



General Assembly

January Session, 2021

Raised Bill No. 6520

LCO No. 3656



Referred to Committee on HUMAN SERVICES

Introduced by:
(HS)

AN ACT CONCERNING THE PROVISION OF TEMPORARY STATE SERVICES TO VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE.

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

1 Section 1. Section 17b-105a of the general statutes is amended by
2 adding subsection (d) as follows (*Effective July 1, 2021*):

3 (NEW) (d) The Commissioner of Social Services, to the extent
4 permissible under federal law, shall (1) expedite supplemental nutrition
5 assistance program eligibility determinations for a victim of domestic
6 violence, as defined in section 17b-112a, and (2) provide an eligible
7 victim temporary supplemental nutrition assistance program benefits
8 for not less than ninety days before redetermining eligibility for benefits.
9 In conducting an expedited initial eligibility determination, the
10 commissioner, to the extent permissible under federal law, shall subtract
11 from such victim's household income the income of any spouse,
12 domestic partner or other household member credibly accused by such
13 victim of domestic violence. For purposes of this subsection, allegations
14 of domestic violence may be substantiated by the commissioner
15 pursuant to the provisions of subsection (b) of section 17b-112a.

16 Sec. 2. Subsections (b) and (c) of section 17b-749 of the general statutes
17 are repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July*
18 *1, 2021*):

19 (b) The commissioner shall establish income standards for applicants
20 and recipients at a level to include a family with gross income up to fifty
21 per cent of the state-wide median income, except the commissioner: (1)
22 [may] May increase the income level up to the maximum level allowed
23 under federal law, (2) upon the request of the Commissioner of Children
24 and Families, may waive the income standards for adoptive families so
25 that children adopted [on or after October 1, 1999,] from the Department
26 of Children and Families are eligible for the child care subsidy program,
27 [and (3) on and after March 1, 2003,] (3) shall, to the extent permissible
28 under federal law and within available appropriations, waive the
29 income standards for not less than ninety days from the date of
30 application for a victim of domestic violence, as defined in section 17b-
31 112a, at which time the commissioner shall redetermine eligibility based
32 upon the income standards, and (4) shall reduce the income eligibility
33 level to up to fifty-five per cent of the state-wide median income for
34 applicants and recipients who qualify based on their loss of eligibility
35 for temporary family assistance. For purposes of this subsection, the
36 commissioner may substantiate allegations of domestic violence
37 pursuant to the provisions of subsection (b) of section 17b-112a. The
38 commissioner may adopt regulations in accordance with chapter 54 to
39 establish income criteria and durational requirements for such waiver
40 of income standards.

41 (c) The commissioner, in consultation with the Commissioner of
42 Social Services, shall establish eligibility and program standards
43 including, but not limited to: (1) A priority intake and eligibility system
44 with preference given to serving (A) victims of domestic violence, as
45 defined in section 17b-112a, to the extent permissible under federal law,
46 (B) recipients of temporary family assistance who are employed or
47 engaged in employment activities under the Department of Social
48 Services' "Jobs First" program, [(B)] (C) working families whose
49 temporary family assistance was discontinued not more than five years

50 prior to the date of application for the child care subsidy program, [(C)]
51 (D) teen parents, [(D)] (E) low-income working families, [(E)] (F)
52 adoptive families of children who were adopted from the Department
53 of Children and Families and who are granted a waiver of income
54 standards under subdivision (2) of subsection (b) of this section, and
55 [(F)] (G) working families who are at risk of welfare dependency; (2)
56 health and safety standards for child care providers not required to be
57 licensed; (3) a reimbursement system for child care services which
58 account for differences in the age of the child, number of children in the
59 family, the geographic region and type of care provided by licensed and
60 unlicensed caregivers, the cost and type of services provided by licensed
61 and unlicensed caregivers, successful completion of fifteen hours of
62 annual in-service training or credentialing of child care directors and
63 administrators, and program accreditation; (4) supplemental payment
64 for special needs of the child and extended nontraditional hours; (5) an
65 annual rate review process for providers which assures that
66 reimbursement rates are maintained at levels which permit equal access
67 to a variety of child care settings; (6) a sliding reimbursement scale for
68 participating families; (7) an administrative appeals process; (8) an
69 administrative hearing process to adjudicate cases of alleged fraud and
70 abuse and to impose sanctions and recover overpayments; (9) an
71 extended period of program and payment eligibility when a parent who
72 is receiving a child care subsidy experiences a temporary interruption
73 in employment or other approved activity; and (10) a waiting list for the
74 child care subsidy program that (A) allows the commissioner to exercise
75 discretion in prioritizing within and between existing priority groups,
76 including, but not limited to, children described in 45 CFR 98.46, as
77 amended from time to time, and households with an infant or toddler,
78 and (B) reflects the priority and eligibility system set forth in subdivision
79 (1) of this subsection, [which is reviewed periodically,] with the
80 inclusion of this information in the annual report required to be issued
81 [annually] by the office to the Governor and the General Assembly in
82 accordance with section 17b-733. Such action will include, but not be
83 limited to, family income, age of child, region of state and length of time
84 on such waiting list.

85 Sec. 3. Subsection (c) of section 17b-191 of the general statutes is
 86 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1,*
 87 *2021*):

88 (c) To be eligible for cash assistance under the program, a person shall
 89 (1) be (A) eighteen years of age or older; (B) a minor found by a court to
 90 be emancipated pursuant to section 46b-150; or (C) under eighteen years
 91 of age and the commissioner determines good cause for such person's
 92 eligibility, and (2) not have assets exceeding two hundred fifty dollars
 93 or, if such person is married, such person and his or her spouse shall not
 94 have assets exceeding five hundred dollars. In determining eligibility,
 95 the commissioner shall not consider as income (A) Aid and Attendance
 96 pension benefits granted to a veteran, as defined in section 27-103, or the
 97 surviving spouse of such veteran, or (B) within available appropriations,
 98 the income of a spouse, domestic partner or other household member
 99 credibly accused of domestic violence by an applicant who is a victim of
 100 domestic violence, as defined in section 17b-112a. The commissioner
 101 shall not count the income of such spouse, domestic partner or other
 102 household member in the household income of such applicant for a
 103 period of not less than ninety days. For purposes of this subsection,
 104 allegations of domestic violence may be substantiated by the
 105 commissioner pursuant to the provisions of subsection (b) of section
 106 17b-112a. No person who is a substance abuser and refuses or fails to
 107 enter available, appropriate treatment shall be eligible for cash
 108 assistance under the program until such person enters treatment. No
 109 person whose benefits from the temporary family assistance program
 110 have terminated as a result of time-limited benefits or for failure to
 111 comply with a program requirement shall be eligible for cash assistance
 112 under the program.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	<i>July 1, 2021</i>	17b-105a
Sec. 2	<i>July 1, 2021</i>	17b-749(b) and (c)
Sec. 3	<i>July 1, 2021</i>	17b-191(c)

Statement of Purpose:

To provide temporary state assistance to victims of domestic violence regardless of household income.

[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.]