

**Chapter 74.08A RCW**  
**WASHINGTON WORKFIRST TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE FOR NEEDY FAMILIES**

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**RCW 74.08A.010 Time limits—Transitional food assistance.**

***(Effective until January 1, 2024.)*** (1) A family that includes an adult who has received temporary assistance for needy families for 60 months after July 27, 1997, shall be ineligible for further temporary assistance for needy families assistance.

(2) For the purposes of applying the rules of this section, the department shall count any month in which an adult family member received a temporary assistance for needy families cash assistance grant unless the assistance was provided when the adult family member was a minor child and not the head of the household or married to the head of the household.

(3) The department shall refer recipients who require specialized assistance to appropriate department programs, crime victims' programs through the department of commerce, or the crime victims' compensation program of the department of labor and industries.

(4) The department shall add to adopted rules related to temporary assistance for needy families time limit extensions, the following criteria by which the department shall exempt a recipient and the recipient's family from the application of subsection (1) of this section:

(a) By reason of hardship, including when:

(i) The recipient's family includes a child or youth who is without a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence as described in the federal McKinney-Vento homeless assistance act (Title 42 U.S.C., chapter 119, subchapter VI, part B) as it existed on January 1, 2020;

(ii) The recipient received temporary assistance for needy families during a month on or after March 1, 2020, when Washington state's unemployment rate as published by the Washington employment security department was equal to or greater than seven percent, and the recipient is otherwise eligible for temporary assistance for needy families except that they have exceeded 60 months. The extension provided for under this subsection (4)(a)(ii) is equal to the number of months that the recipient received temporary assistance for needy families during a month on or after March 1, 2020, when the unemployment rate was equal to or greater than seven percent, and is applied sequentially to any other hardship extensions that may apply under this subsection (4) or in rule; or

(iii) Beginning July 1, 2022, the Washington state unemployment rate most recently published by the Washington employment security department is equal to or greater than seven percent; or

(b) If the family includes an individual who meets the family violence options of section 402(A)(7) of Title IVA of the federal social security act as amended by P.L. 104-193.

(5) The department shall not exempt a recipient and his or her family from the application of subsection (1) of this section until after the recipient has received 52 months of assistance under this chapter.

(6) The department shall provide transitional food assistance for a period of five months to a household that ceases to receive temporary assistance for needy families assistance and is not in sanction status. If necessary, the department shall extend the household's basic food certification until the end of the transition period.

(7) The department may adopt rules specifying which published employment security department unemployment rates to use for the purposes of subsection (4)(a)(ii) and (iii) of this section. [2023 c 418 § 2; 2022 c 24 § 1; 2021 c 239 § 1; 2020 c 320 § 1; 2019 c 343 § 2; 2011 1st sp.s. c 42 § 6; 2004 c 54 § 4; 1997 c 58 § 103.]

**Effective date—2023 c 418 § 2:** "Section 2 of this act is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of the state government and its existing public institutions, and takes effect July 1, 2023." [2023 c 418 § 10.]

**Expiration date—2023 c 418 § 2:** "Section 2 of this act expires January 1, 2024." [2023 c 418 § 11.]

**Conflict with federal requirements—2021 c 239:** "If any part of this act is found to be in conflict with federal requirements that are a prescribed condition to the allocation of federal funds to the state, the conflicting part of this act is inoperative solely to the extent of the conflict and with respect to the agencies directly affected, and this finding does not affect the operation of the remainder of this act in its application to the agencies concerned. Rules adopted under this act must meet federal requirements that are a necessary condition to the receipt of federal funds by the state." [2021 c 239 § 2.]

**Contingent effective date—2021 c 239:** "This act takes effect July 1, 2023, only if specific funding for extending the 60-month time limit through the 2021-2023 biennium, is provided by June 30, 2021, in the omnibus appropriations act. If specific funding for extending the 60-month time limit through the 2021-2023 biennium is not provided by June 30, 2021, in the omnibus appropriations act, this act takes effect 90 days after final adjournment of the legislative session in which it is enacted." [2021 c 239 § 4.]

**Effective date—2020 c 320 § 1:** "Section 1 of this act takes effect July 1, 2021." [2020 c 320 § 3.]

**Prospective application—2019 c 343:** See note following RCW 74.08.025.

**Effective date—2011 1st sp.s. c 42 § 6:** "Section 6 of this act takes effect September 1, 2011." [2011 1st sp.s. c 42 § 29.]

**Findings—Intent—2011 1st sp.s. c 42:** See note following RCW 74.08A.260.

**Finding—2011 1st sp.s. c 42:** See note following RCW 74.04.004.

**Findings—Conflict with federal requirements—2004 c 54:** See notes following RCW 28A.235.160.

**RCW 74.08A.010 Time limits—Transitional food assistance.**

**(Effective January 1, 2024.)** (1) A family that includes an adult who has received temporary assistance for needy families for 60 months after July 27, 1997, shall be ineligible for further temporary assistance for needy families assistance.

(2) For the purposes of applying the rules of this section, the department shall count any month in which an adult family member received a temporary assistance for needy families cash assistance grant unless the assistance was provided when the adult family member was a minor child and not the head of the household or married to the head of the household.

(3) The department shall refer recipients who require specialized assistance to appropriate department programs, crime victims' programs through the department of commerce, or the crime victims' compensation program of the department of labor and industries.

(4) The department shall add to adopted rules related to temporary assistance for needy families time limit extensions, the following criteria by which the department shall exempt a recipient and the recipient's family from the application of subsection (1) of this section:

(a) By reason of hardship, including when:

(i) The recipient's family includes a child or youth who is without a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence as described in the federal McKinney-Vento homeless assistance act (Title 42 U.S.C., chapter 119, subchapter VI, part B) as it existed on January 1, 2020;

(ii) The recipient received temporary assistance for needy families during a month on or after March 1, 2020, when Washington state's unemployment rate as published by the Washington employment security department was equal to or greater than seven percent, and the recipient is otherwise eligible for temporary assistance for needy families except that they have exceeded 60 months. The extension provided for under this subsection (4)(a)(ii) is equal to the number of months that the recipient received temporary assistance for needy families during a month on or after March 1, 2020, when the unemployment rate was equal to or greater than seven percent, and is applied sequentially to any other hardship extensions that may apply under this subsection (4) or in rule; or

(iii) Beginning July 1, 2022, the Washington state unemployment rate most recently published by the Washington employment security department is equal to or greater than seven percent; or

(b) If the family includes an individual who meets the family violence options of section 402(A)(7) of Title IVA of the federal social security act as amended by P.L. 104-193.

(5) The department shall not exempt a recipient and his or her family from the application of subsection (1) of this section until after the recipient has received 52 months of assistance under this chapter.

(6) The department shall provide transitional food assistance for a period of five months to a household that ceases to receive temporary assistance for needy families assistance and is not in full-family sanction status. If a member of a household has been sanctioned but the household is still receiving benefits, the remaining eligible household members may receive transitional food assistance. If necessary, the department shall extend the household's basic food certification until the end of the transition period.

(7) The department may adopt rules specifying which published employment security department unemployment rates to use for the purposes of subsection (4) (a) (ii) and (iii) of this section. [2023 c 418 § 3. Prior: 2022 c 98 § 1; 2022 c 24 § 1; 2021 c 239 § 1; 2020 c 320 § 1; 2019 c 343 § 2; 2011 1st sp.s. c 42 § 6; 2004 c 54 § 4; 1997 c 58 § 103.]

**Effective date—2023 c 418 § 3:** "Section 3 of this act takes effect January 1, 2024." [2023 c 418 § 12.]

**Effective date—2022 c 98:** "This act takes effect January 1, 2024." [2022 c 98 § 2.]

**Conflict with federal requirements—2021 c 239:** "If any part of this act is found to be in conflict with federal requirements that are a prescribed condition to the allocation of federal funds to the state, the conflicting part of this act is inoperative solely to the extent of the conflict and with respect to the agencies directly affected, and this finding does not affect the operation of the remainder of this act in its application to the agencies concerned. Rules adopted under this act must meet federal requirements that are a necessary condition to the receipt of federal funds by the state." [2021 c 239 § 2.]

**Contingent effective date—2021 c 239:** "This act takes effect July 1, 2023, only if specific funding for extending the 60-month time limit through the 2021-2023 biennium, is provided by June 30, 2021, in the omnibus appropriations act. If specific funding for extending the 60-month time limit through the 2021-2023 biennium is not provided by June 30, 2021, in the omnibus appropriations act, this act takes effect 90 days after final adjournment of the legislative session in which it is enacted." [2021 c 239 § 4.]

**Effective date—2020 c 320 § 1:** "Section 1 of this act takes effect July 1, 2021." [2020 c 320 § 3.]

**Prospective application—2019 c 343:** See note following RCW 74.08.025.

**Effective date—2011 1st sp.s. c 42 § 6:** "Section 6 of this act takes effect September 1, 2011." [2011 1st sp.s. c 42 § 29.]

**Findings—Intent—2011 1st sp.s. c 42:** See note following RCW 74.08A.260.

**Finding—2011 1st sp.s. c 42:** See note following RCW 74.04.004.

**Findings—Conflict with federal requirements—2004 c 54:** See notes following RCW 28A.235.160.

**RCW 74.08A.015 Time limits—State of emergency extension.** All families who have received temporary assistance for needy families since March 1, 2020, are eligible for the extension under RCW 74.08A.010(4)(a)(ii), regardless of whether they are current recipients. Eligible families shall only receive temporary assistance for needy families benefits that accrue after July 25, 2021. [2023 c 418 § 4; 2021 c 239 § 3.]

**Conflict with federal requirements—Contingent effective date—2021 c 239:** See notes following RCW 74.08A.010.

**RCW 74.08A.020 Electronic benefit transfer.** By October 2002, the department shall develop and implement an electronic benefit transfer system to be used for the delivery of public assistance benefits, including without limitation, food assistance.

The department shall comply with P.L. 104-193, and shall cooperate with relevant federal agencies in the design and implementation of the electronic benefit transfer system. [1997 c 58 § 104.]

**RCW 74.08A.030 Provision of services by religiously affiliated organizations—Rules.** (1) The department shall allow religiously affiliated organizations to provide services to families receiving temporary assistance for needy families on the same basis as any other nongovernmental provider, without impairing the religious character of such organizations, and without diminishing the religious freedom of beneficiaries of assistance funded under chapter 74.12 RCW.

(2) The department shall adopt rules implementing this section, and the applicable sections of P.L. 104-193 related to services provided by charitable, religious, or private organizations. [1997 c 58 § 106.]

**RCW 74.08A.039 Income eligibility—Federal supplemental security income.** In determining the income eligibility of an applicant or recipient for temporary assistance for needy families or WorkFirst, the department shall not count the federal supplemental security income received by a household member. [2011 1st sp.s. c 42 § 5.]

**Findings—Intent—Effective date—2011 1st sp.s. c 42:** See notes following RCW 74.08A.260.

**Finding—2011 1st sp.s. c 42:** See note following RCW 74.04.004.

**RCW 74.08A.040 Indian tribes—Program access—Funding—Rules.** The department shall (1) provide eligible Indian tribes ongoing, meaningful opportunities to participate in the development, oversight,

and operation of the state temporary assistance for needy families program; (2) certify annually that it is providing equitable access to the state temporary assistance for needy families program to Indian people whose tribe is not administering a tribal temporary assistance for needy families program; (3) coordinate and cooperate with eligible Indian tribes that elect to operate a tribal temporary assistance for needy families program as provided for in P.L. 104-193; (4) upon approval by the secretary of the federal department of health and human services of a tribal temporary assistance for needy families program, transfer a fair and equitable amount of the state maintenance of effort funds to the eligible Indian tribe; and (5) establish rules related to the operation of this section and RCW 74.08A.050, covering, at a minimum, appropriate uses of state maintenance of effort funds and annual reports on program operations. The legislature shall specify the amount of state maintenance of effort funds to be transferred in the biennial appropriations act. [1997 c 58 § 107.]

**RCW 74.08A.050 Indian tribes—Tribal program—Fiscal year.** An eligible Indian tribe exercising its authority under P.L. 104-193 to operate a tribal temporary assistance for needy families program shall operate the program on a state fiscal year basis. If a tribe decides to cancel a tribal temporary assistance for needy families program, it shall notify the department no later than ninety days prior to the start of the state fiscal year. [1997 c 58 § 108.]

**RCW 74.08A.060 Food stamp work requirements.** Single adults without dependents between eighteen and fifty years of age shall comply with federal food stamp work requirements as a condition of eligibility. The department may exempt any counties or subcounty areas from the federal food stamp work requirements in P.L. 104-193, unless the department receives written evidence of official action by a county or subcounty governing entity, taken after noticed consideration, that indicates that a county or subcounty area chooses not to use an exemption to the federal food stamp work requirements. [1997 c 58 § 110.]

**RCW 74.08A.100 Immigrants—Eligibility.** The state shall exercise its option under P.L. 104-193 to continue services to legal immigrants under temporary assistance for needy families, medicaid to the extent allowed by federal law, the state's basic health plan as provided in chapter 70.47 RCW, and social services block grant programs. Eligibility for these benefits for legal immigrants arriving after August 21, 1996, is limited to those families where the parent, parents, or legal guardians have been in residence in Washington state for a period of twelve consecutive months before making their application for assistance. Legal immigrants who lose benefits under the supplemental security income program as a result of P.L. 104-193 are immediately eligible for benefits under the state's general assistance-unemployable program. The department shall redetermine income and resource eligibility at least annually, in accordance with existing state policy. [2002 c 366 § 1; 1997 c 57 § 1.]

**Effective date—2002 c 366:** "This act takes effect October 1, 2002." [2002 c 366 § 3.]

**Captions not law—1997 c 57:** "Captions used in this act are not any part of the law." [1997 c 57 § 4.]

**RCW 74.08A.110 Immigrants—Sponsor deeming.** (1) Except as provided in subsection (4) of this section, qualified aliens and aliens permanently residing under color of law shall have their eligibility for assistance redetermined.

(2) In determining the eligibility and the amount of benefits of a qualified alien or an alien permanently residing under color of law for public assistance under this title, the income and resources of the alien shall be deemed to include the income and resources of any person and his or her spouse who executed an affidavit of support pursuant to section 213A of the federal immigration and naturalization act on behalf of the alien for a period of five years following the execution of that affidavit of support. The deeming provisions of this subsection shall be waived if the sponsor dies or is permanently incapacitated during the period the affidavit of support is valid.

(3) As used in this section, "qualified alien" has the meaning provided it in P.L. 104-183.

(4) (a) Qualified aliens specified under sections 403, 412, and 552 (e) and (f), subtitle B, Title IV, of P.L. 104-193 and in P.L. 104-208, are exempt from this section.

(b) Qualified aliens who served in the armed forces of an allied country, or were employed by an agency of the federal government, during a military conflict between the United States of America and a military adversary are exempt from the provisions of this section.

(c) Qualified aliens who are victims of domestic violence and petition for legal status under the federal violence against women act are exempt from the provisions of this section. [1997 c 57 § 2.]

**Captions not law—1997 c 57:** See note following RCW 74.08A.100.

**RCW 74.08A.120 Immigrants and victims of human trafficking—Food assistance.** (1) The department may establish a food assistance program for legal immigrants and victims of human trafficking as defined in RCW 74.04.005 who are ineligible for the federal food stamp program.

(2) The rules for the state food assistance program shall follow exactly the rules of the federal food stamp program except for the provisions pertaining to immigrant status.

(3) The benefit under the state food assistance program shall be established by the legislature in the biennial operating budget.

(4) The department may enter into a contract with the United States department of agriculture to use the existing federal food stamp program coupon system for the purposes of administering the state food assistance program.

(5) In the event the department is unable to enter into a contract with the United States department of agriculture, the department may issue vouchers to eligible households for the purchase of eligible foods at participating retailers. [2020 c 136 § 2; 1999 c 120 § 4; 1997 c 57 § 3.]



**Effective date—2020 c 136:** See note following RCW 74.04.005.

**Captions not law—1997 c 57:** See note following RCW 74.08A.100.

**RCW 74.08A.130 Immigrants—Naturalization facilitation.** The department shall make an affirmative effort to identify and proactively contact legal immigrants receiving public assistance to facilitate their applications for naturalization. The department shall obtain a complete list of legal immigrants in Washington who are receiving correspondence regarding their eligibility from the social security administration. The department shall inform immigrants regarding how citizenship may be attained. In order to facilitate the citizenship process, the department shall coordinate and contract, to the extent necessary, with existing public and private resources and shall, within available funds, ensure that those immigrants who qualify to apply for naturalization are referred to or otherwise offered classes. The department shall assist eligible immigrants in obtaining appropriate test exemptions, and other exemptions in the naturalization process, to the extent permitted under federal law. [2009 c 518 § 6; 1997 c 58 § 204.]

**RCW 74.08A.210 Diversion program—Emergency assistance.** (1) In order to prevent some families from developing dependency on temporary assistance for needy families, the department shall make available to qualifying applicants a diversion program designed to provide brief, emergency assistance for families in crisis whose income and assets would otherwise qualify them for temporary assistance for needy families.

(2) Diversion assistance may include cash or vouchers in payment for the following needs:

- (a) Child care;
- (b) Housing assistance;
- (c) Transportation-related expenses;
- (d) Food;
- (e) Medical costs for the recipient's immediate family;
- (f) Employment-related expenses which are necessary to keep or obtain paid unsubsidized employment.

(3) Diversion assistance is available once in each twelve-month period for each adult applicant. Recipients of diversion assistance are not included in the temporary assistance for needy families program.

(4) Diversion assistance may not exceed one thousand five hundred dollars for each instance.

(5) To be eligible for diversion assistance, a family must otherwise be eligible for temporary assistance for needy families.

(6) Families ineligible for temporary assistance for needy families or benefits under RCW 74.62.030 due to sanction, noncompliance, the lump sum income rule, or any other reason are not eligible for diversion assistance.

(7) Families must provide evidence showing that a bona fide need exists according to subsection (2) of this section in order to be eligible for diversion assistance.

An adult applicant may receive diversion assistance of any type no more than once per twelve-month period. If the recipient of

diversion assistance is placed on the temporary assistance for needy families program within twelve months of receiving diversion assistance, the prorated dollar value of the assistance shall be treated as a loan from the state, and recovered by deduction from the recipient's cash grant. [2011 1st sp.s. c 36 § 30; 2010 1st sp.s. c 8 § 27; 1997 c 58 § 302.]

**Findings—Intent—2011 1st sp.s. c 36:** See RCW 74.62.005.

**Effective date—2011 1st sp.s. c 36:** See note following RCW 74.62.005.

**Findings—Intent—Short title—Effective date—2010 1st sp.s. c 8:** See notes following RCW 74.04.225.

**RCW 74.08A.220 Individual development accounts—Microcredit and microenterprise approaches—Rules.** The department shall carry out a program to fund individual development accounts established by recipients eligible for assistance under the temporary assistance for needy families program.

(1) An individual development account may be established by or on behalf of a recipient eligible for assistance provided under the temporary assistance for needy families program operated under this title for the purpose of enabling the recipient to accumulate funds for a qualified purpose described in subsection (2) of this section.

(2) A qualified purpose as described in this subsection is one or more of the following, as provided by the qualified entity providing assistance to the individual:

(a) Postsecondary expenses paid from an individual development account directly to an eligible educational institution;

(b) Qualified acquisition costs with respect to a qualified principal residence for a qualified first-time homebuyer, if paid from an individual development account directly to the persons to whom the amounts are due;

(c) Amounts paid from an individual development account directly to a business capitalization account which is established in a federally insured financial institution and is restricted to use solely for qualified business capitalization expenses.

(3) A recipient may only contribute to an individual development account such amounts as are derived from earned income, as defined in section 911(d)(2) of the internal revenue code of 1986.

(4) The department shall establish rules to ensure funds held in an individual development account are only withdrawn for a qualified purpose as provided in this section.

(5) An individual development account established under this section shall be a trust created or organized in the United States and funded through periodic contributions by the establishing recipient and matched by or through a qualified entity for a qualified purpose as provided in this section.

(6) For the purpose of determining eligibility for any assistance provided under this title, all funds in an individual development account under this section shall be disregarded for such purpose with respect to any period during which such individual maintains or makes contributions into such an account.

(7) The department shall adopt rules authorizing the use of organizations using microcredit and microenterprise approaches to assisting low-income families to become financially self-sufficient.

(8) The department shall adopt rules implementing the use of individual development accounts by recipients of temporary assistance for needy families.

(9) For the purposes of this section, "eligible educational institution," "postsecondary educational expenses," "qualified acquisition costs," "qualified business," "qualified business capitalization expenses," "qualified expenditures," "qualified first-time homebuyer," "date of acquisition," "qualified plan," and "qualified principal residence" include the meanings provided for them in P.L. 104-193. [1997 c 58 § 307.]

**RCW 74.08A.230 Earnings disregards and earned income cutoffs.**

**(Effective until August 1, 2024.)** (1) In addition to their monthly benefit payment, a family may earn and keep one-half of its earnings during every month it is eligible to receive assistance under this section.

(2) In no event may a family be eligible for temporary assistance for needy families if its monthly gross earned income exceeds the maximum earned income level as set by the department. In calculating a household's gross earnings, the department shall disregard the earnings of a minor child who is:

(a) A full-time student; or

(b) A part-time student carrying at least half the normal school load and working fewer than thirty-five hours per week. [1997 c 58 § 308.]

**RCW 74.08A.230 Earnings disregards and earned income cutoffs.**

**(Effective August 1, 2024.)** (1) In addition to their monthly benefit payment, a family may earn and keep the first \$500 of the family's earnings in addition to one-half of the family's remaining earnings during every month it is eligible to receive assistance under this section.

(2) In no event may a family be eligible for temporary assistance for needy families if its monthly gross earned income exceeds the maximum earned income level as set by the department. In calculating a household's gross earnings, the department shall disregard the earnings of a minor child who is:

(a) A full-time student; or

(b) A part-time student carrying at least half the normal school load and working fewer than 35 hours per week. [2023 c 418 § 5; 1997 c 58 § 308.]

**Effective date—2023 c 418 § 5:** "Section 5 of this act takes effect August 1, 2024." [2023 c 418 § 14.]

**RCW 74.08A.240 Noncustodial parents in work programs.** The department may provide Washington WorkFirst activities or make cross-referrals to existing programs to qualifying noncustodial parents of children receiving temporary assistance for needy families who are unable to meet their child support obligations. Services authorized

under this section shall be provided within available funds. [1997 c 58 § 310.]

**RCW 74.08A.250 "Work activity" defined.** Unless the context clearly requires otherwise, as used in this chapter, "work activity" means:

- (1) Unsubsidized paid employment in the private or public sector;
- (2) Subsidized paid employment in the private or public sector, including employment through the state or federal work-study program for a period not to exceed 24 months;
- (3) Work experience, including:
  - (a) An internship or practicum, that is paid or unpaid and is required to complete a course of vocational training or to obtain a license or certificate in a high-demand occupation, as determined by the employment security department. No internship or practicum shall exceed 12 months; or
  - (b) Work associated with the refurbishing of publicly assisted housing, if sufficient paid employment is not available;
- (4) On-the-job training;
- (5) Job search and job readiness assistance;
- (6) Community service programs, including a recipient's voluntary service at a child care or preschool facility licensed under chapter 43.216 RCW or an elementary school in which his or her child is enrolled;
- (7) Vocational educational training, not to exceed 12 months with respect to any individual except that this 12-month limit may be increased to 24 months subject to funding appropriated specifically for this purpose;
- (8) Job skills training directly related to employment;
- (9) Education directly related to employment, in the case of a recipient who has not received a high school diploma or a high school equivalency certificate as provided in RCW 28B.50.536;
- (10) Satisfactory attendance at secondary school or in a course of study leading to a high school equivalency certificate as provided in RCW 28B.50.536, in the case of a recipient who has not completed secondary school or received such a certificate;
- (11) The provision of child care services to an individual who is participating in a community service program;
- (12) Internships, that shall be paid or unpaid work experience performed by an intern in a business, industry, or government or nongovernmental agency setting;
- (13) Practicums, which include any educational program in which a student is working under the close supervision of a professional in an agency, clinic, or other professional practice setting for purposes of advancing their skills and knowledge;
- (14) Services required by the recipient under RCW 74.08.025(2) and 74.08A.010(3) to become employable;
- (15) Financial literacy activities designed to be effective in assisting a recipient in becoming self-sufficient and financially stable; and
- (16) Parent education services or programs that support development of appropriate parenting skills, life skills, and employment-related competencies. [2023 c 418 § 6; 2019 c 343 § 5; 2017 c 156 § 1; 2013 c 39 § 27; 2011 1st sp.s. c 42 § 8; 2009 c 353 § 6; 2006 c 107 § 2; 2000 c 10 § 1; 1997 c 58 § 311.]

**Prospective application—2019 c 343:** See note following RCW 74.08.025.

**Findings—Intent—Effective date—2011 1st sp.s. c 42:** See notes following RCW 74.08A.260.

**Finding—2011 1st sp.s. c 42:** See note following RCW 74.04.004.

**Findings—Intent—2006 c 107:** "The legislature finds that for a variety of reasons, many citizens may lack the basic financial knowledge necessary to spend their money wisely, save for the future, and manage money challenges, such as a job loss, financing a college education, or a catastrophic injury. The legislature also finds that financial literacy is an essential element in achieving financial stability and self-sufficiency. The legislature intends to encourage participation in financial literacy training by WorkFirst participants, in order to promote their ability to make financial decisions that will contribute to their long-term financial well-being." [2006 c 107 § 1.]

**Effective date—2006 c 107:** "This act takes effect January 1, 2007." [2006 c 107 § 4.]

**RCW 74.08A.260 Work activity—Referral—Individual responsibility plan—Refusal to work.** (1) Each recipient shall be assessed after determination of program eligibility and before referral to job search. Assessments shall be based upon factors that are critical to obtaining employment, including but not limited to education, availability of child care, history of family violence, history of substance abuse, and other factors that affect the ability to obtain employment. Assessments may be performed by the department or by a contracted entity. The assessment shall be based on a uniform, consistent, transferable format that will be accepted by all agencies and organizations serving the recipient.

(2) Based on the assessment, an individual responsibility plan shall be prepared that: (a) Sets forth an employment goal and a plan for maximizing the recipient's success at meeting the employment goal; (b) considers WorkFirst educational and training programs from which the recipient could benefit; (c) contains the obligation of the recipient to participate in the program by complying with the plan; (d) moves the recipient into full-time WorkFirst activities as quickly as possible; and (e) describes the services available to the recipient either during or after WorkFirst to enable the recipient to obtain and keep employment and to advance in the workplace and increase the recipient's wage earning potential over time.

(3) Recipients who are not engaged in work and work activities, and do not qualify for a good cause exemption under RCW 74.08A.270, shall engage in self-directed service as provided in RCW 74.08A.330.

(4) If a recipient refuses to engage in work and work activities required by the department, after two months of continuous noncompliance, the family's grant shall be reduced by the recipient's share or by forty percent, whichever is greater, and must be terminated after twelve months of continuous noncompliance.

(5) The department shall waive the penalties required under subsection (4) of this section, subject to a finding that the

recipient refused to engage in work for good cause provided in RCW 74.08A.270.

(6) In consultation with the recipient, the department or contractor shall place the recipient into a work activity that is available in the local area where the recipient resides.

(7) Assessments conducted under this section shall include a consideration of the potential benefit to the recipient of engaging in financial literacy activities. The department shall consider the options for financial literacy activities available in the community, including information and resources available through the financial education public-private partnership created under RCW 28A.300.450. The department may authorize up to ten hours of financial literacy activities as a core activity or an optional activity under WorkFirst.

(8) Subsections (2) through (6) of this section are suspended for a recipient who is a parent or other relative personally providing care for a child under the age of two years. This suspension applies to both one and two parent families. However, both parents in a two-parent family cannot use the suspension during the same month. Nothing in this subsection shall prevent a recipient from participating in the WorkFirst program on a voluntary basis. [2020 c 338 § 1. Prior: 2018 c 126 § 5; 2018 c 58 § 8; 2017 3rd sp.s. c 21 § 1; 2011 1st sp.s. c 42 § 2; 2009 c 85 § 2; 2006 c 107 § 3; 2003 c 383 § 1; 1997 c 58 § 313.]

**Effective date—2020 c 338:** "This act takes effect July 1, 2021." [2020 c 338 § 2.]

**Application—2020 c 338:** "This act applies prospectively only and not retroactively." [2020 c 338 § 3.]

**Findings—Intent—2018 c 126:** See note following RCW 74.08A.505.

**Effective date—2018 c 58:** See note following RCW 28A.655.080.

**Findings—Intent—2011 1st sp.s. c 42:** "The legislature finds that stable and sustainable employment is the key goal of the WorkFirst and temporary assistance for needy families programs. Achieving stable and sustainable employment is a developmental process that takes time, effort, and engagement. In times of fiscal challenge, temporary assistance for needy families and WorkFirst resources must be invested in program elements that produce the best results for low-income families and the state of Washington.

The legislature further finds that the core tenets that are the foundation of Washington state's WorkFirst program are: (1) Achieving stable and successful employment; (2) recognizing the critical role that participants play in their children's development, healthy growth, and promotion of family stability; (3) developing strategies founded on the principle that WorkFirst is a transitional, not long-term, program to assist families on the pathway to self-sufficiency while holding them accountable; and (4) leveraging resources outside the funding for temporary assistance for needy families is crucial to achieving WorkFirst goals. It is the intent of the legislature, using evidence-based and research-based practices, to develop a road map to self-sufficiency for WorkFirst participants and temporary assistance for needy families recipients.

The legislature further finds that parents are responsible for the support of their children and that they have up to sixty months of

receipt of temporary assistance for needy families benefits, absent any applicable hardship extension, to achieve stable and sustainable employment or find other means to support their family. It is the intent of the legislature to apply a sixty-month time limit to the temporary assistance for needy families program, including households in which a parent is in the home and ineligible for temporary assistance for needy families. The legislature intends that hardship extensions be applied to families subject to time limits." [2011 1st sp.s. c 42 § 1.]

**Effective date—2011 1st sp.s. c 42:** "Except for section 6 of this act, this act is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of the state government and its existing public institutions, and takes effect July 1, 2011." [2011 1st sp.s. c 42 § 28.]

**Finding—2011 1st sp.s. c 42:** See note following RCW 74.04.004.

**Findings—Intent—Effective date—2006 c 107:** See notes following RCW 74.08A.250.

**RCW 74.08A.265 Assistance termination—Report—Finding of racial disproportionality.**

(1) Annually by December 31st, the department must report to the governor and the appropriate policy and fiscal committees of the legislature disaggregated data identifying the race of individuals whose temporary assistance for needy families benefits were reduced or terminated during the preceding year due to:

- (a) Sanction as described in RCW 74.08A.260; or
- (b) Reaching the sixty-month time limit under RCW 74.08A.010.

(2) If the disaggregated data for terminated or sanctioned individuals shows a disproportionate representation of any racial group that has experienced historic disparities or discrimination, the department must describe steps it is taking to address and remedy the racial disproportionality. [2020 c 320 § 2.]

**RCW 74.08A.270 Good cause.** (1) Good cause reasons for failure to participate in WorkFirst program components include situations where: (a) The recipient is a parent or other relative personally providing care for a child under the age of six years, and formal or informal child care, or day care for an incapacitated individual living in the same home as a dependent child, is necessary for an individual to participate or continue participation in the program or accept employment, and such care is not available, and the department fails to provide such care; (b) the recipient is a parent with a child under the age of two years; or (c) the recipient is experiencing a hardship as defined by the department in rule.

(2) A parent claiming a good cause exemption from WorkFirst participation under subsection (1)(b) of this section may be required to participate in one or more of the following, up to a maximum total of twenty hours per week, if such treatment, services, or training is indicated by the comprehensive evaluation or other assessment:

- (a) Mental health treatment;
- (b) Alcohol or drug treatment;
- (c) Domestic violence services; or

(d) Parenting education or parenting skills training, if available.

(3) The department shall: (a) Work with a parent claiming a good cause exemption under subsection (1)(b) of this section to identify and access programs and services designed to improve parenting skills and promote child well-being, including but not limited to home visitation programs and services; and (b) provide information on the availability of home visitation services to temporary assistance for needy families caseworkers, who shall inform clients of the availability of the services. If desired by the client, the caseworker shall facilitate appropriate referrals to providers of home visitation services.

(4) Nothing in this section shall prevent a recipient from participating in the WorkFirst program on a voluntary basis.

(5) A parent is eligible for a good cause exemption under subsection (1)(b) of this section for a maximum total of 24 months over the parent's lifetime. [2023 c 418 § 7; 2017 3rd sp.s. c 21 § 2; 2007 c 289 § 1; 2002 c 89 § 1; 1997 c 58 § 314.]

**RCW 74.08A.275 Employability screening.** Each recipient approved to receive temporary assistance for needy families shall be subject to an employability screening under RCW 74.08A.260 after determination of program eligibility and before referral to job search. If the employability screening determines the recipient is not employable, or meets the criteria specified in RCW 74.08A.270 for a good cause exemption to work requirements, the department shall defer the job search requirement under RCW 74.08A.285. [2003 c 383 § 2; 1999 c 340 § 1.]

**RCW 74.08A.280 Program goal—Collaboration to develop work programs—Contracts—Service areas—Regional plans.** (1) The legislature finds that moving those eligible for assistance to self-sustaining employment is a goal of the WorkFirst program. It is the intent of WorkFirst to aid a participant's progress to self-sufficiency by allowing flexibility within the statewide program to reflect community resources, the local characteristics of the labor market, and the composition of the caseload. Program success will be enhanced through effective coordination at regional and local levels, involving employers, labor representatives, educators, community leaders, local governments, and social service providers.

(2) The department, through its regional offices, shall collaborate with employers, recipients, frontline workers, educational institutions, labor, private industry councils, the workforce training and education coordinating board, community rehabilitation employment programs, employment and training agencies, local governments, the employment security department, and community action agencies to develop work programs that are effective and work in their communities. For planning purposes, the department shall collect and make accessible to regional offices successful work program models from around the United States, including the employment partnership program, apprenticeship programs, microcredit, microenterprise, self-employment, and W-2 Wisconsin works. Work programs shall incorporate local volunteer citizens in their planning and implementation phases to ensure community relevance and success.



(3) To reduce administrative costs and to ensure equal statewide access to services, the department may develop contracts for statewide welfare-to-work services. These statewide contracts shall support regional flexibility and ensure that resources follow local labor market opportunities and recipients' needs.

(4) The secretary shall establish WorkFirst service areas for purposes of planning WorkFirst programs and for distributing WorkFirst resources. Service areas shall reflect department regions.

(5) By July 31st of each odd-numbered year, a plan for the WorkFirst program shall be developed for each region. The plan shall be prepared in consultation with local and regional sources, adapting the statewide WorkFirst program to achieve maximum effect for the participants and the communities within which they reside. Local consultation shall include to the greatest extent possible input from local and regional planning bodies for social services and workforce development. The regional and local administrator shall consult with employers of various sizes, labor representatives, training and education providers, program participants, economic development organizations, community organizations, tribes, and local governments in the preparation of the service area plan.

(6) The secretary has final authority in plan approval or modification. Regional program implementation may deviate from the statewide program if specified in a service area plan, as approved by the secretary. [1997 c 58 § 315.]

**RCW 74.08A.285 Job search instruction and assistance.** The WorkFirst program operated by the department to meet the federal work requirements specified in P.L. 104-193 shall contain a job search component. The component shall consist of instruction on how to secure a job and assisted job search activities to locate and retain employment. Nonexempt recipients of temporary assistance for needy families shall participate in an initial job search for no more than twelve consecutive weeks. Each recipient shall receive a work skills assessment upon referral to the job search program. The work skills assessment shall include but not be limited to education, employment history, employment strengths, and job skills. The recipient's ability to obtain employment will be reviewed periodically thereafter and, if it is clear at any time that further participation in a job search will not be productive, the department shall assess the recipient pursuant to RCW 74.08A.260. The department shall refer recipients unable to find employment through the initial job search period to work activities that will develop their skills or knowledge to make them more employable, including additional job search and job readiness assistance. [2003 c 383 § 3; 1998 c 89 § 1.]

**RCW 74.08A.290 Competitive performance-based contracting—Evaluation of contracting practices—Contracting strategies.** (1) It is the intent of the legislature that the department is authorized to engage in competitive contracting using performance-based contracts to provide all work activities authorized in chapter 58, Laws of 1997, including the job search component authorized in \*section 312 of this act.

(2) The department may use competitive performance-based contracting to select which vendors will participate in the WorkFirst

program. Performance-based contracts shall be awarded based on factors that include but are not limited to the criteria listed in RCW 74.08A.410, past performance of the contractor, demonstrated ability to perform the contract effectively, financial strength of the contractor, and merits of the proposal for services submitted by the contractor. Contracts shall be made without regard to whether the contractor is a public or private entity.

(3) The department may contract for an evaluation of the competitive contracting practices and outcomes to be performed by an independent entity with expertise in government privatization and competitive strategies. The evaluation shall include quarterly progress reports to the fiscal committees of the legislature and to the governor, starting at the first quarter after the effective date of the first competitive contract and ending two years after the effective date of the first competitive contract.

(4) The department shall seek independent assistance in developing contracting strategies to implement this section. Assistance may include but is not limited to development of contract language, design of requests for proposal, developing full cost information on government services, evaluation of bids, and providing for equal competition between private and public entities. [1997 c 58 § 316.]

**\*Reviser's note:** Section 312 of this act was vetoed by the governor.

**RCW 74.08A.300 Placement bonuses.** In the case of service providers that are not public agencies, initial placement bonuses of no greater than five hundred dollars may be provided by the department for service entities responsible for placing recipients in an unsubsidized job for a minimum of twelve weeks, and the following additional bonuses shall also be provided:

(1) A percent of the initial bonus if the job pays double the minimum wage;

(2) A percent of the initial bonus if the job provides health care;

(3) A percent of the initial bonus if the job includes employer-provided child care needed by the recipient; and

(4) A percent of the initial bonus if the recipient is continuously employed for two years. [1997 c 58 § 317.]

**RCW 74.08A.310 Self-employment assistance—Training and placement programs.** The department shall:

(1) Notify recipients of temporary assistance for needy families that self-employment is one method of leaving state assistance. The department shall provide its regional offices, recipients of temporary assistance for needy families, and any contractors providing job search, training, or placement services notification of programs available in the state for entrepreneurial training, technical assistance, and loans available for start-up businesses;

(2) Provide recipients of temporary assistance for needy families and service providers assisting such recipients through training and placement programs with information it receives about the skills and training required by firms locating in the state;

(3) Encourage recipients of temporary assistance for needy families that are in need of basic skills to seek out programs that integrate basic skills training with occupational training and workplace experience. [1997 c 58 § 324.]

**RCW 74.08A.320 Wage subsidy program.** The department shall establish a wage subsidy program to be known as the community jobs program for recipients of temporary assistance for needy families who have barriers to employment, lack experience and attachment to the job force, or have been unsuccessful in securing employment leading to family self-sufficiency. The department shall give preference in job placements to private sector employers that have agreed to participate in the wage subsidy program. The department shall identify characteristics of employers who can meet the employment goals stated in RCW 74.08A.410. The department shall use these characteristics in identifying which employers may participate in the program. The department shall adopt rules for the participation of recipients of temporary assistance for needy families in the wage subsidy program. Participants in the program established under this section may not be employed if: (1) The employer has terminated the employment of any current employee or otherwise caused an involuntary reduction of its workforce in order to fill the vacancy so created with the participant; or (2) the participant displaces or partially displaces current employees. Employers providing positions created under this section shall meet the requirements of chapter 49.46 RCW. This section shall not diminish or result in the infringement of obligations or rights under chapters 41.06, 41.56, and 49.36 RCW and the national labor relations act, 29 U.S.C. Ch. 7. The department shall establish such local and statewide advisory boards, including business and labor representatives, as it deems appropriate to assist in the implementation of the wage subsidy program. Once the recipient is hired, the wage subsidy shall be authorized for up to nine months. [2010 c 273 § 5; 1997 c 58 § 325.]

**RCW 74.08A.330 Community service program.** The department shall establish the community service program to provide the experience of work for recipients of public assistance. The program is intended to promote a strong work ethic for participating public assistance recipients. Under this program, public assistance recipients are required to volunteer to work for charitable nonprofit organizations and public agencies, or engage in another activity designed to benefit the recipient, the recipient's family, or the recipient's community, as determined by the department on a case-by-case basis. Participants in a community service or work experience program established by this chapter are deemed employees for the purpose of chapter 49.17 RCW. The cost of premiums under Title 51 RCW shall be paid for by the department for participants in a community service or work experience program. Participants in a community service or work experience program may not be placed if: (1) An employer has terminated the employment of any current employee or otherwise caused an involuntary reduction of its workforce in order to fill the vacancy so created with the participant; or (2) the participant displaces or partially displaces current employees. [1997 c 58 § 326.]

**RCW 74.08A.341 Program constraints—Expenditures.** The department of social and health services shall operate the Washington WorkFirst program authorized under RCW 74.08A.210 through 74.08A.330, 43.330.145, 43.216.710, and 74.25.040, and chapter 74.12 RCW within the following constraints:

(1) The program shall be operated within amounts appropriated by the legislature and consistent with policy established by the legislature to achieve self-sufficiency through work and the following additional outcomes:

(a) Recipients' economic status is improving through wage progression, job retention, and educational advancement;

(b) Recipients' status regarding housing stability, medical and behavioral health, and job readiness is improving;

(c) The well-being of children whose caretaker is receiving benefits on their behalf is improving with respect to child welfare and educational achievement.

(2)(a) The department shall create a budget structure that allows for more transparent tracking of program spending. The budget structure shall outline spending for the following: Temporary assistance for needy family grants, WorkFirst activities, and administration of the program.

(b) Each biennium, the department shall establish a biennial spending plan, using the budget structure created in (a) of this subsection, for this program and submit the plan to the legislative fiscal committees and the legislative-executive WorkFirst poverty reduction oversight task force no later than July 1st of every odd-numbered year, beginning on July 1, 2013. The department shall update the legislative fiscal committees and the task force on the spending plan if modifications are made to the plan previously submitted to the legislature and the task force for that biennium.

(c) The department also shall provide expenditure reports to the fiscal committees of the legislature and the legislative-executive WorkFirst poverty reduction oversight task force beginning September 1, 2012, and on a quarterly basis thereafter. If the department determines, based upon quarterly expenditure reports, that expenditures will exceed funding at the end of the fiscal year, the department shall take those actions necessary to ensure that services provided under this chapter are available only to the extent of and consistent with appropriations in the operating budget and policy established by the legislature following notification provided in (b) of this subsection.

(3) No more than fifteen percent of the temporary assistance for needy families block grant, the federal child care funds, and qualifying state expenditures may be spent for administrative purposes. For purposes of this subsection, "administrative purposes" does not include expenditures for information technology and computerization needed for tracking and monitoring required by P.L. 104-193.

(4) The department shall expend funds appropriated for work activities, as defined in RCW 74.08A.250, or for other services provided to WorkFirst recipients, as authorized under RCW 74.08A.290. [2018 c 126 § 6; 2018 c 52 § 5; 2012 c 217 § 1.]

**Reviser's note:** This section was amended by 2018 c 52 § 5 and by 2018 c 126 § 6, each without reference to the other. Both amendments are incorporated in the publication of this section under RCW 1.12.025(2). For rule of construction, see RCW 1.12.025(1).

**Findings—Intent—2018 c 126:** See note following RCW 74.08A.505.

**Effective date—Intent—Finding—2018 c 52:** See notes following RCW 43.216.909.

**Effective date—2012 c 217:** "This act takes effect July 1, 2012."  
[2012 c 217 § 4.]

**RCW 74.08A.350 Questionnaires—Job opportunities for welfare recipients.** The department of social and health services shall create a questionnaire, asking businesses for information regarding available and upcoming job opportunities for welfare recipients. The department of revenue shall include the questionnaire in a regular quarterly mailing. The department of social and health services shall receive responses and use the information to develop work activities in the areas where jobs will be available. [1997 c 58 § 1007.]

**RCW 74.08A.380 Teen parents—Education requirements.** All applicants under the age of eighteen years who are approved for assistance and, within one hundred eighty days after the date of federal certification of the Washington temporary assistance for needy families program, all unmarried minor parents or pregnant minor applicants shall, as a condition of receiving benefits, actively progress toward the completion of a high school diploma or a high school equivalency certificate as provided in RCW 28B.50.536. [2013 c 39 § 28; 1997 c 58 § 503.]

**RCW 74.08A.400 Outcome measures—Intent.** It is the intent of the legislature that the Washington WorkFirst program focus on work and on personal responsibility for recipients. The program shall be evaluated among other evaluations, through a limited number of outcome measures designed to hold each community service office and economic services region accountable for program success. [1997 c 58 § 701.]

**Effective dates—1997 c 58:** See note following RCW 74.20A.320.

**RCW 74.08A.410 Outcome measures—Development—Benchmarks.** (1)  
The WorkFirst program shall develop outcome measures for use in evaluating the WorkFirst program authorized in chapter 58, Laws of 1997, which may include but are not limited to:

- (a) Caseload reduction, including data for participants who exit:
  - (i) Due to increased income;
  - (ii) to employment;
  - (iii) at the participant's request;
  - or (iv) for other reasons;
- (b) Recidivism to caseload after two years;
- (c) Employment;
- (d) Job retention;
- (e) Earnings;
- (f) Wage progression;
- (g) Reduction in average grant through increased recipient earnings;
- (h) Placement of recipients into private sector, unsubsidized jobs; and

(i) Outcomes for sanctioned and time-limited families.

(2) The department shall require that contractors for WorkFirst services collect outcome measure information and report outcome measures to the department regularly. The department shall develop benchmarks that compare outcome measure information from all contractors to provide a clear indication of the most effective contractors. Benchmark information shall be published quarterly and provided to the legislature, the governor, the legislative-executive WorkFirst poverty reduction oversight task force, and all contractors for WorkFirst services. [2019 c 343 § 3; 1997 c 58 § 702.]

**Prospective application—2019 c 343:** See note following RCW 74.08.025.

**Effective dates—1997 c 58:** See note following RCW 74.20A.320.

**RCW 74.08A.411 Outcome measures—Data—Report to the legislature and the legislative-executive WorkFirst poverty reduction oversight task force.** The department shall continue to implement WorkFirst program improvements that are designed to achieve progress against outcome measures specified in RCW 74.08A.410. Outcome data regarding job retention and wage progression shall be reported quarterly to the appropriate fiscal and policy committees of the legislature and to the legislative-executive WorkFirst poverty reduction oversight task force for families who leave assistance for any reason, measured after twelve months, twenty-four months, and thirty-six months. The department shall also report the percentage of families who have returned to temporary assistance for needy families after twelve months, twenty-four months, and thirty-six months. The department shall make every effort to maximize vocational training, as allowed by federal and state requirements. [2019 c 343 § 4; 2009 c 85 § 3.]

**Prospective application—2019 c 343:** See note following RCW 74.08.025.

**RCW 74.08A.420 Outcome measures—Evaluations—Awarding contracts—Bonuses.** Every WorkFirst office, region, contract, employee, and contractor shall be evaluated using the criteria in RCW 74.08A.410. The department shall award contracts to the highest performing entities according to the criteria in RCW 74.08A.410. The department may provide for bonuses to offices, regions, and employees with the best outcomes according to measures in RCW 74.08A.410. [1997 c 58 § 703.]

**Effective dates—1997 c 58:** See note following RCW 74.20A.320.

**RCW 74.08A.440 Recipients exempted from active work search—Benefits eligibility.** Recipients exempted from active work search activities due to incapacity or a disability shall receive services for which they are eligible, including aged, blind, or disabled assistance benefits as they relate to the facilitation of enrollment in the federal supplemental security income program, referrals to essential needs and housing support benefits, access to chemical

dependency treatment, referrals to vocational rehabilitation, and other services needed to assist the recipient in becoming employable. Aged, blind, or disabled assistance and essential needs and housing support benefits shall not supplant cash assistance and other services provided through the temporary assistance for needy families program. To the greatest extent possible, services shall be funded through the temporary assistance for needy families appropriations. [2011 1st sp.s. c 36 § 31; 2010 1st sp.s. c 8 § 32.]

**Findings—Intent—2011 1st sp.s. c 36:** See RCW 74.62.005.

**Effective date—2011 1st sp.s. c 36:** See note following RCW 74.62.005.

**Findings—Intent—Short title—Effective date—2010 1st sp.s. c 8:** See notes following RCW 74.04.225.

**RCW 74.08A.500 Legislative-executive WorkFirst poverty reduction oversight task force—Definitions.** The definitions in this section apply throughout chapter 126, Laws of 2018 unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

(1) "Advisory committee" means the intergenerational poverty advisory committee.

(2) "Cycle of poverty" or "poverty cycle" means the set of factors or events by which the long-term poverty of a person is likely to continue and be experienced by each child of the person when the child becomes an adult unless there is outside intervention.

(3) "Department" means the department of social and health services.

(4) "Intergenerational poverty" means poverty in which two or more successive generations of a family continue in the cycle of poverty and governmental dependence, and is not situational poverty.

(5) "Partner agency" means an executive branch agency represented by a voting or nonvoting member of the task force.

(6) "Secretary" means the secretary of the department of social and health services.

(7) "Task force" means the legislative-executive WorkFirst poverty reduction oversight task force. [2018 c 126 § 2.]

**Findings—Intent—2018 c 126:** See note following RCW 74.08A.505.

**RCW 74.08A.505 Legislative-executive WorkFirst poverty reduction oversight task force—Membership—Duties—Five-year plan.** (1)(a) A legislative-executive WorkFirst poverty reduction oversight task force is established, with voting members as provided in this subsection. Task force membership shall include diverse, statewide representation and its membership shall reflect regional, racial, and cultural diversity to adequately represent the needs of all children and families in the state.

(i) The president of the senate shall appoint two members from each of the two largest caucuses of the senate.

(ii) The speaker of the house of representatives shall appoint two members from each of the two largest caucuses of the house of representatives.

(iii) The governor shall appoint eight members representing the following agencies: The department of social and health services; the department of children, youth, and families; the department of commerce; the employment security department; the office of the superintendent of public instruction; the department of health; the department of corrections; and the state board for community and technical colleges.

(b) The task force shall choose its cochairs, one from among the legislative members and one from among the executive branch members. The secretary of the department of social and health services shall convene the initial meeting of the task force.

(2) The governor shall appoint eight nonvoting members to the task force representing the:

- (a) State commission on African American affairs;
- (b) State commission on Hispanic affairs;
- (c) State commission on Asian Pacific American affairs;
- (d) Governor's office of Indian affairs;
- (e) Women's commission;
- (f) LGBTQ commission;
- (g) Office of equity; and
- (h) Office of financial management.

(3) The cochairs of the intergenerational poverty advisory committee created in RCW 74.08A.510 shall serve as nonvoting members of the task force.

(4) The task force shall:

(a) Oversee the partner agencies' operation of the WorkFirst program and temporary assistance for needy families program to ensure that the programs are achieving desired outcomes for their clients;

(b) Determine evidence-based outcome measures for the WorkFirst program, including measures related to equitably serving the needs of historically underrepresented populations, such as English language learners, immigrants, refugees, and other diverse communities;

(c) Develop accountability measures for WorkFirst recipients and the state agencies responsible for their progress toward self-sufficiency;

(d) Collaborate with the advisory committee created in RCW 74.08A.510 to develop and monitor strategies to prevent and address adverse childhood experiences and reduce intergenerational poverty;

(e) Seek input on best practices for poverty reduction from service providers, community-based organizations, legislators, state agencies, stakeholders, the business community, and subject matter experts;

(f) Collaborate with partner agencies and the advisory committee to analyze available data and information regarding intergenerational poverty in the state, with a primary focus on data and information regarding children who are at risk of continuing the cycle of poverty and welfare dependency unless outside intervention occurs; and

(g) Recommend policy actions to the governor and the legislature to effectively reduce intergenerational poverty and promote and encourage self-sufficiency.

(5) (a) The task force shall direct the department of social and health services to develop a five-year plan to reduce intergenerational poverty and promote self-sufficiency, subject to oversight and approval by the task force. Upon approval by the task force, the department must submit the plan to the governor and the appropriate committees of the legislature by December 1, 2019.



(b) The task force shall review the five-year plan by December 1, 2024, and shall direct the department to update the plan as determined necessary by the task force.

(6) The partner agencies must provide the task force with regular reports on:

(a) The partner agencies' progress toward meeting the outcome and performance measures established under this section;

(b) Caseload trends and program expenditures, and the impact of those trends and expenditures on client services, including services to historically underrepresented populations; and

(c) The characteristics of families who have been unsuccessful on the temporary assistance for needy families program and have lost their benefits either through sanction or the sixty-month time limit.

(7) Staff support for the task force, including administration of task force meetings, must be provided by the state agency members of the task force. Additional staff support for legislative members of the task force must be provided by senate committee services and the house of representatives office of program research.

(8) During their tenure, the state agency members of the task force shall respond in a timely manner to data requests from the cochairs.

(9) Legislative members of the task force are reimbursed for travel expenses in accordance with RCW 44.04.120. Nonlegislative members are not entitled to be reimbursed for travel expenses if they are elected officials or participating on behalf of an employer, governmental entity, or other organization. Any reimbursement for other nonlegislative members is subject to chapter 43.03 RCW. [2022 c 176 § 1; 2018 c 126 § 3.]

**Findings—Intent—2018 c 126:** "The legislature finds that intergenerational poverty, which passes from parents to children, should be distinguished from situational poverty, which occurs after an event like losing employment. Intergenerational poverty can affect the lives of many future children and generations without the development of specific strategies to stop this cycle.

The legislature finds that it is necessary to bring together state agencies and other stakeholders for the purposes of policy and program development to address intergenerational poverty and to develop specific strategies to provide families the support they need to overcome a history of poverty.

The legislature finds that the legislative-executive WorkFirst oversight task force has recommended that its scope be modified to include poverty reduction in order to provide a renewed focus on the underlying causes of intergenerational poverty in Washington. Therefore, the legislature intends to create a legislative-executive WorkFirst poverty reduction oversight task force and an intergenerational poverty advisory committee in order to lay the groundwork in Washington for advancing intergenerational prosperity and reducing poverty." [2018 c 126 § 1.]

**RCW 74.08A.510 Legislative-executive WorkFirst poverty reduction oversight task force—Intergenerational poverty advisory committee—Membership—Duties.** (1) To assist the task force established in RCW 74.08A.505, there is created the intergenerational poverty advisory committee.

(2) The advisory committee must include diverse, statewide representation from public, nonprofit, and for-profit entities. The committee membership must reflect regional, racial, and cultural diversity to adequately represent the needs of all children and families in the state.

(3) Members of the advisory committee are appointed by the secretary, with the approval of the task force.

(4) The advisory committee must include representatives from:

(a) Advocacy groups that focus on childhood poverty issues;

(b) Advocacy groups that focus on education and early childhood education issues;

(c) Academic experts in childhood poverty, education, or early childhood education issues;

(d) Faith-based organizations that address childhood poverty, education, or early childhood education issues;

(e) Tribal governments;

(f) Families impacted by poverty;

(g) Local government representatives that address childhood poverty or education issues;

(h) The business community;

(i) A group representing accredited financial counselors;

(j) A subject matter expert in infant mental health;

(k) The department of children, youth, and families; and

(l) The department.

(5) Each member of the advisory committee is appointed for a four-year term unless a member is appointed to complete an unexpired term. The secretary may adjust the length of term at the time of appointment or reappointment so that approximately one-half of the advisory committee is appointed every two years.

(6) The secretary may remove an advisory committee member:

(a) If the member is unable or unwilling to carry out the member's assigned responsibilities; or

(b) For good cause.

(7) If a vacancy occurs in the advisory committee membership for any reason, a replacement may be appointed for the unexpired term.

(8) The advisory committee shall choose cochairs from among its membership. The secretary shall convene the initial meeting of the advisory committee.

(9) A majority of the advisory committee constitutes a quorum of the advisory committee at any meeting and the action of the majority of members present is the action of the advisory committee.

(10) The advisory committee shall:

(a) Meet quarterly at the request of the task force cochairs or the cochairs of the advisory committee;

(b) Make recommendations to the task force on how the task force and the state can effectively address the needs of children affected by intergenerational poverty and achieve the purposes and duties of the task force as described in RCW 74.08A.505;

(c) Ensure that the advisory committee's recommendations to the task force are supported by verifiable data; and

(d) Gather input from diverse communities about the impact of intergenerational poverty on outcomes such as education, health care, employment, involvement in the child welfare system, and other related areas.

(11) The department shall provide staff support to the advisory committee and shall endeavor to accommodate the participation needs of its members. Accommodations may include considering the location and

time of committee meetings, making options available for remote participation by members, and convening meetings of the committee in locations with proximity to available child care whenever feasible.

(12) Members of the advisory committee may receive reimbursement for travel expenses in accordance with RCW 43.03.050 and 43.03.060. [2022 c 176 § 2; 2018 c 126 § 4.]

**Findings—Intent—2018 c 126:** See note following RCW 74.08A.505.

**RCW 74.08A.900 Short title—1997 c 58.** This act may be known and cited as the Washington WorkFirst temporary assistance for needy families act. [1997 c 58 § 2.]

**RCW 74.08A.901 Part headings, captions, table of contents not law—1997 c 58.** Part headings, captions, and the table of contents used in this act are not any part of the law. [1997 c 58 § 1008.]

**RCW 74.08A.902 Exemptions and waivers from federal law—1997 c 58.** The governor and the department of social and health services shall seek all necessary exemptions and waivers from and amendments to federal statutes, rules, and regulations and shall report to the appropriate committees in the house of representatives and senate quarterly on the efforts to secure the federal changes to permit full implementation of this act at the earliest possible date. [1997 c 58 § 1009.]

**RCW 74.08A.903 Conflict with federal requirements—1997 c 58.** If any part of this act is found to be in conflict with federal requirements that are a prescribed condition to the allocation of federal funds to the state, the conflicting part of this act is inoperative solely to the extent of the conflict and with respect to the agencies directly affected, and this finding does not affect the operation of the remainder of this act in its application to the agencies concerned. The rules under this act shall meet federal requirements that are a necessary condition to the receipt of federal funds by the state. As used in this section, "allocation of federal funds to the state" means the allocation of federal funds that are appropriated by the legislature to the department of social and health services and on which the department depends for carrying out any provision of the operating budget applicable to it. [1997 c 58 § 1011.]

**RCW 74.08A.904 Severability—1997 c 58.** If any provision of this act or its application to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the remainder of the act or the application of the provision to other persons or circumstances is not affected. [1997 c 58 § 1012.]

**RCW 74.08A.905 Construction—Chapter applicable to state registered domestic partnerships—2009 c 521.** For the purposes of

this chapter, the terms spouse, marriage, marital, husband, wife, widow, widower, next of kin, and family shall be interpreted as applying equally to state registered domestic partnerships or individuals in state registered domestic partnerships as well as to marital relationships and married persons, and references to dissolution of marriage shall apply equally to state registered domestic partnerships that have been terminated, dissolved, or invalidated, to the extent that such interpretation does not conflict with federal law. Where necessary to implement chapter 521, Laws of 2009, gender-specific terms such as husband and wife used in any statute, rule, or other law shall be construed to be gender neutral, and applicable to individuals in state registered domestic partnerships. [2009 c 521 § 174.]

**Effective dates—2009 c 521 §§ 5-8, 79, 87-103, 107, 151, 165, 166, 173-175, and 190-192:** See note following RCW 2.10.900.