

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA

SESSION 1999

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HOUSE BILL 1255*

Short Title: Welfare Reform Changes.

(Public)

Sponsors: Representatives Earle, Alexander; Braswell, Church, Easterling, Hunter, Moore, Nesbitt, and Redwine.

Referred to: Welfare Reform.

April 15, 1999

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT TO MAKE CHANGES TO THE TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE FOR NEEDY FAMILIES LAW PERTAINING TO THE MEDICAID STANDARD OF NEED, PAY-AFTER-PERFORMANCE FOR TWO-PARENT FAMILIES, TIME LIMITATIONS ON ASSISTANCE, AND OTHER AREAS OF WELFARE REFORM.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

Section 1. G.S. 108A-27.2 is amended by adding the following new subdivisions to read:

"The Department shall have the following general duties with respect to the Work First Program:

...

(1b) Ensure that eligibility criteria across the State include the Medicaid Standard of Need for the Categorically Needy;

(1c) Ensure that qualified two-parent families receive assistance prior to meeting work requirements for three months after qualifying for assistance, in order to encourage families to stay together and to overcome barriers to self-sufficiency and gainful employment."

1 Section 2. G.S. 108A-27.9(c) is amended by adding the following new
2 subdivisions to read:

3 "(c) The State Plan shall include the following generally applicable provisions:

4 ...

5 (1b) Provisions to ensure that eligibility criteria across the State include the
6 Medicaid Eligibility Standard of Need for the categorically needy;

7 (1c) Provisions to ensure that qualified two-parent families receive
8 assistance prior to meeting work requirements for three months after
9 qualifying for assistance, in order to encourage families to stay together
10 and to overcome barriers to self-sufficiency and gainful employment."

11 Section 3. G.S. 108A-27.1 reads as rewritten:

12 **"§ 108A-27.1. Time limitations on assistance.**

13 (a) Under the Standard Work First Program, unless an extension or an exemption
14 is provided pursuant to the provisions of the Part or the State Plan, any cash assistance
15 provided to a person or family in the employment program shall only be provided for a
16 cumulative total of 24 months. After having received cash assistance for 24 months, the
17 person or the family may reapply for cash assistance, but not until after ~~36~~18 months
18 from the last month the person or the family received cash assistance. This subsection
19 shall not apply to child-only cases.

20 (b) Electing Counties may set any time limitations on assistance it finds
21 appropriate, so long as the time limitations do not conflict with or exceed any federal
22 time limitations."

23 Section 4. G.S. 108A-27.3(a) is amended by adding the following new
24 subdivision to read:

25 "(a) The duties of the county boards of commissioners in Electing Counties under
26 the Work First Program are as follows:

27 ...

28 (10a) Ensure that all Work First cases are reviewed between the 18th month
29 and the 20th month of receiving assistance to:

30 a. Ensure that time limitations on assistance have been computed
31 correctly;

32 b. Ensure that the family is informed about public assistance
33 benefits for which the family is eligible even while cash
34 assistance is no longer available;

35 c. Provide for an extension of cash assistance benefits if the family
36 qualifies for an extension; and

37 d. Review family status and assist the family in identifying
38 resources and support the family needs to maintain employment
39 and family stability."

40 Section 5. G.S. 108A-27.4(e) is amended by adding the following new
41 subdivision to read:

42 "(e) Each county shall include in its County Plan the following:

43 ...

- 1 (7) The process by which the county will review all Work First caseloads
2 between the 18th month and the 20th month of receiving assistance to:
3 a. Ensure that time limitations on assistance have been computed
4 correctly;
5 b. Ensure that the family is informed about public assistance
6 benefits for which the family is eligible even while cash
7 assistance is no longer available;
8 c. Provide for an extension of cash assistance benefits if the family
9 qualifies for an extension; and
10 d. Review family status and assist the family in identifying
11 resources and support the family needs to maintain employment
12 and family stability."

13 Section 6. G.S. 108A-27.6(a) is amended by adding the following new
14 subdivision to read:

15 "(a) Except as otherwise provided in this Article, the Standard Work First Program
16 shall be administered by the county departments of social services. The county
17 departments of social services in Standard Program Counties shall:

18 ...

- 19 (10) Ensure that all Work First cases are reviewed between the 18th month
20 and the 20th month of receiving assistance to:
21 a. Ensure that time limitations on assistance have been computed
22 correctly;
23 b. Ensure that the family is informed about public assistance
24 benefits for which the family is eligible even while cash
25 assistance is no longer available;
26 c. Provide for an extension of cash assistance benefits if the family
27 qualifies for an extension; and
28 d. Review family status and assist the family in identifying
29 resources and support the family needs to maintain employment
30 and family stability."

31 Section 7. The Department of Health and Human Services shall amend the
32 North Carolina Temporary Assistance for Needy Families State Plan to include and
33 reflect changes to State law made by this act and any other act of the 1999 General
34 Assembly.

35 Section 8. This act is effective when it becomes law.