions established under this chapter, that was obtainable on the date of application in Washington state, if the benefit level of the prior state is lower than the level provided to similarly situated applicants in Washington state. The benefit level under this subsection shall be in effect for the first twelve months a recipient is on temporary assistance for needy families in Washington state.

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

(4) The department may implement a permanent disqualification for adults who have been terminated due to WorkFirst noncompliance sanction three or more times since March 1, 2007. A household that includes an adult who has been permanently disqualified from receiving temporary assistance for needy families shall be ineligible for further temporary assistance for needy families assistance.

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

Sec. 2. RCW 74.08A.410 and 1997 c 58 s 702 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) The WorkFirst program shall develop outcome measures for use in evaluating the WorkFirst program authorized in chapter 58, Laws of 1997, which may include but are not limited to:
(a) Caseload reduction, including data for participants who exit:
   (i) Due to increased income; (ii) to employment; (iii) at the
   participant's request; or (iv) for other reasons;
   (b) Recidivism to caseload after two years;
   (c) Employment;
   (d) Job retention;
   (e) Earnings;
   (f) Wage progression;
   (g) Reduction in average grant through increased recipient
   earnings; (and
   (h) Placement of recipients into private sector, unsubsidized jobs; and
   (i) Outcomes for sanctioned and time-limited families.
(2) The department shall require that contractors for WorkFirst
   services collect outcome measure information and report outcome
   measures to the department regularly. The department shall develop
   benchmarks that compare outcome measure information from all
   contractors to provide a clear indication of the most effective
   contractors. Benchmark information shall be published quarterly and
   provided to the legislature, the governor, the legislative-executive
   WorkFirst poverty reduction oversight task force, and all contractors
   for WorkFirst services.

Sec. 3. RCW 74.08A.411 and 2009 c 85 s 3 are each amended to
read as follows:

The department shall continue to implement WorkFirst program
improvements that are designed to achieve progress against outcome
measures specified in RCW 74.08A.410. Outcome data regarding job
retention and wage progression shall be reported quarterly to the
appropriate fiscal and policy committees of the legislature and to
the legislative-executive WorkFirst poverty reduction oversight task
force for families who leave assistance for any reason, measured
after twelve months, twenty-four months, and thirty-six months. The
department shall also report the percentage of families who have
returned to temporary assistance for needy families after twelve
months, twenty-four months, and thirty-six months. The department
shall make every effort to maximize vocational training, as allowed
by federal and state requirements.
Sec. 4. RCW 74.08A.250 and 2017 c 156 s 1 are each amended to read as follows:

Unless the context clearly requires otherwise, as used in this chapter, "work activity" means:

(1) Unsubsidized paid employment in the private or public sector;
(2) Subsidized paid employment in the private or public sector, including employment through the state or federal work-study program for a period not to exceed twenty-four months;
(3) Work experience, including:
   (a) An internship or practicum, that is paid or unpaid and is required to complete a course of vocational training or to obtain a license or certificate in a high-demand occupation, as determined by the employment security department. No internship or practicum shall exceed twelve months; or
   (b) Work associated with the refurbishing of publicly assisted housing, if sufficient paid employment is not available;
(4) On-the-job training;
(5) Job search and job readiness assistance;
(6) Community service programs, including a recipient's voluntary service at a child care or preschool facility licensed under chapter 43.215 RCW or an elementary school in which his or her child is enrolled;
(7) Vocational educational training, not to exceed twelve months with respect to any individual except that this twelve-month limit may be increased to twenty-four months subject to funding appropriated specifically for this purpose;
(8) Job skills training directly related to employment;
(9) Education directly related to employment, in the case of a recipient who has not received a high school diploma or a high school equivalency certificate as provided in RCW 28B.50.536;
(10) Satisfactory attendance at secondary school or in a course of study leading to a high school equivalency certificate as provided in RCW 28B.50.536, in the case of a recipient who has not completed secondary school or received such a certificate;
(11) The provision of child care services to an individual who is participating in a community service program;
(12) Internships, that shall be paid or unpaid work experience performed by an intern in a business, industry, or government or nongovernmental agency setting;
(13) Practicums, which include any educational program in which a student is working under the close supervision of a professional in an agency, clinic, or other professional practice setting for purposes of advancing their skills and knowledge;

(14) Services required by the recipient under RCW 74.08.025((3)) (2) and 74.08A.010(4) to become employable;

(15) Financial literacy activities designed to be effective in assisting a recipient in becoming self-sufficient and financially stable; and

(16) Parent education services or programs that support development of appropriate parenting skills, life skills, and employment-related competencies.

NEW SECTION. Sec. 5. This act applies prospectively only and not retroactively. Prospective application of this act allows families who have been previously permanently disqualified under prior policies to receive benefits prospectively only, if otherwise eligible.

NEW SECTION. Sec. 6. If specific funding for the purposes of this act, referencing this act by bill or chapter number, is not provided by June 30, 2019, in the omnibus appropriations act, this act is null and void.

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