

SSB 5898 - S AMD 304
By Senator Braun

ADOPTED 06/30/2017

1 Strike everything after the enacting clause and insert the
2 following:

3 "Sec. 1. RCW 74.08A.260 and 2011 1st sp.s. c 42 s 2 are each
4 amended to read as follows:

5 (1) Each recipient shall be assessed after determination of
6 program eligibility and before referral to job search. Assessments
7 shall be based upon factors that are critical to obtaining
8 employment, including but not limited to education, availability of
9 child care, history of family violence, history of substance abuse,
10 and other factors that affect the ability to obtain employment.
11 Assessments may be performed by the department or by a contracted
12 entity. The assessment shall be based on a uniform, consistent,
13 transferable format that will be accepted by all agencies and
14 organizations serving the recipient.

15 (2) Based on the assessment, an individual responsibility plan
16 shall be prepared that: (a) Sets forth an employment goal and a plan
17 for maximizing the recipient's success at meeting the employment
18 goal; (b) considers WorkFirst educational and training programs from
19 which the recipient could benefit; (c) contains the obligation of the
20 recipient to participate in the program by complying with the plan;
21 (d) moves the recipient into full-time WorkFirst activities as
22 quickly as possible; and (e) describes the services available to the
23 recipient either during or after WorkFirst to enable the recipient to
24 obtain and keep employment and to advance in the workplace and
25 increase the recipient's wage earning potential over time.

26 (3) Recipients who are not engaged in work and work activities,
27 and do not qualify for a good cause exemption under RCW 74.08A.270,
28 shall engage in self-directed service as provided in RCW 74.08A.330.

29 (4) If a recipient refuses to engage in work and work activities
30 required by the department, the family's grant shall be reduced by
31 the recipient's share, and may, if the department determines it
32 appropriate, be terminated.

1 (5) The department may waive the penalties required under
2 subsection (4) of this section, subject to a finding that the
3 recipient refused to engage in work for good cause provided in RCW
4 74.08A.270.

5 (6) In consultation with the recipient, the department or
6 contractor shall place the recipient into a work activity that is
7 available in the local area where the recipient resides.

8 (7) Assessments conducted under this section shall include a
9 consideration of the potential benefit to the recipient of engaging
10 in financial literacy activities. The department shall consider the
11 options for financial literacy activities available in the community,
12 including information and resources available through the financial
13 education public-private partnership created under RCW 28A.300.450.
14 The department may authorize up to ten hours of financial literacy
15 activities as a core activity or an optional activity under
16 WorkFirst.

17 (8)(a) (~~From July 1, 2011, through June 30, 2012,~~) Subsections
18 (2) through (6) of this section are suspended for a recipient who is
19 a parent or other relative personally providing care for ~~((one))~~ a
20 child under the age of two years ~~((, or two or more children under the~~
21 ~~age of six years))~~. This suspension applies to both one and two
22 parent families. However, both parents in a two-parent family cannot
23 use the suspension during the same month. ~~((Beginning July 1, 2012,~~
24 ~~the department shall phase in the work activity requirements that~~
25 ~~were suspended, beginning with those recipients closest to reaching~~
26 ~~the sixty-month limit of receiving temporary assistance for needy~~
27 ~~families under RCW 74.08A.010(1). The phase in shall be accomplished~~
28 ~~so that a fairly equal number of recipients required to participate~~
29 ~~in work activities are returned to those activities each month until~~
30 ~~the total number required to participate is participating by June 30,~~
31 ~~2013.))~~ Nothing in this subsection shall prevent a recipient from
32 participating in the WorkFirst program on a voluntary basis.
33 ~~((Recipients who participate in the WorkFirst program on a voluntary~~
34 ~~basis shall be provided an option to participate in the program on a~~
35 ~~part-time basis, consisting of sixteen or fewer hours of activities~~
36 ~~per week. Recipients also may participate voluntarily on a full-time~~
37 ~~basis.))~~

38 (b)(i) The period of suspension of work activities under this
39 subsection provides an opportunity for the legislative and executive
40 branches to oversee redesign of the WorkFirst program. To realize

1 this opportunity, both during the period of suspension and following
2 reinstatement of work activity requirements as redesign is being
3 implemented, a legislative-executive WorkFirst oversight task force
4 is established, with members as provided in this subsection (8)(b).

5 (ii) The president of the senate shall appoint two members from
6 each of the two largest caucuses of the senate.

7 (iii) The speaker of the house of representatives shall appoint
8 two members from each of the two largest caucuses of the house of
9 representatives.

10 (iv) The governor shall appoint members representing the
11 department of social and health services, the department of early
12 learning, the department of commerce, the employment security
13 department, the office of financial management, and the state board
14 for community and technical colleges.

15 (v) The task force shall choose cochairs, one from among the
16 legislative members and one from among the executive branch members.
17 The legislative members shall convene the initial meeting of the task
18 force.

19 (c) The task force shall:

20 (i) Oversee the partner agencies' implementation of the redesign
21 of the WorkFirst program and operation of the temporary assistance
22 for needy families program to ensure that the programs are achieving
23 desired outcomes for their clients;

24 (ii) Determine evidence-based outcome measures for the WorkFirst
25 program, including measures related to equitably serving the needs of
26 historically underrepresented populations, such as English language
27 learners, immigrants, refugees, and other diverse communities;

28 (iii) Develop accountability measures for WorkFirst recipients
29 and the state agencies responsible for their progress toward self-
30 sufficiency;

31 (iv) Make recommendations to the governor and the legislature
32 regarding:

33 (A) Policies to improve the effectiveness of the WorkFirst
34 program over time;

35 (B) Early identification of those recipients most likely to
36 experience long stays on the program and strategies to improve their
37 ability to achieve progress toward self-sufficiency; and

38 (C) Necessary changes to the program, including taking into
39 account federal changes to the temporary assistance for needy
40 families program.

1 (d) The partner agencies must provide the task force with regular
2 reports on:

3 (i) The partner agencies' progress toward meeting the outcome and
4 performance measures established under (c) of this subsection;

5 (ii) Caseload trends and program expenditures, and the impact of
6 those trends and expenditures on client services, including services
7 to historically underrepresented populations; and

8 (iii) The characteristics of families who have been unsuccessful
9 on the program and have lost their benefits either through sanction
10 or the sixty-month time limit.

11 (e) Staff support for the task force must be provided by senate
12 committee services, the house of representatives office of program
13 research, and the state agency members of the task force.

14 (f) The task force shall meet on a quarterly basis beginning
15 September 2011, or as determined necessary by the task force
16 cochairs.

17 (g) During its tenure, the state agency members of the task force
18 shall respond in a timely manner to data requests from the cochairs.

19 **Sec. 2.** RCW 74.08A.270 and 2007 c 289 s 1 are each amended to
20 read as follows:

21 (1) Good cause reasons for failure to participate in WorkFirst
22 program components include: (a) Situations where the recipient is a
23 parent or other relative personally providing care for a child under
24 the age of six years, and formal or informal child care, or day care
25 for an incapacitated individual living in the same home as a
26 dependent child, is necessary for an individual to participate or
27 continue participation in the program or accept employment, and such
28 care is not available, and the department fails to provide such care;
29 or (b) the recipient is a parent with a child under the age of
30 (~~one~~) two years.

31 (2) A parent claiming a good cause exemption from WorkFirst
32 participation under subsection (1)(b) of this section may be required
33 to participate in one or more of the following, up to a maximum total
34 of twenty hours per week, if such treatment, services, or training is
35 indicated by the comprehensive evaluation or other assessment:

- 36 (a) Mental health treatment;
37 (b) Alcohol or drug treatment;
38 (c) Domestic violence services; or

1 (d) Parenting education or parenting skills training, if
2 available.

3 (3) The department shall: (a) Work with a parent claiming a good
4 cause exemption under subsection (1)(b) of this section to identify
5 and access programs and services designed to improve parenting skills
6 and promote child well-being, including but not limited to home
7 visitation programs and services; and (b) provide information on the
8 availability of home visitation services to temporary assistance for
9 needy families caseworkers, who shall inform clients of the
10 availability of the services. If desired by the client, the
11 caseworker shall facilitate appropriate referrals to providers of
12 home visitation services.

13 (4) Nothing in this section shall prevent a recipient from
14 participating in the WorkFirst program on a voluntary basis.

15 (5) A parent is eligible for a good cause exemption under
16 subsection (1)(b) of this section for a maximum total of (~~twelve~~)
17 twenty-four months over the parent's lifetime."

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18 On page 1, line 1 of the title, after "programs;" strike the
19 remainder of the title and insert "and amending RCW 74.08A.260 and
20 74.08A.270."

EFFECT: (1) Removes the requirement that individuals who
experience a nontemporary change in their status as working or
attending a job training or education program assistance must be
discontinued from the Working Connections Child Care (WCCC) program
after a minimum of three months.

(2) Removes the requirement that individuals seek child support
enforcement services in order to be eligible for WCCC subsidies.

(3) Removes the requirement that applicants for the Temporary
Assistance for Needy Families program demonstrate that a job search
has been conducted prior to applying for assistance.

(4) Removes the 36 month time limit for receiving Aged, Blind, or
Disabled assistance benefits.

(5) Modifies the good cause reasons for failure to participate in
the WorkFirst program to include recipients with a child under two
years of age.

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