
SENATE BILL 6420

State of Washington

59th Legislature

2006 Regular Session

By Senators Pridemore, Schmidt, Kohl-Welles, Fairley, McAuliffe and Shin

Read first time 01/12/2006. Referred to Committee on Labor, Commerce, Research & Development.

1 AN ACT Relating to community and technical college part-time
2 academic employee health care benefits; adding a new section to chapter
3 28B.50 RCW; and creating a new section.

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

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** Part-time academic employees at community
6 and technical colleges are currently eligible for full health care
7 benefits beginning the second quarter of employment at half-time or
8 more of an academic workload, as defined in RCW 28B.50.489. They are
9 also eligible for health benefits over the summer quarter even if they
10 work under half-time, if they have worked half-time or more of an
11 academic workload in three of the four preceding quarters. However, as
12 these rules are currently administered, a part-time academic employee,
13 even if the employee has been in an eligible position for many years,
14 who falls below the half-time threshold in even one quarter, loses
15 coverage for that quarter and the summer quarter as well and is not
16 reinstated until the next quarter when half-time or more employment
17 occurs.

18 It is the legislature's intent to provide and maintain a consistent
19 delivery of health benefits to part-time academic employees who have

1 established an ongoing employment relationship with the colleges and to
2 prevent unnecessary and harmful lapses in health benefits coverage. To
3 this end, the legislature intends to establish an additional
4 eligibility status to average academic workload over an academic year,
5 rather than in each quarter. This is not intended to alter the
6 continued eligibility of those who continue to maintain half-time or
7 more in each quarter.

8 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 28B.50 RCW
9 to read as follows:

10 (1) The criteria in this section shall be used to establish a
11 workload pattern for averaging half-time academic workloads over the
12 course of an academic year. The workload pattern shall be used to
13 report eligibility for state-mandated health insurance for part-time
14 academic employees in community and technical colleges.

15 (2) A workload pattern shall be established after two consecutive
16 academic years of employment that averages half time or more of an
17 academic workload as determined according to RCW 28B.50.489. In order
18 to qualify for averaging under this section, the employee must be
19 employed at some level in at least three out of four quarters of the
20 academic year.

21 (3) Academic employees who have established a workload pattern
22 shall be considered eligible for health care benefits as long as their
23 workload continues to average half time or more when calculated using
24 any three of the four quarters in an academic year.

25 (4)(a) An employee meeting the workload pattern eligibility
26 criteria in this section maintains eligibility for health benefits
27 during any one quarter where the workload is less than half time and
28 during the subsequent summer quarter.

29 (b) Once an employee has met the initial workload pattern
30 eligibility requirements under (a) of this subsection, if the workload
31 for that employee averages less than fifty percent over an academic
32 year, excluding summers, the workload pattern is broken.

33 (5) If an employee loses workload pattern eligibility under this
34 section by virtue of falling below the workload requirement for one
35 full academic year, the employee may self-pay under the terms of the
36 consolidated omnibus budget reconciliation act (COBRA) and have

1 benefits reinstated at the first quarter in which half time or more
2 employment is attained, as long as that occurs within eighteen months.
3 A new workload pattern may then be established.

4 (6) This section does not change eligibility for an academic
5 employee who is eligible for any health benefit with or without an
6 established workload pattern, who falls below half time in one quarter,
7 to self-pay under the terms of the consolidated omnibus budget
8 reconciliation act (COBRA) and have benefits reinstated at the first
9 quarter in which half time or more employment is attained, as long as
10 that occurs within eighteen months.

11 (7) As used in this section "academic year" means a year starting
12 with the first day of summer quarter and ending with the last day of
13 spring quarter.

14 (8) Part-time employees whose employment on the effective date of
15 this section meets the workload pattern established in this section
16 shall be considered to have workload pattern eligibility beginning on
17 the effective date of this section.

18 (9) Nothing in this section precludes individuals from being
19 eligible for benefits under other laws and rules that may apply or for
20 which they may be eligible.

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