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## Human Services & Early Learning Committee

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### HB 1303

**Brief Description:** Removing certain restrictions on subsidized child care for students at institutions of higher education.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Shewmake, Eslick, Pollet, Griffey, Riccelli, Senn, Appleton, Dolan, Frame, Paul, Goodman, Robinson, Springer, Lekanoff, Macri, Thai, Tharinger, Stanford, Bergquist, Jinkins, Leavitt and Ormsby.

#### Brief Summary of Bill

- Directs the Department of Children, Youth, and Families to revise Working Connections Child Care Program rules to remove work requirements for full-time students.

**Hearing Date:** 1/29/19

**Staff:** Dawn Eychaner (786-7135).

#### Background:

##### Working Connections Child Care.

The Working Connections Child Care Program (WCCC) is a subsidized child care program for low-income families that is funded through federal Child Care and Development Funds (CCDF), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), and state general funds. In state fiscal year 2017, approximately 13 percent of participating WCCC households were also TANF recipients.

To be eligible, an applicant must have a household income at or below 200 percent of the federal poverty guideline at the time of application and be engaged in approved work activities unless the family has received child welfare, child protective, or family assessment response (FAR) services in the previous six months. Historically, the average monthly caseload of the WCCC has been capped in the state operating budget at 33,000 households.

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*This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.*

The Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) is the designated lead agency for administration of the CCDF program and sets policy for the WCCC. The Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) determines eligibility for the WCCC and authorizes the amount of care a consumer may receive. Effective July 1, 2019, all duties related to the WCCC will transfer from the DSHS to the DCYF.

#### WorkFirst.

TANF is a federal block grant that provides temporary cash assistance, subsidized childcare, and work programs for families. The Washington WorkFirst TANF Act of 1997 created the WorkFirst program. With limited exceptions, adult TANF recipients must participate in one or more WorkFirst activities that are identified in the participant's Individual Responsibility Plan (IRP). These activities may include paid and unpaid employment based training programs, career development, community service, work skills assessment and job hunting training, and vocational training programs.

A person participating in WorkFirst may be eligible for WCCC benefits for approved activities in his or her IRP.

#### Working Connections Child Care for Students.

A consumer who is not participating in WorkFirst and is under the age of 22 may be eligible for the WCCC for high school or a general educational development (GED) program without a minimum number of work hours. A consumer who is age 22 or older must work either an average of 20 or more hours per week of unsubsidized employment or an average of 16 or more hours per week in a paid federal or state work study program.

There is a lifetime limit of 24 months of WCCC benefits for participation in adult basic education, English as a second language, or high school or GED completion. Vocational education benefits are limited to 36 months in a consumer's lifetime for participation in vocational education. The vocational education program must lead to a degree or certificate in a specific occupation and be offered by a public or private technical college or school, a community college, or a tribal college.

#### **Summary of Bill:**

The DCYF must consult with the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges and the Washington Student Achievement Council and, by January 1, 2020, revise WCCC program rules to eliminate minimum work hours for full-time community or technical or tribal college students who are not WorkFirst participants.

In the event of a waitlist for the WCCC, no changes are intended to be made regarding how applicants are prioritized as a result of eliminating work hours for students. Community and technical colleges must work to meet the demands created by removing the work requirements; however, an entitlement for the WCCC is not created.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Requested on January 23, 2019.

**Effective Date:** The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.