
HOUSE BILL 1489

State of Washington

69th Legislature

2025 Regular Session

By Representative Ormsby; by request of Office of Financial Management

Read first time 01/21/25. Referred to Committee on Appropriations.

1 AN ACT Relating to implementation dates for programs related to
2 early childhood education and child care; amending RCW 43.216.556 and
3 43.216.810; reenacting and amending RCW 43.216.802; providing an
4 effective date; and declaring an emergency.

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

6 **Sec. 1.** RCW 43.216.556 and 2021 c 199 s 208 are each amended to
7 read as follows:

8 (1) Funding for the program of early learning established under
9 this chapter must be appropriated to the department. The department
10 shall distribute funding to approved early childhood education and
11 assistance program contractors on the basis of eligible children
12 enrolled.

13 (2) The program shall be implemented in phases, so that full
14 implementation is achieved in the ((2026-27)) 2030-31 school year.

15 (3) Funding shall continue to be phased in each year until full
16 statewide implementation of the early learning program is achieved in
17 the ((2026-27)) 2030-31 school year, at which time any eligible child
18 is entitled to be enrolled in the program. Entitlement under this
19 section is voluntary enrollment.

20 (4) School districts and approved community-based early learning
21 providers may contract with the department to provide services under

1 the program. The department shall collaborate with school districts,
2 community-based providers, and educational service districts to
3 promote an adequate supply of approved providers.

4 **Sec. 2.** RCW 43.216.802 and 2024 c 225 s 1 and 2024 c 67 s 2 are
5 each reenacted and amended to read as follows:

6 (1) It is the intent of the legislature to increase working
7 families' access to affordable, high quality child care and to
8 support the expansion of the workforce to support businesses and the
9 statewide economy.

10 (2) A family is eligible for working connections child care when
11 the household's annual income is at or below 60 percent of the state
12 median income adjusted for family size and:

13 (a) The child receiving care is: (i) Less than 13 years of age;
14 or (ii) less than 19 years of age and has a verified special need
15 according to department rule or is under court supervision; and

16 (b) The household meets all other program eligibility
17 requirements established in this chapter or in rule by the department
18 as authorized by RCW 43.216.055 or 43.216.065 or any other authority
19 granted by this chapter.

20 (3) Beginning July 1, (~~2025~~) 2029, a family is eligible for
21 working connections child care when the household's annual income is
22 above 60 percent and at or below 75 percent of the state median
23 income adjusted for family size and:

24 (a) The child receiving care is: (i) Less than 13 years of age;
25 or (ii) less than 19 years of age and has a verified special need
26 according to department rule or is under court supervision; and

27 (b) The household meets all other program eligibility
28 requirements established in this chapter or in rule by the department
29 as authorized by RCW 43.216.055 or 43.216.065 or any other authority
30 granted by this chapter.

31 (4) Beginning July 1, (~~2027~~) 2031, and subject to the
32 availability of amounts appropriated for this specific purpose, a
33 family is eligible for working connections child care when the
34 household's annual income is above 75 percent of the state median
35 income and is at or below 85 percent of the state median income
36 adjusted for family size and:

37 (a) The child receiving care is: (i) Less than 13 years of age;
38 or (ii) less than 19 years of age and has a verified special need
39 according to department rule or is under court supervision; and

1 (b) The household meets all other program eligibility
2 requirements established in this chapter or in rule by the department
3 as authorized by RCW 43.216.055 or 43.216.065 or any other authority
4 granted by this chapter.

5 (5) Beginning November 1, 2024, when an applicant or consumer is
6 a member of an assistance unit that is eligible for or receiving
7 basic food benefits under the federal supplemental nutrition
8 assistance program or the state food assistance program the
9 department must determine that the household income eligibility
10 requirements in this section are met.

11 (6) The department must adopt rules to implement this section,
12 including an income phase-out eligibility period.

13 (7) The department may not consider the citizenship status of an
14 applicant or consumer's child when determining eligibility for
15 working connections child care benefits.

16 (8) The income eligibility requirements in subsections (2)
17 through (4) of this section do not apply to households eligible for
18 the working connections child care program under RCW 43.216.808,
19 43.216.810, 43.216.812, and 43.216.814.

20 **Sec. 3.** RCW 43.216.810 and 2024 c 67 s 6 are each amended to
21 read as follows:

22 (1) An applicant or consumer is eligible to receive working
23 connections child care benefits for the care of one or more eligible
24 children for the first 12 months of the applicant's or consumer's
25 enrollment in a state registered apprenticeship program under chapter
26 49.04 RCW when:

27 (a) The applicant or consumer's household annual income adjusted
28 for family size does not exceed 75 percent of the state median income
29 at the time of application, or, beginning July 1, (~~(2027)~~) 2032, does
30 not exceed 85 percent of the state median income if funds are
31 appropriated for the purpose of RCW 43.216.802(4);

32 (b) The child receiving care is: (i) Less than 13 years of age;
33 or (ii) less than 19 years of age and either has a verified special
34 need according to department rule or is under court supervision; and

35 (c) The household meets all other program eligibility
36 requirements established in this chapter or in rule by the department
37 in accordance with RCW 43.216.055, 43.216.065, and 43.216.800.

38 (2) The department must adopt a copayment model for benefits
39 granted under this (~~subsection~~[~~section~~]) section, which must align

1 with any copayment identified or adopted for households with the same
2 income level under RCW 43.216.804.

3 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** This act is necessary for the immediate
4 preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of
5 the state government and its existing public institutions, and takes
6 effect July 1, 2025.

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