
HOUSE BILL 2487

State of Washington

68th Legislature

2024 Regular Session

By Representatives Lekanoff, Shavers, and Nance

Read first time 01/30/24. Referred to Committee on Postsecondary Education & Workforce.

1 AN ACT Relating to education and assistance for displaced
2 farmworkers; adding a new section to chapter 28B.12 RCW; adding a new
3 section to chapter 28C.04 RCW; adding a new section to chapter
4 28B.145 RCW; adding a new section to chapter 28B.50 RCW; adding a new
5 section to chapter 28B.117 RCW; adding a new section to chapter
6 28B.115 RCW; adding a new section to chapter 28B.103 RCW; adding a
7 new section to chapter 28B.122 RCW; and adding a new chapter to Title
8 28B RCW.

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

10 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The farmworkers education and assistance
11 program is created. The purpose of the program is to:

12 (1) Help farmworkers who have been or will be displaced from
13 their jobs in the agricultural industry learn about postsecondary
14 educational opportunities;

15 (2) Provide outreach to farmworkers to educate them on existing
16 scholarship and grant opportunities available to Washington
17 residents; and

18 (3) Provide technical support and wraparound services to
19 farmworkers pursuing postsecondary educational opportunities.

1 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** The definitions in this section apply
2 throughout this chapter unless the context clearly requires
3 otherwise.

4 (1) "Apprentice" means a person enrolled in a state-approved,
5 federally registered, or reciprocally recognized apprenticeship
6 program.

7 (2) "Apprenticeship" means an apprenticeship training program
8 approved or recognized by the state apprenticeship council or similar
9 federal entity.

10 (3) "Farmworker" means a Washington resident who is an
11 agricultural employee or farm labor contractor as defined in RCW
12 19.30.010.

13 (4) "Institution of higher education" means an institution of
14 higher education as defined in RCW 28B.10.016 or a degree-granting
15 institution as defined in RCW 28B.85.010 that participates in the
16 state student financial aid program.

17 (5) "Office" means the office of student financial assistance.

18 (6) "Preapprenticeship" means an apprenticeship preparation
19 program recognized by the state apprenticeship council and as defined
20 in RCW 28C.18.162.

21 (7) "Program" means the farmworkers education and assistance
22 program created in this chapter.

23 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** (1) The office shall design and, subject
24 to funds appropriated for this specific purpose, implement the
25 program. The program must use both English and Spanish, be culturally
26 appropriate, and offer support for displaced farmworkers to enhance
27 awareness of existing grants and scholarships, as well as educational
28 and apprenticeship opportunities, for students who are farmworkers
29 who are or will be displaced from the agricultural industry.

30 (2) The office shall convene and consult with an advisory
31 committee to assist with program design and implementation. The
32 committee must include:

33 (a) Farmworkers who have been displaced from their jobs in the
34 agricultural industry;

35 (b) A representative from the state board for community and
36 technical colleges;

37 (c) Student support specialists from public and private colleges
38 and universities;

1 (d) A representative from the state workforce training and
2 education coordinating board;

3 (e) A representative of the employment security department; and

4 (f) A member of the state apprenticeship council.

5 (3) The office, in consultation and with assistance from the
6 state board for community and technical colleges, shall identify
7 students and apprentices who are current or former farmworkers so
8 that those students and apprentices may receive assistance under the
9 program. In designing and implementing the program under this
10 section, the office, in consultation and with assistance from the
11 state board for community and technical colleges, shall ensure that
12 institutions of higher education have a plan for identifying students
13 and apprentices who are eligible for assistance under this program,
14 for tracking and enhancing their academic progress, for addressing
15 their unique needs, and for linking them to appropriate sources of
16 assistance in their transition from farmworker to student and beyond.

17 (4) The office shall define a process for verifying a student's
18 or apprentice's status as a farmworker.

19 (5) Subject to amounts appropriated for this specific purpose,
20 institutions of higher education must receive financial and other
21 incentives for achieving measurable progress in the recruitment,
22 retention, and graduation of eligible students and apprentices.

23 (6) All institutions of higher education shall include on their
24 applications for admission or on their registration materials a
25 question asking whether the applicant has been a farmworker, with an
26 explanation that financial and support services may be available.

27 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** (1) To the extent funds are appropriated
28 for this purpose, the office shall develop and maintain an internet
29 website and outreach program available in English and Spanish to
30 serve as a comprehensive portal for farmworkers in Washington who are
31 or will be displaced from the agricultural industry to obtain
32 information regarding higher education and registered apprenticeship
33 and recognized preapprenticeship programs. In developing the website
34 and conducting the outreach program, the office shall get input from
35 community and technical colleges; displaced farmworkers; institutions
36 of higher education; the employment security department; the state
37 apprenticeship and training council; the workforce training and
38 education coordinating board; the department of licensing; and the

1 department of labor and industries. The outreach program and website
2 must include, but is not limited to:

3 (a) Academic, social, family, financial, and logistical
4 information important to successful postsecondary educational
5 success;

6 (b) How and when to obtain and complete college applications;

7 (c) How and when to apply for a registered apprenticeship or
8 recognized preapprenticeship program;

9 (d) What academic subject matter prerequisites, if any, are
10 generally required for acceptance to an institution of higher
11 education, a registered apprenticeship, or a recognized
12 preapprenticeship program;

13 (e) What college placement tests, if any, are generally required
14 for admission to college and when and how to register for such tests;

15 (f) How and when to obtain and complete a federal free
16 application for federal student aid or if ineligible to apply for the
17 federal free application for federal student aid, the state financial
18 aid application approved by the office; and

19 (g) Detailed sources of financial aid and assistance likely
20 available to farmworkers in Washington.

21 (2) The office shall determine whether to design, build, and
22 operate the outreach program and website directly or to use, support,
23 and modify existing websites created by government or nongovernmental
24 entities for a similar purpose.

25 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 5.** (1) The office shall partner with
26 organizations that serve community and provide social services and
27 general assistance, such as the national community action
28 partnership, to develop the farmworkers seeking education to career
29 program. The farmworkers seeking education to career program shall
30 include a navigator with bilingual capacity.

31 (2) Services offered must include:

32 (a) Supporting clients, including displaced farmworkers;

33 (b) Addressing and explaining required academic and financial
34 forms required for apprenticeships and postsecondary educational
35 opportunities;

36 (c) Information on available scholarships and grants; and

37 (d) One-on-one appointments with the navigator to discuss career
38 paths and outreach resources.

1 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 6.** A new section is added to chapter 28B.12
2 RCW to read as follows:

3 Ten percent of funds available for the state work-study program
4 must be reserved for students who are farmworkers as defined in
5 section 2 of this act and who otherwise meet the requirements for
6 state work-study.

7 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 7.** A new section is added to chapter 28C.04
8 RCW to read as follows:

9 Ten percent of funds available for the Washington award for
10 vocational excellence must be reserved for students who are
11 farmworkers as defined in section 2 of this act and who otherwise
12 qualify for the award.

13 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 8.** A new section is added to chapter 28B.145
14 RCW to read as follows:

15 Ten percent of funds available for the opportunity scholarship
16 must be reserved for students who are farmworkers as defined in
17 section 2 of this act and who otherwise qualify for the scholarship.

18 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 9.** A new section is added to chapter 28B.50
19 RCW to read as follows:

20 Ten percent of funds available for the opportunity grant must be
21 reserved for students who are farmworkers as defined in section 2 of
22 this act and who otherwise qualify for the grant.

23 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 10.** A new section is added to chapter 28B.117
24 RCW to read as follows:

25 Ten percent of funds available for the passport to careers
26 program and the passport to apprenticeship opportunities program must
27 be reserved for students who are farmworkers as defined in section 2
28 of this act and who otherwise qualify for the programs.

29 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 11.** A new section is added to chapter 28B.115
30 RCW to read as follows:

31 Ten percent of funds available for the Washington health corps
32 must be reserved for students who are farmworkers as defined in
33 section 2 of this act and who otherwise qualify under this chapter.

1 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 12.** A new section is added to chapter 28B.103
2 RCW to read as follows:

3 Ten percent of funds available for the Washington national guard
4 postsecondary education grant program must be reserved for students
5 who are farmworkers as defined in section 2 of this act and who
6 otherwise qualify for the grant.

7 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 13.** A new section is added to chapter 28B.122
8 RCW to read as follows:

9 Ten percent of funds available for the aerospace training student
10 loan program must be reserved for students who are farmworkers as
11 defined in section 2 of this act and who otherwise qualify for the
12 program.

13 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 14.** Sections 1 through 5 of this act
14 constitute a new chapter in Title 28B RCW.

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