

FINAL BILL REPORT

2SHB 1525

C 294 L 23
Synopsis as Enacted

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

Sponsors: House Committee on Appropriations (originally sponsored by 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).

House Committee on Human Services, Youth, & Early Learning

House Committee on Appropriations

Senate Committee on Early Learning & K-12 Education

Senate Committee on Ways & Means

Background:

Working Connections Child Care.

Working Connections Child Care (WCCC) is a federally and state-funded program administered by the Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) that provides subsidies for child care while a parent is working or participating in approved work-related activities. The WCCC program is available to families who meet certain eligibility requirements and have a household income at or below 60 percent of the state median income (SMI), adjusted for family size. Beginning July 1, 2025, a family is eligible for WCCC program benefits when the 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.

Depending on income, families may be required to pay a monthly copayment to their

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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 DCYF must calculate a maximum monthly copayment of \$215 for households with incomes above 60 percent and at or below 75 percent of the SMI. Subject to appropriations, the DCYF must adopt a copayment model for households with annual incomes above 75 percent of the SMI and at or below 85 percent of the 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 is 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. The Washington State Apprenticeship and Training Council (WSTAC) establishes standards for and registers apprenticeship programs. 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.

Apprentices earn wages while participating in the apprenticeship. Upon completing an apprenticeship program, apprentices receive completion certificates issued by the WSTAC.

Summary:

The work requirements for the WCCC program are waived for those participating in a state-registered apprenticeship regardless of whether or not the apprentice is a full-time student of a community, technical, or tribal college.

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

- the person has a household income that does not exceed 75 percent of the SMI at the time of application, or, beginning July 1, 2027, does not exceed 85 percent of the SMI at the time of application if funds are appropriated to increase the generally applicable income eligibility threshold for the WCCC program to 85 percent of the SMI;
- the child receiving care is less than 13 years old, or is less than 19 years old and has a verified special need or is under court supervision; and
- the household meets all other program eligibility requirements.

The DCYF must adopt a copayment model for benefits granted to apprentices that aligns with the copayments identified or adopted for other households at the same income levels.

Votes on Final Passage:

House	96	0	
Senate	36	12	(Senate amended)
House	96	0	(House concurred)

Effective: July 23, 2023