
Early Learning & Human Services Committee

HB 1463

Brief Description: Expanding time limit exemptions applicable to cash assistance programs.

Sponsors: Representatives Cortes, Bernbaum, Berry, Wylie, Doglio, Ryu, Alvarado, Reed, Goodman, Peterson, Ortiz-Self, Macri, Fosse, Parshley, Kloba, Scott, Hill and Simmons.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Expands the list of circumstances warranting a time limit extension for the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families to include circumstances when, by reason of hardship, termination or denial of cash assistance would result in financial distress for the recipient's family.

Hearing Date: 2/11/25

Staff: Omeara Harrington (786-7136).

Background:

The Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program is a federally funded program that provides cash assistance to parents or caregivers with children and pregnant individuals to help meet foundational needs. Persons who are caring for a relative's child, are legal guardians, or who are acting in the place of a parent, are also able to apply for TANF benefits on behalf of these children. To be eligible for TANF benefits, a person must meet certain income and resource limits and meet citizenship criteria.

Federal rules limit the length of time an adult may receive TANF benefits to a cumulative total of five years. Time limit extensions may be offered on the basis of hardship, as defined by the state, or in instances of family violence. States can extend federal TANF assistance beyond the

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five-year limit for up to 20 percent of the average monthly caseload.

Statute and rules adopted by the Department of Social and Health Services identify certain circumstances in which a person is eligible for a time limit extension, by reason of hardship, including when the recipient is:

- age 55 or older and caring for a relative child when the recipient is not the parent;
- a disabled adult;
- caring for a disabled adult or child;
- participating in a family violence service plan;
- involved in a first-time child welfare case;
- employed for 32 hours or more per week of unsubsidized employment;
- homeless;
- receiving or was receiving TANF during a period of high employment (when the unemployment rate was at 7 percent or higher); or
- is a parent or guardian of a child under the age of 2 and qualifies for an infant, toddler, or postpartum exemption from WorkFirst activities.

Summary of Bill:

The list of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families time limit extension circumstances is expanded to include circumstances when, by reason of hardship, termination or denial of cash assistance would result in financial distress for the recipient's family.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 27, 2025.

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