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## Children & Family Services Committee

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### BILL ANALYSIS HB 2901

**Title:** An act relating to creating a job search component within the WorkFirst program.

**Brief Description:** Requiring a WorkFirst job search component.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Cooke, Tokuda, Ballasiotes, Carrell, O'Brien, McDonald, B. Thomas and Boldt.

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**Meeting Date:** January 27, 1998.

**Bill Analysis Prepared by:** Doug Ruth (786-7134).

**Background:** The 1996 Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Act replaced AFDC with the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) block grant. To receive a block grant, states must establish a program to move TANF recipients into permanent jobs. The program must make participation in work activities a condition of receiving continued assistance.

In response to this legislation, Washington created the WorkFirst program. The WorkFirst program established by the department consists of screening, orientation, referral, work search, assessment, formation of a individual responsibility plan and work participation components.

The work search component requires participation in a job search workshop and an assisted job search. Recipients may also receive short-term job training if a job search is initially unsuccessful. If it is clear that a job search will not be productive for a recipient, he or she is referred for additional assessment. The assessment may identify the need for more specific training, work experience, or help for personal conditions such as drug/alcohol abuse, domestic violence, or a learning disability.

**Summary of Bill:** A job search component is created in law. Participation in the component is limited to six weeks. During the first four weeks, the recipient of TANF receives instruction and assistance in finding a job. If the recipient fails to find work during this time, the department will conduct an assessment. Based on the assessment, the department will refer the recipient to training, work experience, or another type of service that will make the recipient more employable. At any time, the department may have the recipient perform

up to two weeks of additional job search.

***Appropriation:*** None.

***Fiscal Note:*** None requested.

***Effective Date:*** Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

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