



Substitute House Bill No. 5442

Public Act No. 14-161

AN ACT CONCERNING THE STATE-ADMINISTERED GENERAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.

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

Section 1. Subsection (c) of section 17b-104 of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2014*):

(c) On and after July 1, 1995, the payment standards for families receiving assistance under the temporary family assistance program [and the state-administered general assistance program] shall be equal to seventy-three per cent of the AFDC standards of need in effect June 30, 1995.

Sec. 2. Section 17b-191 of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2014*):

(a) Notwithstanding the provisions of sections 17b-190, 17b-195, as amended by this act, and 17b-196, as amended by this act, the Commissioner of Social Services shall operate a state-administered general assistance program in accordance with this section and sections 17b-131, 17b-193, 17b-194, as amended by this act, 17b-197 and 17b-198. Notwithstanding any provision of the general statutes, on and after October 1, 2003, no town shall be reimbursed by the state for any

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general assistance medical benefits incurred after September 30, 2003, and on and after March 1, 2004, no town shall be reimbursed by the state for any general assistance cash benefits or general assistance program administrative costs incurred after February 29, 2004.

(b) [No earlier than September 1, 2003, but not later than October 1, 2003, the] The state-administered general assistance program [pursuant to this section and any general assistance program operated by a town] shall provide cash assistance of (1) two hundred dollars per month [to a single] for an unemployable person upon determination of such person's unemployability; (2) two hundred dollars per month for a [single transitional individual] transitional person who is required to pay for shelter; and (3) fifty dollars per month for a [single transitional individual] transitional person who is not required to pay for shelter. [No earlier than September 1, 2003, but not later than October 1, 2003, eligible families shall receive cash assistance in an amount that is fifty dollars less than the standard of assistance such family would receive under the temporary family assistance program.] The standard of assistance paid for individuals residing in rated boarding facilities [,] shall remain at the level in effect on August 31, 2003. No [individual] person shall be eligible for cash assistance under the program if eligible for cash assistance under any other state or federal cash assistance program. The standards of assistance set forth in this subsection shall be subject to annual increases, as described in subsection (b) of section 17b-104.

(c) To be eligible for cash assistance under the program, a person shall (1) be (A) eighteen years of age or older; (B) a minor found by a court to be emancipated pursuant to section 46b-150; [(C) under eighteen years of age and a member of a family eligible for cash or medical assistance under the program;] or [(D)] (C) under eighteen years of age and the commissioner determines good cause for such person's eligibility, and (2) not have assets exceeding two hundred fifty

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dollars or, if such person is married, such person and his or her spouse shall not have assets exceeding five hundred dollars. In determining eligibility, the commissioner shall not consider as income Aid and Attendance pension benefits granted to a veteran, as defined in section 27-103, or the surviving spouse of such veteran. No person who is a substance abuser and refuses or fails to enter available, appropriate treatment shall be eligible for cash assistance under the program until such person enters treatment. No person whose benefits from the temporary family assistance program have terminated as a result of time-limited benefits or for [compliance] failure to comply with a program requirement shall be eligible for cash assistance under the program.

(d) Prior to or upon discontinuance of assistance, a person previously determined to be a transitional [individual] person may petition the commissioner to review the determination of his or her status. In such review, the commissioner shall consider factors, including, but not limited to: (1) Age; (2) education; (3) vocational training; (4) mental and physical health; and (5) employment history and shall make a determination of such person's ability to obtain gainful employment.

Sec. 3. Subsection (a) of section 17b-194 of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2014*):

(a) For the purposes of this section and sections 17b-131, 17b-191, as amended by this act, to 17b-193, inclusive, 17b-195, as amended by this act, 17b-197 and 17b-198, (1) an "employable person" means one (A) who is sixteen years of age or older but less than sixty-five years of age; and (B) who has no documented physical or mental impairment prohibiting such person from working or participating in an education, training or other [work readiness] work-readiness program, or who has such an impairment which is expected to last less than two

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months, as determined by the commissioner; (2) an "unemployable person" means a person who (A) is under sixteen years of age or sixty-five years of age or older or fifty-five years of age or older with a history of chronic unemployment; (B) has a physical or mental impairment prohibiting such person from working or participating in an education, training or other work-readiness program, which is expected to last at least six months, as determined by the commissioner; (C) is pending receipt of supplemental security income, Social Security income or financial assistance through another program administered by the Department of Social Services; (D) is needed to care for a child under two years of age or to care for an incapacitated child or spouse; (E) is a full-time high school student in good standing; or (F) is a VISTA volunteer; and (3) a ["transitional individual" means a person] "transitional person" means one (A) who has a documented physical or mental impairment which prevents employment and is expected to last at least two months, but less than six months, as determined by the commissioner, and who has a recent connection to the labor market, unless circumstances precluded participation in the labor force, as determined by the commissioner; or (B) whose determination of unemployability or disability, as defined by the commissioner, is pending and who provides medical documentation of a severe physical or mental impairment which is expected to last at least six months. A person who is a substance abuser shall be required to participate in treatment, including counseling, and shall be eligible for assistance while waiting for treatment.

Sec. 4. Section 17b-195 of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2014*):

Notwithstanding any provision of the general statutes, when a person who is ineligible for financial assistance due to his or her employability status is currently in or enters a residential substance abuse treatment facility, the [town] Department of Social Services or the

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Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services shall pay his or her room and board while at such facility, [as an expense reimbursable under the general assistance program by the Department of Social Services or the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services,] provided the person is eligible to receive medical assistance. [The town shall be responsible for these costs until the date upon which the administration of the general assistance program is assumed by the state or is officially delegated to a town by the Commissioner of Social Services, at which time the Department of Social Services or the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services shall assume these costs.] Such assistance shall be paid directly to the treatment facility at a rate established by the Department of Social Services or negotiated by the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services.

Sec. 5. Section 17b-196 of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2014*):

[A] Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection (c) of section 17b-191, as amended by this act, a person (1) at least eighteen years of age and under twenty-one years of age, (2) living with his or her family [which] that is receiving benefits under the temporary family assistance program, and (3) who would be an eligible dependent in such program if under the age of eighteen shall be eligible for state-administered general assistance in the amount of assistance such person would be eligible for as a dependent in such family under the temporary family assistance program.

Approved June 11, 2014