



General Assembly

January Session, 2023

***Raised Bill No. 6857***

LCO No. 5125



Referred to Committee on HUMAN SERVICES

Introduced by:  
(HS)

***AN ACT IMPLEMENTING THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE FOOD AS MEDICINE WORKING GROUP.***

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

1 Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective from passage*) (a) As used in this section and  
2 section 2 of this act, (1) "certified dietitian-nutritionist" means a dietitian-  
3 nutritionist certified pursuant to section 20-206n of the general statutes,  
4 (2) "certain health conditions" means conditions including, but not  
5 limited to, prediabetes, gestational diabetes and types 1 and 2 diabetes,  
6 heart disease, including hypertension, hypercholesterol, dyslipidemia  
7 and congestive heart failure, food allergies, celiac disease, chronic  
8 obstructive pulmonary disease, renal disease and obesity, (3) "health  
9 care provider" means a physician, physician's assistant, advanced  
10 practice registered nurse, certified dietitian-nutritionist or certified  
11 diabetes educator, and (4) "produce prescription" means a prescription  
12 for fruits and vegetables without added salt, sugar or fat given to a  
13 Medicaid enrollee with certain health conditions by a health care  
14 provider.

15 (b) The Commissioner of Social Services shall apply for a Medicaid

16 waiver under Section 1115 of the Social Security Act for a three-year  
17 pilot program to provide Medicaid coverage for produce prescriptions  
18 for a Medicaid enrollee with certain health conditions. The  
19 commissioner may provide such enrollee with vouchers or an electronic  
20 debit card restricted to purchases of prescribed produce.

21 (c) Not later than January 15, 2024, January 15, 2025, and January 15,  
22 2026, the commissioner shall file reports, in accordance with the  
23 provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes, with the joint  
24 standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of  
25 matters relating to human services on (1) the number of Medicaid  
26 enrollees who have received produce prescriptions, (2) data regarding  
27 the effect produce prescriptions have on their health, including, but not  
28 limited to, indicators such as blood sugar levels, blood pressure and  
29 serum lipids, (3) the effect on ranges of food insecurity, as measured by  
30 the United States Department of Agriculture, and (4) the cost to the state  
31 to provide Medicaid reimbursement for such prescriptions compared to  
32 any savings generated by improved health outcomes for such enrollees.  
33 The commissioner shall share aggregate data on food insecurity among  
34 pilot program participants with organizations that track data on food  
35 insecurity and connect food insecure persons with nutritional  
36 assistance.

37 *Sec. 2. (Effective from passage)* (a) As used in this section, (1) "medically  
38 tailored meals" means a meal plan consisting of five to twenty-one meals  
39 per week tailored by a certified dietitian-nutritionist, or other qualified  
40 nutrition professional as determined by the Commissioner of Social  
41 Services, to help treat certain health conditions of Medicaid enrollees,  
42 and (2) "medically tailored food" means partially prepared or  
43 nonprepared food items, or both, sufficient to prepare not more than  
44 fourteen meals per week selected by a certified dietitian-nutritionist, or  
45 other qualified nutrition professional as determined by the  
46 commissioner, as part of a treatment plan for a Medicaid enrollee with  
47 certain health conditions.

48 (b) The Commissioner of Social Services shall convene a working

49 group not later than August 1, 2023, to develop recommendations to  
50 improve health outcomes for Medicaid enrollees with certain health  
51 conditions by treating food as medicine. The working group's study  
52 shall include, but not be limited to, best practices for integrating  
53 medically tailored meals and medically tailored food for Medicaid  
54 enrollees with certain health conditions into the state's medical  
55 assistance program.

56 (c) The working group shall consist of (1) the Commissioner of Social  
57 Services, or the commissioner's designee; (2) the Commissioner of  
58 Agriculture, or the commissioner's designee; (3) a representative of the  
59 elderly nutrition program administered by the Department of Aging  
60 and Disability Services, appointed by the Commissioner of Aging and  
61 Disability Services; (4) a certified dietitian-nutritionist with experience  
62 in planning medically tailored meals or medically tailored foods for  
63 persons with certain health conditions, appointed by the Commissioner  
64 of Social Services; (5) an academic professional, who has researched the  
65 link between nutrition and certain health conditions, appointed by the  
66 Commissioner of Social Services; (6) two Medicaid enrollees with  
67 certain health conditions, appointed by the Commissioner of Social  
68 Services; (7) one person appointed by the House chairperson of the joint  
69 standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of  
70 matters relating to human services; and (8) one person appointed by the  
71 Senate chairperson of the joint standing committee of the General  
72 Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to human services.

73 (d) The chairpersons of the working group shall be chosen by  
74 members of the working group. The working group shall meet not less  
75 than monthly and shall provide recommendations to the Commissioner  
76 of Social Services not later than January 1, 2024. The working group shall  
77 terminate on the date that it submits such report or January 1, 2024,  
78 whichever is later.

79 Sec. 3. Section 17b-28e of the general statutes is amended by adding  
80 subsection (f) as follows (*Effective from passage*):

81 (NEW) (f) Not later than October 1, 2023, the Commissioner of Social  
82 Services shall amend the Medicaid state plan to add reimbursement for  
83 medical nutrition therapy provided by a dietitian-nutritionist certified  
84 pursuant to section 20-206n to a Medicaid enrollee with certain health  
85 conditions. For purposes of this subsection, "certain health conditions"  
86 has the same meaning as provided in section 1 of this act and "medical  
87 nutrition therapy" means an evidence-based, individualized nutrition  
88 plan designed to help treat certain health conditions.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	<i>from passage</i>	New section
Sec. 2	<i>from passage</i>	New section
Sec. 3	<i>from passage</i>	17b-28e(f)

**Statement of Purpose:**

To establish (1) a pilot program to provide Medicaid funding for produce prescriptions for Medicaid enrollees with certain health conditions, (2) a working group to develop additional recommendations, including for providing medically tailored meals for such persons, and (3) Medicaid reimbursement for certified dietitian-nutritionists who provide medical nutrition therapy.

*[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.]*