

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## HB 2456

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**As Reported by House Committee On:**  
Human Services & Early Learning

**Title:** An act relating to working connections child care eligibility.

**Brief Description:** Concerning working connections child care eligibility.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Callan, Eslick, Ramos, Ryu, Shewmake, Chapman, Senn, Frame, Thai, Bergquist, Kilduff, Stonier, Tharinger, Davis, Macri, Pollet, Goodman, Wylie and Doglio; by request of Governor Inslee.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:**

Human Services & Early Learning: 1/17/20, 1/24/20 [DP].

**Brief Summary of Bill**

- Extends the grace period for homeless families to fulfill Working Connections Child Care program requirements from four to 12 months.

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### HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES & EARLY LEARNING

**Majority Report:** Do pass. Signed by 7 members: Representatives Senn, Chair; Callan, Vice Chair; Frame, Vice Chair; Goodman, Kilduff, Lovick and Ortiz-Self.

**Minority Report:** Do not pass. Signed by 4 members: Representatives Dent, Ranking Minority Member; McCaslin, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Corry and Klippert.

**Staff:** Dawn Eychaner (786-7135).

**Background:**

The Working Connections Child Care (WCCC) program provides child care subsidies for families with incomes at or below 200 percent of the federal poverty guideline (FPG). Two hundred percent of the 2019 FPG is \$42,660 for a household of three. The parent must be engaged in work or in approved work activities unless the family has received child welfare,

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child protective, or family assessment response services in the previous six months. A household's eligibility period for the WCCC program lasts for 12 months.

Families experiencing homelessness are allowed a four-month grace period to meet program requirements, including providing verification of participation in approved work activities.

The WCCC program is funded in part by the federal Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF). The CCDF rules define homelessness in accordance with the federal McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act subchapter on Education for Homeless Children and Youths (McKinney-Vento Act). This definition describes homeless individuals as lacking a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence and includes sharing the housing of other persons in the definition for homeless children and youth.

The Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) is the designated lead agency for administration of the CCDF program and administers the WCCC program.

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**Summary of Bill:**

The DCYF must extend the grace period for homeless families to meet WCCC program requirements from four months to 12 months.

The term "homeless" is defined as without a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence as described in the federal McKinney-Vento Act.

Statutory content is reorganized.

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**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Requested on January 14, 2020.

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

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony:**

(In support) This policy is about providing safe, consistent, high quality care to the most vulnerable children and a safe place for children while parents stabilize and find housing. Families are rarely able to find the care they need in the four-month timeframe of the current homeless grace period. More than 300 homeless families lost access to care last year. Homelessness in early childhood is harmful to children's health, and early brain development and experiencing toxic stress is associated with poor educational outcomes and long-term health issues. Access to child care will help buffer children and families. Homeless families have a full-time job coping with their trauma and trying to shield their children from the effects of homelessness. Parents who are homeless and trying to find a job face huge barriers

in finding and keeping jobs. The current grace period is not enough time, and extending it will increase predictability for providers. In a 12-month program, a child has time to learn, thrive, and feel safe. With more time in the grace period, families facing uncertainty of affording child care will have fewer worries. Improving access to quality early learning is one of the best ways to break the cycle of intergenerational poverty. After school care is a place for children to work on homework, as well as on social-emotional growth.

(Opposed) None.

**Persons Testifying:** (In support) Representative Callan, prime sponsor; Joel Ryan, Washington State Association of Head Start and Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program; Norma Lobo and Sarah Brady, Child Care Resources; Kelly Blutcher; Bevette Irvis, Wellspring Family Services; Nick Federici, United Way of King County; Ryan Murphy, Save the Children Action Network; David Beard, School's Out Washington; and Sydney Forrester, Office of the Governor.

(Opposed) None.

**Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying:** None.