
Health Care & Wellness Committee

HB 1199

Brief Description: Concerning health care for working individuals with disabilities.

Sponsors: Representatives Cody, DeBolt, Jinkins, Harris, Tharinger, Caldier, Robinson, Macri, Schmick, Stonier, Slatter, Wylie, Tarleton, Frame, Pollet and Riccelli.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Prohibits the Health Care Authority (Authority) from establishing restrictions for the Health Care for Workers with Disabilities (HWD) program based on a person's income or maximum age.
- Directs the Authority to seek federal approval to exclude resources earned while a person is enrolled in the HWD program from being counted when establishing eligibility for a Medical Assistance program.

Hearing Date: 1/30/19

Staff: Chris Blake (786-7392).

Background:

A person may qualify for federal Social Security benefits if the person has a disability that does not allow the person to engage in any substantial gainful activity because of a medically-determinable physical or mental impairment that is expected to result in death, or that has lasted or is expected to last for a continuous period of at least 12 months. The program includes several types of employment supports that are intended to help a person find a job, protect cash and medical benefits while the person works, and save for education. One of these supports is the federal Ticket to Work program. One element of the Ticket to Work program allows a person returning to work to buy in to Medicaid coverage.

Washington has implemented the Medicaid buy-in element of the Ticket to Work program through the Health Care for Workers with Disabilities (HWD) program. To qualify for the HWD program, a person must be age 16 through 64, meet federal disability standards, have a net

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income at or below 220 percent of the federal poverty level, and be employed either full- or part-time. Enrollees in the HWD program must pay a premium based on a sliding scale that is not to exceed 7.5 percent of the enrollees income.

Summary of Bill:

The Health Care Authority (Authority) may not establish eligibility restrictions for the Health Care for Workers with Disabilities (HWD) program based on a person's income or maximum age. Information about a person's income may only be used to establish cost sharing requirements.

The Authority must seek federal approval to exclude resources earned during a person's enrollment in the HWD program from being counted as resources when the person is establishing eligibility for another Medical Assistance program.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect on January 1, 2020.