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**SENATE BILL 5030**

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**State of Washington**

**69th Legislature**

**2025 Regular Session**

**By** Senator C. Wilson

Prefiled 12/10/24.

1 AN ACT Relating to improving access to educational services by  
2 reducing barriers to obtaining vital records and allowing alternative  
3 forms of documentation; amending RCW 70.58A.560; adding a new section  
4 to chapter 43.216 RCW; adding a new section to chapter 28A.225 RCW;  
5 and creating a new section.

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

7 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that reducing  
8 barriers to enrollment in early learning programs and public schools  
9 will increase enrollment and well-being for students and families.  
10 The legislature finds that fees to obtain vital records, including  
11 birth certificates, present a burden to families earning lower  
12 incomes. The legislature therefore resolves to improve access to  
13 education services by waiving fees to obtain birth certificates for  
14 families receiving certain types of public assistance and allowing  
15 alternative forms of documentation for enrollment.

16 **Sec. 2.** RCW 70.58A.560 and 2019 c 148 s 24 are each amended to  
17 read as follows:

18 (1) The department and local registrars shall charge a fee of  
19 (~~twenty-five dollars~~) \$25 for a certification or informational copy  
20 of a vital record or for a search of the vital records system when no

1 matching record was identified, except as provided in subsection (2)  
2 of this section.

3 (2) The department and local registrars may not charge a fee for  
4 issuing a certification of:

5 (a) A vital record for use in connection with a claim for  
6 compensation or pension pending before the veterans administration;

7 (b) The death of a sex offender, for use by a law enforcement  
8 agency in maintaining a registered sex offender database; (~~or~~)

9 (c) The death of any offender, requested by a county clerk or  
10 court in the state for purposes of extinguishing the offender's legal  
11 financial obligation; or

12 (d) The birth of a child, requested by a parent or guardian who  
13 has a child who is a member of an assistance unit that is eligible  
14 for or receiving basic food benefits under the federal supplemental  
15 nutrition assistance program or the state food assistance program and  
16 is enrolling the child in an early learning program as defined in RCW  
17 43.216.010 or a public school as defined in RCW 28A.150.010.  
18 Eligibility for benefits described in this subsection can be proven  
19 through, among other methods, a benefits letter or unexpired benefits  
20 card with a corresponding piece of identification.

21 (3) The department may not charge a fee for issuing a birth  
22 certification for homeless persons as defined in RCW 43.185C.010  
23 living in state.

24 (4) The department and local registrars may charge an electronic  
25 payment fee, in addition to the (~~twenty-five dollar~~) \$25 fee for  
26 certification and informational copy of vital records or for a search  
27 of the vital records system, in cases where payment is made by credit  
28 card, charge card, debit card, smart card, stored value card, federal  
29 wire, automatic clearinghouse system, or other electronic  
30 communication.

31 (5) Local registrars shall keep a true and correct account of all  
32 fees received under this section for the issuance of certifications  
33 and informational copies.

34 (6) A portion of the (~~twenty-five dollar~~) \$25 fee collected by  
35 the local registrars must be transmitted to the state treasurer on a  
36 monthly basis as follows:

37 (a) (~~Thirteen dollars~~) \$13 for each birth certification and  
38 birth informational copy issued;

39 (b) (~~Thirteen dollars~~) \$13 for each first copy of a death  
40 certification and death informational copy; and

1 (c) (~~Twenty dollars~~) \$20 for each additional death  
2 certification and death informational copy.

3 (7) For each fee turned over to the state treasurer by the local  
4 registrars, the state treasurer shall:

5 (a) Pay the department (~~two dollars~~) \$2 of each fee for birth  
6 certifications and birth informational copies and first copies of  
7 death certifications and death informational copies;

8 (b) Pay the department (~~nine dollars~~) \$9 of each fee for  
9 additional death certifications and death informational copies; and

10 (c) Hold (~~eleven dollars~~) \$11 of each fee in the death  
11 investigations account established under RCW 43.79.445, except for an  
12 heirloom birth certification issued under RCW 70.58A.530.

13 (8) (~~Eleven dollars~~) \$11 of the (~~twenty-five dollar~~) \$25 fee  
14 collected by the department for certifications and informational  
15 copies issued by the department must be transmitted to the state  
16 treasurer for the death investigations account established under RCW  
17 43.79.445.

18 (9) The department of children, youth, and families shall set a  
19 fee for an heirloom birth certification established under RCW  
20 70.58A.530 for the children's trust fund established under RCW  
21 43.121.100. The department shall collect the fee established under  
22 this subsection when issuing an heirloom birth certification and  
23 transmit the fees collected to the state treasurer for credit to the  
24 children's trust fund.

25 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** A new section is added to chapter 43.216  
26 RCW under the subchapter heading "early childhood education and  
27 assistance" to read as follows:

28 The department shall adopt a rule that requires early childhood  
29 education and assistance program contractors and providers to accept  
30 birth certificates, passports, and alternative documents to show a  
31 child's age or date of birth for the purposes of enrollment.  
32 Alternative documents include, but are not limited to, a religious,  
33 hospital, or physician's certificate showing the date of birth, an  
34 entry in a family bible, an adoption record, an affidavit from a  
35 parent, or a previously verified school record.

36 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** A new section is added to chapter 28A.225  
37 RCW to read as follows:

1       The office of the superintendent of public instruction shall  
2 adopt a rule that requires public schools to accept birth  
3 certificates, passports, and alternative documents to show a child's  
4 age or date of birth for the purposes of enrollment. Alternative  
5 documents include, but are not limited to, a religious, hospital, or  
6 physician's certificate showing the date of birth, an entry in a  
7 family bible, an adoption record, an affidavit from a parent, or a  
8 previously verified school record.

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