



General Assembly

February Session, 2012

Raised Bill No. 273

LCO No. 1466

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Referred to Committee on Select Committee on Children

Introduced by:
(KID)

AN ACT CONCERNING THE CARE4KIDS PROGRAM.

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

1 Section 1. Section 17b-749 of the 2012 supplement to the general
2 statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof
3 (*Effective October 1, 2012*):

4 (a) For purposes of this section:

5 (1) "High school" means a day program accredited by the state
6 Department of Education or the New England Association of Schools
7 and Colleges, a general equivalency diploma program, adult education
8 program, technical high school program or vocational secondary
9 school program, which will lead to a high school level diploma or
10 certificate.

11 (2) "School-based child care program" means a child care program
12 administered by a public school system, or administered by a
13 municipal agency or department and is located in a public school
14 building, or a program administered by a private school, which is in
15 compliance with section 10-188 and is approved by the State Board of

16 Education or is accredited by an accrediting agency recognized by the
17 State Board of Education.

18 (3) "Teen parent" means any parent under the age of twenty.

19 [(a)] (b) The Commissioner of Social Services shall establish and
20 operate a child care subsidy program to increase the availability,
21 affordability and quality of child care services for (1) families with a
22 parent or caretaker who is working, attending high school or who
23 receives cash assistance under the temporary family assistance
24 program from the Department of Social Services and is participating in
25 an approved education, training, or other job preparation activity and
26 (2) teen parents not receiving cash assistance under the temporary
27 family assistance program from the Department of Social Services,
28 who are enrolled in high school and regularly attend classes at such
29 high school. Services available under the child care program shall
30 include the provision of child care subsidies for children under the age
31 of thirteen or children under the age of nineteen with special needs.
32 The department shall open and maintain enrollment for the child care
33 subsidy program and shall administer such program within the
34 existing budgetary resources available. The department shall issue a
35 notice on the department's Internet web site and shall provide written
36 notice to recipients of program benefits and to service providers any
37 time the department closes the program to new applications, changes
38 eligibility requirements, changes program benefits or makes any other
39 change to the program's status or terms, provided the department shall
40 not be required to issue such notice when the department expands
41 program eligibility. Any change in the department's acceptance of new
42 applications, eligibility requirements, program benefits or any other
43 change to the program's status or terms for which the department is
44 required to give notice pursuant to this subsection, shall not be
45 effective until thirty days after the department issues such notice.

46 [(b)] (c) The commissioner shall establish income standards for
47 applicants and recipients at a level to include a family with gross

48 income up to fifty per cent of the state-wide median income, except the
49 commissioner (1) may increase the income level to up to seventy-five
50 per cent of the state-wide median income, (2) upon the request of the
51 Commissioner of Children and Families, may waive the income
52 standards for adoptive families so that children adopted on or after
53 October 1, 1999, from the Department of Children and Families are
54 eligible for the child care subsidy program, and (3) on and after March
55 1, 2003, shall reduce the income eligibility level to up to fifty-five per
56 cent of the state-wide median income for applicants and recipients
57 who qualify based on their loss of eligibility for temporary family
58 assistance. The commissioner may adopt regulations in accordance
59 with chapter 54 to establish income criteria and durational
60 requirements for such waiver of income standards.

61 (d) The commissioner shall not include the income of a parent or
62 legal guardian of a teen when determining the eligibility of the teen
63 parent for the child care subsidy program, regardless of whether the
64 teen parent was residing with the parent or legal guardian at the time
65 of such determination.

66 ~~[(c)]~~ (e) The commissioner shall establish eligibility and program
67 standards including, but not limited to: (1) A priority intake and
68 eligibility system with preference given to serving recipients of
69 temporary family assistance who are employed or engaged in
70 employment activities under the department's "Jobs First" program,
71 working families whose temporary family assistance was discontinued
72 not more than five years prior to the date of application for the child
73 care subsidy program, teen parents, low-income working families,
74 adoptive families of children who were adopted from the Department
75 of Children and Families and who are granted a waiver of income
76 standards under subdivision (2) of subsection [(b)] (c), and working
77 families who are at risk of welfare dependency; (2) health and safety
78 standards for child care providers not required to be licensed; (3) a
79 reimbursement system for child care services which account for
80 differences in the age of the child, number of children in the family, the

81 geographic region and type of care provided by licensed and
82 unlicensed caregivers, the cost and type of services provided by
83 licensed and unlicensed caregivers, successful completion of fifteen
84 hours of annual in-service training or credentialing of child care
85 directors and administrators, and program accreditation; (4)
86 supplemental payment for special needs of the child and extended
87 nontraditional hours; (5) an annual rate review process for providers;
88 [which assures that reimbursement rates are maintained at levels
89 which permit equal access to a variety of child care settings;] (6) a
90 sliding reimbursement scale for participating families; (7) an
91 administrative appeals process; (8) an administrative hearing process
92 to adjudicate cases of alleged fraud and abuse and to impose sanctions
93 and recover overpayments; (9) an extended period of program and
94 payment eligibility when a parent who is receiving a child care
95 subsidy experiences a temporary interruption in employment or other
96 approved activity; and (10) a waiting list for the child care subsidy
97 program that reflects the priority and eligibility system set forth in
98 subdivision (1) of this subsection, which is reviewed periodically, with
99 the inclusion of this information in the annual report required to be
100 issued annually by the Department of Social Services to the Governor
101 and the General Assembly in accordance with subdivision (10) of
102 section 17b-733. Such action will include, but not be limited to, family
103 income, age of child, region of state and length of time on such waiting
104 list.

105 (f) Not later than July 1, 2022, payment rates for the provision of
106 child care services for child care centers and family day care homes
107 shall be set at, and thereafter maintained, at the seventy-fifth percentile
108 of current market rates for such centers and homes, and payment rates
109 for relatives, in-home care providers and other types of unlicensed
110 providers shall be set at, and thereafter maintained at, one-third of the
111 current state minimum wage. Any increase in funding to the
112 department's child care subsidy program in the state fiscal year ending
113 June 30, 2013, shall be used to proportionately increase the payment
114 rate to child care subsidy program providers.

115 [(d)] (g) Not later than January 1, 2011, an applicant determined to
116 be eligible for program benefits shall remain eligible for such benefits
117 for a period of not less than eight months from the date that such
118 applicant is determined to be eligible, provided the commissioner has
119 not determined, during such eight-month period, that the applicant's
120 circumstances have changed so as to render the applicant ineligible for
121 program benefits. The commissioner shall not make an eligibility
122 determination for a recipient of program benefits more than one time
123 per eight-month period, except as provided in subsection [(e)] (j) of
124 this section.

125 (h) A recipient of program benefits who takes unpaid leave from her
126 employment due to the birth or impending birth of a child shall be
127 granted not more than twelve weeks of program eligibility during the
128 leave if: (1) The recipient intends to return to work at the end of the
129 unpaid leave; (2) the recipient verifies that eligibility is needed to
130 prevent the loss of a slot in a school-based program or licensed child
131 care setting; or (3) the child receiving child care services under the
132 program continues to attend the program during the recipient's leave.

133 (i) A recipient of program benefits whose employment is terminated
134 and is actively seeking a new job shall remain eligible for the child care
135 subsidy program for not more than six months during such period of
136 unemployment.

137 [(e)] (j) Not later than October 15, 2011, the commissioner shall
138 submit a report, in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a, to
139 the joint standing committees of the General Assembly having
140 cognizance of matters relating to human services and appropriations
141 and the budgets of state agencies concerning eligibility
142 redeterminations made on an eight-month basis. Such report shall
143 include an analysis of overpayments of program benefits made by the
144 department and administrative costs incurred by the department as a
145 result of eligibility redeterminations made on an eight-month basis. On
146 and after October 15, 2011, the commissioner may make eligibility

147 redeterminations on a six-month basis if, after January 1, 2011, the
148 department's overpayments of program benefits have increased in
149 comparison with the period between January 1, 2010, and December
150 31, 2010, as a result of having an eight-month eligibility
151 redetermination period.

152 [(f)] (k) A provider under the child care subsidy program that
153 qualifies for eligibility and subsequently receives payment for child
154 care services for recipients under this section shall be reimbursed for
155 such services until informed by the Department of Social Services of
156 the recipient's ineligibility.

157 [(g)] (l) All licensed child care providers and those providers exempt
158 from licensing shall provide the Department of Social Services with the
159 following information in order to maintain eligibility for
160 reimbursement: (1) The name, address, appropriate identification,
161 Social Security number and telephone number of the provider and all
162 adults who work for or reside at the location where care is provided;
163 (2) the name and address of the child's doctor, primary care provider
164 and health insurance company; (3) whether the child is immunized
165 and has had health screens pursuant to the federal Early and Periodic
166 Screening, Diagnostic and Treatment Services Program under 42 USC
167 1396d; and (4) the number of children cared for by the provider.

168 [(h)] (m) On or after January 1, 1998, the commissioner shall adopt
169 regulations, in accordance with the provisions of chapter 54, to
170 implement the provisions of this section.

171 [(i)] (n) The commissioner shall submit to the joint standing
172 committees of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters
173 relating to human services and appropriations and the budgets of state
174 agencies a copy of the Child Care and Development Fund Plan that the
175 commissioner submits to the Administration for Children and Families
176 pursuant to federal law. The copy of the plan shall be submitted to the
177 committees not later than thirty days after submission of the plan to
178 the Administration for Children and Families.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:

Section 1	October 1, 2012	17b-749
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Statement of Purpose:

To make changes to the Care4Kids subsidy program to allow minor parents attending high school to be eligible for the program, allow women on maternity leave to continue to receive Care4Kids during their leave, extend the eligibility to unemployed recipients seeking employment, and to adjust payment rates for the program.

[Proposed deletions are enclosed in brackets. Proposed additions are indicated by underline, except that when the entire text of a bill or resolution or a section of a bill or resolution is new, it is not underlined.]