



PA 19-78—sSB 1080

Human Services Committee

AN ACT CONCERNING A TWO-GENERATIONAL INITIATIVE

SUMMARY: This act makes several changes to the two-generational initiative to advance family economic self-sufficiency. Most notably, it replaces the initiative's previous advisory council with a board of similar composition. It also makes minor changes to the members' duties and the initiative's objectives and purpose.

The act also makes technical and conforming changes.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2019

ADVISORY BOARD

The act changes the initiative's advisory council under prior law to an advisory board but retains most of its membership. It charges the board with (1) advising the state, legislature, and the Office of Policy and Management (OPM) Secretary and (2) partnering with available philanthropic organizations to provide support, technical assistance, guidance, and best practices to the initiative's participating communities. Whereas under prior law the commissioners of Correction, Early Childhood, Education, Housing, Labor, Public Health, Social Services, and Transportation, or their designees, served on the council, they do not serve on the board. The act requires the Commission on Women, Children, and Seniors (CWCS) to select parent or family leaders representing low income households to constitute one quarter of the board's membership (compared to one council member under prior law). (PA 19-117 §§ 105-143 & 398 merges CWCS and the Commission on Equity and Opportunity into a new entity, the Commission on Women, Children, Seniors, Equity and Opportunity.) The act also adds to the board's membership one governor's appointee and other business and academic professionals, selected by the co-chairpersons as needed.

The act requires, by July 1, 2020, the attorney general's office to develop a uniform interagency data-sharing protocol to remove legal barriers to promote cross-agency and cross-sector collaboration under the act to the fullest extent permitted under state and federal laws. The office must consult with the advisory board, OPM secretary, Chief Data Officer, and the Connecticut Preschool through Twenty and Workforce Information Network (P20 WIN). (Prior law required the advisory council to consult with similar stakeholders to develop a uniform approach to facilitate data sharing among the initiative's partner agencies in accordance with state and federal laws by September 1, 2018.)

The act allows, within available appropriations, parent and family participants to be compensated for time and travel related to board meetings and initiative activities related to asset building, leadership, and community engagement. (It is

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unclear who is responsible for the compensation.)

INTERAGENCY PLAN

The act requires the OPM secretary, in collaboration with the advisory board, to develop an interagency plan to coordinate and align service delivery to assist families to overcome barriers to economic success. The plan must include:

1. development of an infrastructure to promote data sharing within and between state agencies to the extent permissible under federal and state law,
2. coordination and leverage of existing resources to assist families to overcome common barriers to economic success,
3. consideration of innovative approaches based on parental and community input to increase the initiative's impact, and
4. shared indicators and goals for interagency collaboration to achieve quantifiable and verifiable systems change to disrupt cycles of intergenerational poverty and advance family economic self-sufficiency and racial and socio-economic equity.

For the latter, such indicators and goals may include (1) improvements to service and resource coordination and delivery across one or more programs for early learning, adult education, child care, housing, job training, transportation, financial literacy, and health and mental health services and (2) efforts to sufficiently support pathways to family-sustaining workforce opportunities. The secretary must begin to implement the plan by January 1, 2020.

DUTIES, OBJECTIVES, AND PURPOSE

Under prior law, the statewide initiative's objective was to foster family economic self-sufficiency in low-income households through a comprehensive two-generational service delivery approach. The act instead makes it the initiative's objective to disrupt poverty cycles and advance family economic self-sufficiency. It directs the initiative to achieve these goals by collaborating across public and private sectors, rather than promoting systemic change to create conditions across local and state public and private sector agencies and the private sector, as required under prior law.

The act also makes numerous modifications to the areas the initiative may review and consider. Among other things, it (1) narrows the focus of such review and consideration to attaining family and economic mobility and success and (2) eliminates the development of a long-term plan to optimize program service delivery statewide.

The act requires implementation in partnership with parent and family leaders to determine the priorities and challenges of such households, whereas prior law requires the initiative to be informed by members of low-income households within its participating communities.

It also expands the Office of Early Childhood's role as the initiative's coordinating agency for the executive branch to statewide coordinator for the

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initiative. It retains existing law's requirement that CWCS serve as administrative staff to the initiative's learning communities; however, the act no longer requires the staff to provide organizational support to such communities.

REPORTING REQUIREMENT

Starting December 31, 2020, the act requires the board, in consultation with the OPM secretary, to annually report to the Appropriations, Children, Education, Housing, Human Services, Labor, Public Health, and Transportation committees. The report must include:

1. shared indicators and goals for interagency collaboration;
2. improvements in service coordination and streamlined resources;
3. methods of improved family engagement to assure continuous feedback from family leaders regarding priorities and challenges of low-income households; and
4. recommendations to (a) improve systems, policy, culture, program, budget, or communications issues among agencies and service providers on the local and state levels to achieve two-generational success; (b) eliminate barriers to two-generational success; and (c) improve data sharing within and between agencies to inform systems and policy direction to achieve family economic success.