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**SENATE BILL 5318**

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**State of Washington 68th Legislature 2023 Regular Session**

**By** Senators Nobles, Kuderer, Nguyen, and C. Wilson

AN ACT Relating to limiting estate recovery; and amending RCW 43.20B.080 and 70.129.040.

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

**Sec.**  RCW 43.20B.080 and 2010 c 94 s 12 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) The department shall file liens, seek adjustment, or otherwise effect recovery for medical assistance correctly paid on behalf of an individual consistent with 42 U.S.C. Sec. 1396p. The department shall adopt a rule providing for prior notice and hearing rights to the record title holder or purchaser under a land sale contract.

(2) Liens may be adjusted by foreclosure in accordance with chapter 61.12 RCW.

(3) In the case of an individual who was fifty-five years of age or older when the individual received medical assistance, the department shall seek adjustment or recovery from the individual's estate, and from nonprobate assets of the individual as defined by RCW 11.02.005, but only for medical assistance consisting of nursing facility services, home and community-based services, other services that the department determines to be appropriate, and related hospital and prescription drug services. Recovery from the individual's estate, including foreclosure of liens imposed under this section, shall be undertaken as soon as practicable, consistent with 42 U.S.C. Sec. 1396p.

(4) The department shall apply the medical assistance estate recovery law as it existed on the date that benefits were received when calculating an estate's liability to reimburse the department for those benefits.

(5)(a) The department shall establish procedures consistent with standards established by the federal department of health and human services and pursuant to 42 U.S.C. Sec. 1396p to waive recovery when such recovery would work an undue hardship. The department shall recognize an undue hardship for a surviving domestic partner whenever recovery would not have been permitted if he or she had been a surviving spouse. The department is not authorized to pursue recovery under such circumstances.

(b) Recovery of medical assistance from a recipient's estate shall not include property made exempt from claims by federal law or treaty, including exemption for tribal artifacts that may be held by individual Native Americans.

(6) A lien authorized under this section relates back to attach to any real property that the decedent had an ownership interest in immediately before death and is effective as of that date or date of recording, whichever is earlier.

(7) The department may enforce a lien authorized under this section against a decedent's life estate or joint tenancy interest in real property held by the decedent immediately prior to his or her death. Such a lien enforced under this subsection shall not end and shall continue as provided in this subsection until the department's lien has been satisfied.

(a) The value of the life estate subject to the lien shall be the value of the decedent's interest in the property subject to the life estate immediately prior to the decedent's death.

(b) The value of the joint tenancy interest subject to the lien shall be the value of the decedent's fractional interest the recipient would have owned in the jointly held interest in the property had the recipient and the surviving joint tenants held title to the property as tenants in common on the date of the recipient's death.

(c) The department may not enforce the lien provided by this subsection against a bona fide purchaser or encumbrancer that obtains an interest in the property after the death of the recipient and before the department records either its lien or the request for notice of transfer or encumbrance as provided by RCW 43.20B.750.

(d) The department may not enforce a lien provided by this subsection against any property right that vested prior to July 1, 2005.

(8)((~~(a) Subject to the requirements of 42 U.S.C. Sec. 1396p(a) and the conditions of this subsection (8), the department is authorized to file a lien against the property of an individual prior to his or her death, and to seek adjustment and recovery from the individual's estate or sale of the property subject to the lien, if:~~

~~(i) The individual is an inpatient in a nursing facility, intermediate care facility for persons with intellectual disabilities, or other medical institution; and~~

~~(ii) The department has determined after notice and opportunity for a hearing that the individual cannot reasonably be expected to be discharged from the medical institution and to return home.~~

~~(b) If the individual is discharged from the medical facility and returns home, the department shall dissolve the lien.~~

~~(9)~~)) The department is authorized to adopt rules to effect recovery under this section. The department may adopt by rule later enactments of the federal laws referenced in this section.

((~~(10)~~)) (9) It is the responsibility of the department to fully disclose in advance verbally and in writing, in easy to understand language, the terms and conditions of estate recovery to all persons offered long-term care services subject to recovery of payments.

((~~(11)~~)) (10) In disclosing estate recovery costs to potential clients, and to family members at the consent of the client, the department shall provide a written description of the community service options.

**Sec.**  RCW 70.129.040 and 2021 c 159 s 24 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) The resident has the right to manage his or her financial affairs, and the facility may not require residents to deposit their personal funds with the facility.

(2) Upon written authorization of a resident, if the facility agrees to manage the resident's personal funds, the facility must hold, safeguard, manage, and account for the personal funds of the resident deposited with the facility as specified in this section.

(a) The facility must deposit a resident's personal funds in excess of one hundred dollars in an interest-bearing account or accounts that is separate from any of the facility's operating accounts, and that credits all interest earned on residents' funds to that account. In pooled accounts, there must be a separate accounting for each resident's share.

(b) The facility must maintain a resident's personal funds that do not exceed one hundred dollars in a noninterest-bearing account, interest-bearing account, or petty cash fund.

(3) The facility must establish and maintain a system that assures a full and complete and separate accounting of each resident's personal funds entrusted to the facility on the resident's behalf.

(a) The system must preclude any commingling of resident funds with facility funds or with the funds of any person other than another resident.

(b) The individual financial record must be available on request to the resident, or resident representative to the extent provided by law.

(4) Upon the death of a resident with personal funds deposited with the facility, the facility must convey within thirty days the resident's funds, and a final accounting of those funds, to the individual or probate jurisdiction administering the resident's estate((~~; but in the case of a resident who received long-term care services paid for by the state, the funds and accounting shall be sent to the state of Washington, department of social and health services, office of financial recovery. The department shall establish a release procedure for use for burial expenses~~)).

(5) If any funds in excess of one hundred dollars are paid to an adult family home by the resident or resident representative, as a security deposit for performance of the resident's obligations, or as prepayment of charges beyond the first month's residency, the funds shall be deposited by the adult family home in an interest-bearing account that is separate from any of the home's operating accounts, and that credits all interest earned on the resident's funds to that account. In pooled accounts, there must be a separate accounting for each resident's share. The account or accounts shall be in a financial institution as defined by RCW 30A.22.041, and the resident shall be notified in writing of the name, address, and location of the depository. The adult family home may not commingle resident funds from these accounts with the adult family home's funds or with the funds of any person other than another resident. The individual resident's account record shall be available upon request by the resident or resident representative to the extent provided by law.

(6) The adult family home shall provide the resident or resident representative full disclosure in writing, prior to the receipt of any funds for a deposit, security, prepaid charges, or any other fees or charges, specifying what the funds are paid for and the basis for retaining any portion of the funds if the resident dies, is hospitalized, or is transferred or discharged from the adult family home. The disclosure must be in a language that the resident or resident representative understands, and be acknowledged in writing by the resident or resident representative. The adult family home shall retain a copy of the disclosure and the acknowledgment. The adult family home may not retain funds for reasonable wear and tear by the resident or for any basis that would violate RCW 70.129.150.

(7) Funds paid by the resident or resident representative to the adult family home, which the adult family home in turn pays to a placement agency or person, shall be governed by the disclosure requirements of this section. If the resident then dies, is hospitalized, or is transferred or discharged from the adult family home, and is entitled to any refund of funds under this section or RCW 70.129.150, the adult family home shall refund the funds to the resident or resident representative to the extent provided by law, within thirty days of the resident leaving the adult family home, and may not require the resident to obtain the refund from the placement agency or person.

(8) If, during the stay of the resident, the status of the adult family home licensee or ownership is changed or transferred to another, any funds in the resident's accounts affected by the change or transfer shall simultaneously be deposited in an equivalent account or accounts by the successor or new licensee or owner, who shall promptly notify the resident or resident representative to the extent provided by law, in writing of the name, address, and location of the new depository.

(9) Because it is a matter of great public importance to protect residents who need long-term care from deceptive disclosures and unfair retention of deposits, fees, or prepaid charges by adult family homes, a violation of this section or RCW 70.129.150 shall be construed for purposes of the consumer protection act, chapter 19.86 RCW, to constitute an unfair or deceptive act or practice or an unfair method of competition in the conduct of trade or commerce. The resident's claim to any funds paid under this section shall be prior to that of any creditor of the adult family home, its owner, or licensee, even if such funds are commingled.

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