
**Human Services, Youth, & Early
Learning Committee**

HB 1525

Brief Description: Concerning eligibility for working connections child care benefits for persons participating in state registered apprenticeships.

Sponsors: Representatives Fosse, Lekanoff, Farivar, Shavers, Thai, Taylor, Hansen, Alvarado, Senn, Hackney, Wylie, Duerr, Leavitt, Berg, Stearns, Peterson, Macri, Berry, Cortes, Low, Schmidt, Stonier, Kloba, Robertson, Gregerson, Riccelli, Doglio, Waters, Cheney, Orwall, Connors, Ybarra, Bronoske, Dent, Morgan, Ramel, Donaghy, Goodman, Ryu, Fey, Reed, Davis, Timmons, Street, Simmons, Fitzgibbon, Christian, Santos, Rule, Abbarno, Sandlin, Chopp, Bateman, Rude, Eslick, Ormsby, Reeves, Barkis, Graham, Pollet, Ortiz-Self, Callan and Bergquist.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Expands eligibility for Working Connections Child Care benefits to apply to persons in the first 12 months of a state registered apprenticeship when the person meets certain additional criteria.

Hearing Date: 1/31/23

Staff: Omeara Harrington (786-7136).

Background:

Working Connections Child Care.

Working Connections Child Care (WCCC) is a federally and state-funded program that provides subsidies for child care to families with incomes at or below 60 percent of the state median income (SMI), adjusted for family size, and when the household meets other eligibility requirements. Beginning July 1, 2025, a family is eligible for WCCC program benefits when the

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household's annual income is above 60 percent and at or below 75 percent of the SMI, adjusted for family size, and beginning July 1, 2027, if funds are appropriated, when the household's annual income is up to 85 percent of the SMI, adjusted for family size.

Through the WCCC program, the state pays part of the cost of child care when a parent is working or participating in approved work-related activities. Depending on income, families may be required to pay a monthly copayment to their provider. Copayments are currently calculated as follows:

Household income:	Maximum copayment:
At or below 20 percent of the SMI	Waived to the extent allowable under federal law; otherwise, a maximum of \$15
Above 20 percent and at or below 36 percent of the SMI	\$65
Above 36 percent and at or below 50 percent of SMI	\$90
Above 50 percent and at or below 60 percent of SMI	\$115 (\$165 beginning July 1, 2023)

Beginning July 1, 2025, the Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) must calculate a maximum monthly copayment of \$215 for households with incomes above 60 percent and at or below 75 percent of SMI. Subject to appropriations, the DCYF must adopt a copayment model for households with annual incomes above 75 percent of SMI and at or below 85 percent of SMI. The model must calculate a copayment for each household that is no greater than 7 percent of the household's countable income within this income range.

The DCYF may not require an applicant or consumer to meet work requirements as a condition of receiving the WCCC program benefits when the recipient is a full-time student of a community, technical, or tribal college; and enrolled in a vocational education program that leads to a degree or certificate in a specific occupation, an associate degree program, or a registered apprenticeship program. Subject to appropriations, the DCYF may waive work requirements for full-time students who are enrolled in a bachelor's degree or applied baccalaureate degree program.

Registered Apprenticeships.

Apprenticeship programs enable individuals to learn trades and occupations through on-the-job training and related supplemental instruction. Journey-level craft persons or trade professionals generally supervise on-the-job training. Employer- or union-sponsored schools or community or technical colleges offer the technical instruction.

Most registered apprenticeship programs take around two to five years to complete, and apprentices earn wages while learning their trade or occupation. Upon completing apprenticeship programs, apprentices receive completion certificates issued by the Washington State Apprenticeship and Training Council, which is the entity that establishes standards and

registers apprenticeship programs.

Summary of Bill:

A person is eligible to receive WCCC benefits for the first 12 months of the person's enrollment in a state registered apprenticeship when:

- the person was eligible for or was receiving WCCC benefits for a period of 12 months immediately preceding their enrollment in the apprenticeship program; and
- the person has a household income that does not exceed 85 percent of the SMI at the time of application.

The DCYF must adopt a copayment model for benefits granted to households with incomes above 60 percent and at or below 85 percent of the SMI.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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