



General Assembly

January Session, 2015

***Raised Bill No. 956***

LCO No. 3978



Referred to Committee on COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN

Introduced by:  
(KID)

***AN ACT EXPANDING THE CARE 4 KIDS PROGRAM.***

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

1 Section 1. Section 17b-749 of the general statutes is repealed and the  
2 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October 1, 2015*):

3 (a) The Commissioner of Early Childhood shall establish and  
4 operate a child care subsidy program to increase the availability,  
5 affordability and quality of child care services for families with a  
6 parent or caretaker (1) who is working, [or] attending high school or  
7 attending an institution of higher education, as defined in subsection  
8 (i) of section 31-222, or (2) who receives cash assistance under the  
9 temporary family assistance program from the Department of Social  
10 Services and is participating in an approved education, training or  
11 other job preparation activity. Services available under the child care  
12 program shall include the provision of child care subsidies for children  
13 under the age of thirteen or children under the age of nineteen with  
14 special needs. The Office of Early Childhood shall open and maintain  
15 enrollment for the child care subsidy program and shall administer  
16 such program within the existing budgetary resources available. The

17 office shall issue a notice on the office's Internet web site and shall  
18 provide written notice to recipients of program benefits and to service  
19 providers any time the office closes the program to new applications,  
20 changes eligibility requirements, changes program benefits or makes  
21 any other change to the program's status or terms, provided the office  
22 shall not be required to issue such notice when the office expands  
23 program eligibility. Any change in the office's acceptance of new  
24 applications, eligibility requirements, program benefits or any other  
25 change to the program's status or terms for which the office is required  
26 to give notice pursuant to this subsection, shall not be effective until  
27 thirty days after the office issues such notice.

28 (b) The commissioner shall establish income standards for  
29 applicants and recipients at a level to include a family with gross  
30 income up to fifty per cent of the state-wide median income, except the  
31 commissioner (1) may increase the income level to up to seventy-five  
32 per cent of the state-wide median income, (2) upon the request of the  
33 Commissioner of Children and Families, may waive the income  
34 standards for adoptive families so that children adopted on or after  
35 October 1, 1999, from the Department of Children and Families are  
36 eligible for the child care subsidy program, and (3) on and after March  
37 1, 2003, shall reduce the income eligibility level to up to fifty-five per  
38 cent of the state-wide median income for applicants and recipients  
39 who qualify based on their loss of eligibility for temporary family  
40 assistance. The commissioner may adopt regulations in accordance  
41 with chapter 54 to establish income criteria and durational  
42 requirements for such waiver of income standards.

43 (c) The commissioner, in consultation with the Commissioner of  
44 Social Services, shall establish eligibility and program standards  
45 including, but not limited to: (1) A priority intake and eligibility  
46 system with preference given to serving (A) recipients of temporary  
47 family assistance who are employed or engaged in employment  
48 activities under the Department of Social Services' "Jobs First"  
49 program, (B) working families whose temporary family assistance was

50 discontinued not more than five years prior to the date of application  
51 for the child care subsidy program, (C) teen parents, (D) low-income  
52 working families, (E) adoptive families of children who were adopted  
53 from the Department of Children and Families and who are granted a  
54 waiver of income standards under subdivision (2) of subsection (b) of  
55 this section, (F) working families who are at risk of welfare  
56 dependency, and (G) any household with a child or children  
57 participating in the Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership federal  
58 grant program for a period of up to twelve months based on Early  
59 Head Start eligibility criteria; (2) health and safety standards for child  
60 care providers not required to be licensed; (3) a reimbursement system  
61 for child care services which account for differences in the age of the  
62 child, number of children in the family, the geographic region and type  
63 of care provided by licensed and unlicensed caregivers, the cost and  
64 type of services provided by licensed and unlicensed caregivers,  
65 successful completion of fifteen hours of annual in-service training or  
66 credentialing of child care directors and administrators, and program  
67 accreditation; (4) supplemental payment for special needs of the child  
68 and extended nontraditional hours; (5) an annual rate review process  
69 for providers which assures that reimbursement rates are maintained  
70 at levels which permit equal access to a variety of child care settings;  
71 (6) a sliding reimbursement scale for participating families; (7) an  
72 administrative appeals process; (8) an administrative hearing process  
73 to adjudicate cases of alleged fraud and abuse and to impose sanctions  
74 and recover overpayments; (9) an extended period of program and  
75 payment eligibility when a parent who is receiving a child care  
76 subsidy experiences a temporary interruption in employment or other  
77 approved activity; and (10) a waiting list for the child care subsidy  
78 program that reflects the priority and eligibility system set forth in  
79 subdivision (1) of this subsection, which is reviewed periodically, with  
80 the inclusion of this information in the [annual] report required to be  
81 issued annually by the office to the Governor and the General  
82 Assembly in accordance with section 17b-733. Such action will include,  
83 but not be limited to, family income, age of child, region of state and

84 length of time on such waiting list.

85 (d) (1) Not later than January 1, 2011, an applicant determined to be  
86 eligible for program benefits shall remain eligible for such benefits for  
87 a period of not less than [~~eight~~] twelve months from the date that such  
88 applicant is determined to be eligible, provided the Commissioner of  
89 Social Services has not determined, during such [~~eight-month~~] twelve-  
90 month period, that the applicant's circumstances have changed so as to  
91 render the applicant ineligible for program benefits. The  
92 Commissioner of Social Services shall not make an eligibility  
93 determination for a recipient of program benefits more than one time  
94 per [~~eight-month~~] twelve-month period, except as provided in  
95 subsection (f) of this section.

96 (2) On and after July 1, 2014, the Commissioner of Early Childhood  
97 shall succeed the Commissioner of Social Services for the purpose of  
98 making the eligibility determinations pursuant to subdivision (1) of  
99 this subsection.

100 (e) Within available appropriations, a recipient of program benefits  
101 who takes unpaid leave from such recipient's employment due to the  
102 birth or impending birth of a child shall be granted not more than six  
103 weeks of payment eligibility during the leave if: (1) The recipient  
104 intends to return to work at the end of the unpaid leave; (2) the  
105 recipient verifies that eligibility is needed to prevent the loss of a slot  
106 in a school-based program or licensed child care setting; and (3) the  
107 child receiving child care services under the program continues to  
108 attend the program during the recipient's leave.

109 [(f) (1) Not later than October 15, 2011, the Commissioner of Social  
110 Services shall submit a report, in accordance with the provisions of  
111 section 11-4a, to the joint standing committees of the General  
112 Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to human services and  
113 appropriations and the budgets of state agencies concerning eligibility  
114 redeterminations made on an eight-month basis. Such report shall

115 include an analysis of overpayments of program benefits made by the  
116 Department of Social Services and administrative costs incurred by the  
117 department as a result of eligibility redeterminations made on an  
118 eight-month basis. On and after October 15, 2011, and until June 30,  
119 2014, the Commissioner of Social Services may make eligibility  
120 redeterminations on a six-month basis if, after January 1, 2011, the  
121 department's overpayments of program benefits have increased in  
122 comparison with the period between January 1, 2010, and December  
123 31, 2010, as a result of having an eight-month eligibility  
124 redetermination period.]

125 [(2)] (f) On and after July 1, 2014, and annually thereafter, the  
126 Commissioner of Early Childhood shall submit a report, in accordance  
127 with the provisions of section 11-4a, to the joint standing committees of  
128 the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to human  
129 services and appropriations concerning eligibility redeterminations  
130 made on [an eight-month] a twelve-month basis. Such report shall  
131 include an analysis of overpayments of program benefits made by the  
132 office and administrative costs incurred by the office as a result of  
133 eligibility redeterminations made on [an eight-month] a twelve-month  
134 basis. On and after July 1, 2014, the commissioner may make eligibility  
135 redeterminations on a six-month basis if the office's overpayments of  
136 program benefits have increased in comparison with the period  
137 between January 1, 2010, and December 31, 2010, as a result of having  
138 [an eight-month] a twelve-month eligibility redetermination period.

139 (g) A provider under the child care subsidy program that qualifies  
140 for eligibility and subsequently receives payment for child care  
141 services for recipients under this section shall be reimbursed for such  
142 services until informed by the office of the recipient's ineligibility.

143 (h) All licensed child care providers and those providers exempt  
144 from licensing shall provide the office with the following information  
145 in order to maintain eligibility for reimbursement: (1) The name,  
146 address, appropriate identification, Social Security number and

147 telephone number of the provider and all adults who work for or  
148 reside at the location where care is provided; (2) the name and address  
149 of the child's doctor, primary care provider and health insurance  
150 company; (3) whether the child is immunized and has had health  
151 screens pursuant to the federal Early and Periodic Screening,  
152 Diagnostic and Treatment Services Program under 42 USC 1396d; and  
153 (4) the number of children cared for by the provider.

154 (i) Not later than January 1, 2016, the Office of Early Childhood shall  
155 collaborate with the Departments of Social Services, Developmental  
156 Services, Mental Health and Addiction Services, Children and Families  
157 and Public Health, to implement an information sharing process  
158 enabling the office to share information regarding recipients of benefits  
159 under the child care subsidy program with said departments in order  
160 to identify whether such recipients are also receiving benefits or  
161 services from other state-sponsored programs.

162 [(i)] (j) On or after July 1, 2014, the commissioner shall adopt  
163 regulations, in accordance with the provisions of chapter 54, to  
164 implement the provisions of this section.

165 [(j)] (k) The commissioner shall submit to the joint standing  
166 committees of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters  
167 relating to human services and appropriations and the budgets of state  
168 agencies a copy of the Child Care and Development Fund Plan that the  
169 commissioner submits to the Administration for Children and Families  
170 pursuant to federal law. The copy of the plan shall be submitted to the  
171 committees not later than thirty days after submission of the plan to  
172 the Administration for Children and Families.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	October 1, 2015	17b-749

***Statement of Purpose:***

To allow more individuals access to the Care 4 Kids program and to enable the Office of Early Childhood to implement an information sharing process to identify and better care for individuals who are receiving services from multiple state agencies.

*[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.]*