



# House of Representatives

**File No. 766**

General Assembly

February Session, 2008

**(Reprint of File No. 401)**

Substitute House Bill No. 5708  
As Amended by House Amendment Schedule  
"A"

Approved by the Legislative Commissioner  
May 1, 2008

**AN ACT CONCERNING THE EXPANSION OF THE CARE 4 KIDS PROGRAM.**

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. Subsection (c) of section 17b-749 of the general statutes is  
2 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July*  
3 *1, 2008*):

4 (c) The commissioner shall establish eligibility and program  
5 standards including, but not limited to: (1) A priority intake and  
6 eligibility system with preference given to serving recipients of  
7 temporary family assistance who are employed or engaged in  
8 employment activities under the department's "Jobs First" program,  
9 working families whose temporary family assistance was discontinued  
10 not more than five years prior to the date of application for the child  
11 care subsidy program, teen parents, low-income working families,  
12 adoptive families of children who were adopted from the Department  
13 of Children and Families and who are granted a waiver of income  
14 standards under subdivision (2) of subsection (b), and working  
15 families who are at risk of welfare dependency; (2) health and safety

16 standards for child care providers not required to be licensed; (3) a  
 17 reimbursement system for child care services which account for  
 18 differences in the age of the child, number of children in the family, the  
 19 geographic region and type of care provided by licensed and  
 20 unlicensed caregivers, the cost and type of services provided by  
 21 licensed and unlicensed caregivers, successful completion of fifteen  
 22 hours of annual in-service training or credentialing of child care  
 23 directors and administrators, and program accreditation; (4)  
 24 supplemental payment for special needs of the child and extended  
 25 nontraditional hours; (5) an annual rate review process which assures  
 26 that reimbursement rates are maintained at levels which permit equal  
 27 access to a variety of child care settings; (6) a sliding reimbursement  
 28 scale for participating families; (7) an administrative appeals process;  
 29 (8) an administrative hearing process to adjudicate cases of alleged  
 30 fraud and abuse and to impose sanctions and recover overpayments;  
 31 [and] (9) an extended period of program and payment eligibility when  
 32 a parent who is receiving a child care subsidy experiences a temporary  
 33 interruption in employment or other approved activity; and (10) a  
 34 waiting list for the child care subsidy program that reflects the priority  
 35 and eligibility system set forth in subdivision (1) of this subsection,  
 36 which is reviewed periodically, with the inclusion of this information  
 37 in the annual report required to be issued annually by the Department  
 38 of Social Services to the Governor and the General Assembly in  
 39 accordance with subdivision (10) of section 17b-733 of the 2008  
 40 supplement to the general statutes. Such action will include, but not be  
 41 limited to, family income, age of child, region of state and length of  
 42 time on such waiting list.

|   |              |            |
|---|--------------|------------|
| This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections: |              |            |
| Section 1   | July 1, 2008 | 17b-749(c) |

The following fiscal impact statement and bill analysis are prepared for the benefit of members of the General Assembly, solely for the purpose of information, summarization, and explanation, and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose:

**OFA Fiscal Note**

**State Impact:**

| Agency Affected                | Fund-Effect | FY 09 \$      | FY 10 \$      |
|--------------------------------|-------------|---------------|---------------|
| Department of Social Services. | GF - Cost   | Indeterminate | Indeterminate |

**Municipal Impact:** None

**Explanation**

The bill directs the Department of Social Services (DSS) to establish temporary eligibility standards of up to four weeks for unemployed parents who are seeking employment.

Although this program is statutorily to be operated within existing budgetary resources, DSS has in practice operated it as an entitlement in recent years. Should the department continue this practice, the eligibility expansion in this bill will lead to increased child care subsidy costs. It is not known how many additional parents would use the temporary eligibility standard. Currently, the average monthly cost of a child care subsidy is approximately \$625.

House "A" eliminated a provision of the underlying bill that would have extended child care eligibility to include a parent who is seeking employment or who is attending an institute of higher education if they meet other program criteria. This elimination removed an indeterminate cost associated with this expansion.

**The Out Years**

The annualized ongoing fiscal impact identified above would continue into the future subject to inflation.

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**OLR Bill Analysis****sHB 5708 (as amended by House "A")\******AN ACT CONCERNING THE EXPANSION OF THE CARE 4 KIDS PROGRAM.*****SUMMARY:**

This bill directs the Department of Social Services (DSS) commissioner to establish extended eligibility standards for people receiving child care subsidies under the department's Care 4 Kids program who become ineligible for the subsidy due to a temporary interruption in employment or other approved activity. Currently, the subsidy is available only to qualifying families with a parent or caretaker who is (1) working; (2) going to high school; or (3) receiving cash assistance under the state's Temporary Family Assistance (TFA) program and participating in an approved education, training, or other job preparation activity.

\*House Amendment "A" eliminates eligibility for (1) job seekers, when this is not an approved TFA activity and (2) college students.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2008

**BACKGROUND*****Care 4 Kids Income Limits And Applicant Preferences***

Applicants for Care 4 Kids subsidies must have incomes below 50% of the state's median (\$38,726 for a three-person family in 2008). Once enrolled, families remain eligible until their incomes reach 75% of the state's median (\$58,089 for a three-person family in 2008). There is no waiting list currently, but by law, if one is established, preference goes to applicants who are:

1. TFA recipients working or engaged in Jobs First employment

- activities,
2. former TFA recipients who are employed and received cash assistance within the past five years,
  3. teen parents,
  4. low-income workers,
  5. adoptive parents of DCF foster children with a waiver of Care 4 Kids income standards, or
  6. working but at risk of welfare dependency.

**COMMITTEE ACTION**

Select Committee on Children

Joint Favorable Substitute Change of Reference  
Yea 10 Nay 0 (03/06/2008)

Human Services Committee

Joint Favorable  
Yea 14 Nay 4 (03/18/2008)