

---

HOUSE BILL 2796

---

State of Washington

53rd Legislature

1994 Regular Session

By Representatives Dunshee, Sommers, Peery, Hansen, Reams, Kessler, Rust, Sheldon, Linville, R. Johnson, G. Fisher, Rayburn, Holm, Pruitt, Jones, Quall and Karahalios

Read first time 01/24/94. Referred to Committee on Human Services.

1 AN ACT Relating to community work experience for income assistance  
2 recipients; amending RCW 74.25.010; adding a new section to chapter  
3 74.25 RCW; and creating a new section.

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

5 **Sec. 1.** RCW 74.25.010 and 1991 c 126 s 5 are each amended to read  
6 as follows:

7 The legislature establishes as state policy the goal of economic  
8 self-sufficiency for employable recipients of public assistance,  
9 through employment, training, and education. In furtherance of this  
10 policy, the legislature intends to comply with the requirements of the  
11 federal social security act, as amended, by creating a job  
12 opportunities and basic skills training program for applicants and  
13 recipients of aid to families with dependent children. The purpose of  
14 this program is to provide recipients of aid to families with dependent  
15 children the opportunity to obtain a full range of necessary education,  
16 training, skills, and supportive services, including child care,  
17 consistent with their needs, that will help them enter or reenter  
18 gainful employment, thereby avoiding long-term welfare dependence and  
19 achieving economic self-sufficiency. The program shall be operated by

1 the department of social and health services in conformance with  
2 federal law and consistent with the following legislative findings:

3 (1) The legislature finds that the well-being of children depends  
4 not only on meeting their material needs, but also on the ability of  
5 parents to become economically self-sufficient. The job opportunities  
6 and basic skills training program is specifically directed at  
7 increasing the household earnings of aid to families with dependent  
8 children recipients, through the removal of barriers preventing them  
9 from achieving self-sufficiency. These barriers include, but are not  
10 limited to, the lack of supportive services such as affordable and  
11 reliable child care, adequate transportation, appropriate counseling,  
12 and necessary job-related tools, equipment, books, clothing, and  
13 supplies, the absence of basic literacy skills, the lack of educational  
14 attainment sufficient to meet labor market demands for career  
15 employees, and the nonavailability of useful labor market assessments.

16 (2) The legislature also recognizes that aid to families with  
17 dependent children recipients must be acknowledged as active  
18 participants in self-sufficiency planning under the program. The  
19 legislature finds that the department of social and health services  
20 should communicate concepts of personal empowerment, self-motivation,  
21 and self-esteem to program participants. The legislature further  
22 recognizes that informed choice is consistent with individual  
23 responsibility, and that parents should be given a range of options for  
24 available child care while participating in the program.

25 (3) The legislature finds that education, including, but not  
26 limited to, literacy, high school equivalency, vocational, secondary,  
27 and postsecondary, is one of the most important tools an individual  
28 needs to achieve full independence, and that this should be an  
29 important component of the program.

30 (4) The legislature finds that participation in a program of  
31 community work experience can provide aid to families with dependent  
32 children recipients with an opportunity to acquire basic work skills  
33 that are essential to achieving employment and economic self-  
34 sufficiency.

35 (5) The legislature further finds that the objectives of this  
36 program are to assure that aid to families with dependent children  
37 recipients achieve financial stability and an adequate standard of  
38 living at wages that will meet family needs.

1        NEW SECTION.    **Sec. 2.**    A new section is added to chapter 74.25 RCW  
2 to read as follows:

3        (1) The department of social and health services shall establish,  
4 directly or by contract, a community work experience program for aid to  
5 families with dependent children recipients who have been receiving  
6 such benefits for at least thirty-six continuous months.

7        (2) Participation in the community work experience program shall be  
8 mandatory for aid to families with dependent children recipients who  
9 have been receiving such benefits for at least thirty-six continuous  
10 months, except that participation in the program shall be voluntary  
11 for:

12        (a) Teenage custodial parents working to receive their general  
13 education development certificate or high school diploma;

14        (b) Recipients enrolled in a vocational education or job training  
15 program that includes a work experience component;

16        (c) Recipients who are employed for at least ten hours per week;

17        (d) Recipients determined to require substance abuse treatment  
18 prior to job placement;

19        (e) Recipients determined to be permanently or temporarily  
20 incapacitated and recipients who are primary caregivers to such  
21 persons;

22        (f) Recipients who are parents of children less than six years of  
23 age;

24        (g) Recipients for whom suitable child care arrangements are  
25 necessary, but are not provided by the department of social and health  
26 services; and

27        (h) Recipients who would be required to commute for more than one  
28 hour each way to a community work experience position without access to  
29 public or employer-sponsored transportation.

30        (3) The community work experience program shall:

31        (a) Coordinate with other job opportunities and basic skills  
32 component activities, ensuring that support service and other needs  
33 identified in the recipient's employability plan are addressed and  
34 opportunities for job placement activities can be pursued;

35        (b) Ensure that assignments to community work experience positions  
36 take into consideration the recipient's prior training, work  
37 experience, skills, basic literacy, interests, and barriers to  
38 employment;

1 (c) Provide for a reassessment and revision, as appropriate, of the  
2 recipient's employability plan after each six months of community work  
3 experience participation;

4 (d) Ensure that community work experience positions:

5 (i) Do not fill established, unfilled position vacancies in a  
6 worksite or result in displacement of a currently employed person;

7 (ii) Serve a useful public purpose in private or nonprofit  
8 agencies. The department shall make an effort to place recipients in  
9 community work experience positions in licensed child care facilities  
10 and early childhood education programs; and

11 (iii) Have not been developed in response to the existence of a  
12 strike, lockout, or other bona fide labor dispute or violate any  
13 existing labor agreement between an employee and an employer;

14 (e) Not require a recipient to use his or her income or resources  
15 to pay costs of participating in the community work experience program;  
16 and

17 (f) Ensure that agencies providing community work experience  
18 opportunities offer workers' compensation coverage on the same basis as  
19 regular employees.

20 (4) If a recipient required to participate in the community work  
21 experience program under subsection (2) of this section is not engaged  
22 in work experience efforts of at least twenty hours per week within  
23 twelve months of the recipient's entry into the program, the  
24 recipient's aid to families with dependent children monthly benefit  
25 payment shall be reduced by ten percent of the amount for which the  
26 recipient is otherwise eligible. In determining whether a recipient is  
27 working twenty hours per week, the department shall give credit for  
28 hours worked by the recipient in employment independent of the  
29 community work experience program. For purposes of determining the  
30 amount of the monthly benefit payment for recipients who are subject to  
31 benefit reductions pursuant to this subsection, all countable nonexempt  
32 earned income shall be subtracted from an amount equal to the payment  
33 standard.

34 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** By October 1, 1994, the department of social  
35 and health services shall request the governor to seek congressional or

1 federal agency action necessary to implement chapter ..., Laws of 1994  
2 (this act).

--- END ---