Appendix 5: Federal & State Welfare Legislative History

SFY

2025

ESA Briefing Book

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House Bill (HB) 2039 (Chapter 402, Laws of 2025), ***Child support pass through***
This bill delays implementation of the 100% child support pass through enacted via SHB 1652 (Chapter 174, Laws of 2024) from January 1, 2026 until July 1, 2029.

House Bill (HB) 2040 (Chapter 403, Laws of 2025), ***The recovery of the aged, blind, or disabled assistance program***
This bill delays the implementation of the elimination of the Aged, Blind, or Disabled (ABD) interim assistance requirement enacted via SHB 1260 (Chapter 289, Laws of 2023) from October 1, 2025, to October 1, 2028.

Senate Bill (SB) 5079 (Chapter 331, Laws of 2025), ***Addressing the burden of unintentional overpayments on older adults and adults with disabilities served by DSHS***
Effective July 1, 2025, this agency request legislation allows DSHS to waive collection of unintentional overpayments for the ABD program, and clients receiving long-term care and/or developmental disability supports.

Engrossed Substitute Senate Bill (ESSB) 5232 (Chapter 408, Laws of 2025), ***Supporting economic security by updating provisions related to the home security fund and the essential needs and housing support program***
Effective July 27, 2025, this bill:

- Expands the Housing and Essential Needs (HEN) program to elderly or disabled adults who are no longer receiving a referral to HEN from DSHS, are receiving federal benefits from the Social Security Administration, and continue to have an immediate housing need. (Formerly a pilot in six counties.)
- Requires HEN providers to verify the existence of a DSHS referral every 12 months (in former practice, per HEN grantee guidelines issued by Commerce, referrals were verified every three months).
- Strikes the prohibition that HEN benefits may not be issued in the form of direct cash assistance. Assistance may be provided through vouchers, gift cards, direct vendor payments, and other methods.

Federal Welfare Legislative History, 1935 - 2025

2025

Notice of Change of Eligibility Period (90 FR 13370). On March 21, 2025, the U.S. Office of Refugee Resettlement announced a change in the eligibility period for Refugee Cash Assistance (RCA) in the Federal Register. The duration that a refugee or humanitarian immigrant can receive RCA was reduced from up to twelve months of assistance to up to four months of assistance for those whose date of eligibility for refugee benefits is on or after May 5, 2025.

2024

Consolidated Appropriations Act 2024 (PL 118-42). On March 9, 2024, H.R. 4366 was signed into law and became Public Law 118-42, extending certain financial provisions of the Compacts of Free Association (COFA) through 2043. The Act restored access to certain federal public benefit programs, including Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program (TANF), to eligible citizens of the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Republic of Palau who lawfully reside in the United States. For the first time since 1996, COFA islanders were eligible for these federal benefits if they met all other eligibility criteria for the programs.

Additional Ukraine Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2022 (AUSAA) (H.R. 7691) signed into law on April 24, 2024, extended provisions of H.R. 7691 signed into law on May 21, 2022 that allowed Ukrainian citizens or nationals paroled into the U.S. between February 24, 2022 and September 30, 2024, as well as their eligible family members paroled into the U.S. after September 30, 2024, eligibility for federal assistance and supports to the same extent as refugees.

Ukraine Security Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2024 (USSAA) (H.R. 815) signed into law on April 24, 2024, extended eligibility for federal benefits and refugee services for Ukrainian citizens or nationals and non-Ukrainians who last habitually resided in Ukraine and were paroled into the U.S. between February 24, 2022, and September 30, 2024.

2023

Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2023 (H.R.2617). Under the act, food assistance benefits stolen through card skimming or other fraudulent methods (on or after October 1, 2022 through September 30, 2024) can be replaced if the claim is valid and reported within 30 days of the date the theft was discovered. Replacements are limited to the lessor of the total amount stolen or the amount equal to twice the monthly allotment the household received immediately before the theft and cannot exceed more than two replacements during a federal fiscal year. The act also extended eligibility for federal benefits and refugee services for citizens or nationals of Afghanistan paroled into the U.S. between July 31, 2021, and September 30, 2023.

Fiscal Responsibility Act (FRA), 2023 (H.R.3746) signed into law on June 3, 2023 kept the government running by raising the limit on federal borrowing, also known as the debt

ceiling. The FRA requires administrative changes to how states count and meet TANF work requirements and makes programmatically significant amendments to the SNAP eligibility rules.

Temporary SNAP changes include (*due to sunset – October 1, 2030*):

- Expanding Able-Bodied Adults without Dependents (ABAWDs) age requirements:
    - Age of those subject to the ABAWD time limit increases to age 50 – *effective* September *1, 2023*.
    - Age of those subject to the ABAWD time limit increases to age 52 – *effective October 1, 2023*.
    - Age of those subject to the ABAWD time limit increases to age 54 – *effective October 1, 2024*.
- New work exemptions for specific groups – *effective* September *1, 2023*, allowing for expanded access to Basic Food benefits for:
    - Individuals experiencing homelessness.
    - Veterans.
    - Individuals who are 24 years of age or younger who were in foster care on their 18th birthday.

TANF mandated changes include:

- New outcome measure reporting requirements – *effective October 1, 2024.*
- Change to the base year for the caseload reduction credit (CRC) from 2005 to 2015 – *effective October 1, 2025.*
- $35 minimum for small payments to working parents included in a state's Work Participation Rate (WPR) - *effective October 1, 2025.*

FRA also included a 5-year TANF pilot program option for five states, to test a program performance approach leveraging outcome measures in lieu of the Work Participation Rate, *effective October 1, 2024.*

2022

Afghanistan Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2022 (H.R. 2471) signed into law on March 15, 2022, provided supports for Afghan resettlement, such as:

- Allocated funding for Afghan resettlement operations including housing, medical, legal, and case management services.
- Expanded eligibility for federal public assistance to citizens or nationals of Afghanistan paroled into the U.S. between July 31, 2021 and September 30, 2022 and their family members who were paroled into the U.S. after September 30, 2022.

Additional Ukraine Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2022 (AUSAA) (H.R. 7691) signed into law on May 21, 2022 allowed Ukrainian citizens or nationals paroled into the U.S. between February 24, 2022 and September 30, 2023, as well as their eligible family members paroled into the U.S. after September 30, 2023, eligibility for federal assistance and supports to the same extent as refugees.

Final rule entitled "Extending Refugee Cash Assistance and Refugee Medical Assistance

From 8 Months to 12 Months" was published in the Federal Register on March 28, 2022. The rule revised the eligibility period for Refugee Cash Assistance (RCA) and Refugee Medical Assistance (RMA) benefits from eight months to twelve months from date of eligibility for Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) eligible populations who became eligible on or after October 1, 2021.

2021

Consolidated Appropriations Act 2021 (H.R. 133) signed into law on December 27, 2020 and provided a number of SNAP-related enhancements including:

- $13 billion to increase the monthly SNAP benefit nationally by 15% through June 30, 2021 (later extended in the *American Rescue Plan Act*)
- A temporary expansion to student eligibility for those who are eligible to participate in state or federally funded work-study during the school year and have an expected family contribution of $0.00.
- Enhanced Pandemic EBT (P-EBT) to the 2020-2021 school year to assist those who were affected by school closures and would have otherwise received free or reduced-price school meals. In addition to children in school, P-EBT was expanded to children under the age of 6 and were enrolled in covered childcare facilities who were also affected by the pandemic.
- Restored Medicaid to Washington residents from the Republic of Palau, the Republic of the Marshall Islands and the Federated State of Micronesia (COFA Islanders).

The American Rescue Plan Act 2021 (H.R. 1319) was signed into law on March 11, 2021, and included the following provisions:

- Extending the temporary 15% increase to SNAP benefit amounts through the end of Federal Fiscal Year 21, or September 30, 2021.
- Expanding P-EBT programing through the summer period to eligible school aged children and children under six.
- The TANF section of the Social Security Act is amended to establish a $1 billion Pandemic Emergency Fund which must be spent on non-recurrent, short-term benefits. Washington received $22.7M of this Fund which must be spent by September 30, 2022.
- Providing additional Supplemental Family Violence and Prevention Services funding is to support continuity of domestic violence services and respond immediate needs of survivors connected to domestic violence and the COVID-19 public health emergency.

Final Rule entitled: "Employment and Training Opportunities in SNAP" was published to the Federal Register January 5, 2021. The new rule implemented changes, made in section 4005 of the Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018, to 7 CFR 271 and 273 including:

- Mandating SNAP Employment and Training (E&T) programs to coordinate with local Workforce Development Boards.
- Creating the "provider determination" process requiring SNAP E&T providers to refer clients back to the state when determined not a "good fit" for the program.

- Clarifying supervised job search and non-participation good cause.
- Adding "case management" to the definition of SNAP E&T.
- Updating ABAWD allowable activities and exemptions.
- Increasing Work Registration requirements including referral expectations.

2020

Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act was signed into law on March 27, 2020. It extended authorization for TANF and related programs through November 2020. It also provided additional SNAP funding to cover waiver authority granted in the Families First Coronavirus Relief Act (FFCRA) and the additional participation expected due to the coronavirus impact, through September 30, 2021.

The Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) was signed into law on March 18, 2020 and contained several provisions related to SNAP. Under this act, the following changes were implemented:

- Pandemic EBT, or P-EBT, food assistance benefits were made available to families with school-age children who are eligible for free or reduced-price meal programs, if their school closed for at least five consecutive days. This assistance was for the time period schools closed due to COVID-19 during the 2019 – 2020 school year.
- Emergency SNAP allotments allowing recipients to receive a supplemental benefit of the difference between their regular monthly benefit and the maximum amount for their household size. A household already receiving the maximum allotment for their household size did not receive additional benefits. This policy was also extended to the Food Assistance Program through support of the state's Disaster Relief Fund.
- Administrative flexibilities including extending certification periods for households with eligibility reviews for recertifications due in the months of April, May and June 2020 for six additional months. These certifications were extended through October, November and December 2020. Mid-certification review (MCR) requirements for April, May and June 2020 were also waived, so benefits continued through the end of certification periods without a mid-certification review as long as households continued to meet all other eligibility requirements.
- Allowed for continued Medicaid coverage throughout the public health emergency. Provided only limited exceptions for termination.

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program: Requirements for Able Bodied Adults Without Dependents Final Rule Injunction. Effective March 16, 2020, a federal court injunction delayed implementation of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) final rule limiting states flexibilities in waiving ABAWD work requirements. The rule was scheduled to take effect April 1, 2020. The court denied the request for a preliminary injunction related to the final rule's changes to discretionary exemptions. The final rule, including discretionary exemptions, was vacated in October 2020 by the Federal District of Columbia Court.

2019

Final rule entitled "Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program: Requirements for Able Bodied Adults Without Dependents" was published in the Federal Register on December 5, 2019**.** The rule revised the conditions under which USDA would waive, when requested by states, the ABAWD time limit in areas that have an unemployment rate of over 10 percent or a lack of sufficient jobs. The rule also limited the carryover of ABAWD discretionary exemptions.

Final rule entitled "Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program: Student Eligibility, Convicted Felons, Lottery and Gambling, and State Verification Provisions of the Agricultural Act of 2014" was published in the Federal Register on April 15, 2019**.** A major provision of this final rule prohibited individuals with substantial lottery and gambling winnings from receiving SNAP benefits. The remaining provisions were enacted by ESA CSD in previous years.

2018

Included under a continuing resolution to fund the federal government [PL 115-123, **the *Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018***; Section 53117], this federal act included a policy requirement that all state child support agencies increase the annual user fee to $35 and increase the threshold amount of support collections that triggers the annual fee to $550. The impact on Washington state is discussed more fully above.

The Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018 became public law on December 20, 2018. The act reauthorized SNAP through Federal Fiscal Year 2023. Provisions regarding SNAP included:

- Made the option to provide a shelter deduction to homeless households in which all members are homeless individuals that are not receiving free shelter throughout the month and do not opt to claim an excess shelter deduction mandatory for all states. It indexed the current value of $143 to inflation beginning in Fiscal Year (FY) 2019.
- Changed benefit expungement due to inactivity from 12 to 9 months.

2017

"BIG RULE". On January 6, 2017, the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) published the final rule, *Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program: Eligibility, Certification, and Employment and Training Provisions of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008*, referred to as the Big Rule, because of the many regulatory changes. Some of the provisions in this rule were enacted on October 1, 2008, while the items below were effective March 7, 2017.

Mandatory provisions:

- Program name change 7 CFR Parts 271 through 285
- Changed the program name from Food Stamp Program to SNAP.
- Minimum benefit increase for small households 7 CFR 271.2 and 273.10(e)(2)(ii)(C): Increases the minimum benefit for one and two person households and allows for annual increases.
- Provided households a copy of completed non-paper applications 7 CFR 273.2(c)(1)(v). Requires state agencies to offer copies of SNAP applications completed by households regardless of the method by which the

applicant submitted the application. Households will have the option to receive the copy of their complete application in electronic format. (*Effective January 8, 2018).*

- Asset changes 7 CFR 273.8(b). Indexed SNAP asset limits to inflation, rounded down to the nearest $250, as of October 1, 2008. Excluded all tax-preferred retirement accounts, such as individual retirement accounts, from countable resources in determining SNAP eligibility. Also excluded funds in a qualified tuition program described in section 529 of the Internal Revenue Code (IRC) or in a Coverdell education savings account under section 530 of the IRC. The value of funeral arrangements is also excluded from SNAP resources altogether.
- Military combat pay exclusion 7 CFR 273.9(c)(2). Excluded military combat pay from income of households that apply for or participate in SNAP. This exclusion applied only to additional pay resulting from deployment or service to a combat zone, and not to pay received prior to deployment.
- Standard deduction increase for small households 7 CFR 273.9(d)(1)(iii). Raises the minimum standard deduction for one, two, or three person households and indexes the standard deduction to inflation beginning in Fiscal Year (FY) 2010.
- Elimination of the cap on dependent care expenses 7 CFR 273.9(d)(4). Eliminates the cap on the deduction for dependent care expenses and provided state agencies the option to include dependent care-related transportation costs and activity fees. This final rule also clarified longstanding policy that dependent care costs are deductible for children under the age of 18 and for people with disabilities of any age.
- Changes to client reporting requirements 7 CFR 273.12. Removed restrictions that prohibited state agencies from applying Simplified Reporting systems to households with certain members including elderly, disabled, homeless and migrant farm workers. The final rule also clarified how states respond to unclear information received outside of a client report and provides procedures for following up with households in accordance with their reporting systems.

Optional Provisions:

- Transitional benefits option 7 CFR 272.2, 273.26, 273.27, 273.29, 273.32. Expands eligibility for transitional benefits to households with children when state and locally funded cash assistance ends. Previously, transitional benefits were limited to families whose TANF benefits were ending.
- Unwritten signatures option 7 CFR 273.2(c)(1), 273.2(c)(3), 273.2(c)(7). Allows SNAP applicants to sign an application over the telephone using a recorded verbal assent. Also specifies that state agencies may accept unwritten signatures, which include electronic signature techniques, handwritten signatures transmitted by fax or other electronic transmissions, and recorded gestured signatures.

- Telephone interview at initial certification and recertification 7 CFR 273.2(e)(2) and 273.14(b)(3). Allows state agencies to use a telephone interview rather than a face-to-face interview without the need for the state to ascertain hardship. State agencies must provide a face-to-face interview if requested by the household or its authorized representative.
- Average student work hours 7 CFR 273.5(b). Provides state agencies the option to determine compliance with the 20-hour minimum work requirement by averaging the number of hours worked over the month. Work hours performed during academic breaks greater than one month must not be averaged with other months.
- Employment and Training (E&T) funding for job retention services option 7 CFR 273.7(d)(3)(ix). Includes job retention services of up to 90 days as an allowable E&T service state agencies may provide to clients.

2016

The ABAWD time limit policy exemption was lifted statewide. The Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (PRWORA) limited the receipt of SNAP benefits to 3 months in a 36-month period for ABAWDs who are not working at least eighty hours per month, participating in qualifying education and training activities at least eighty hours per month, or complying with a workfare program. An ABAWD is a person between the ages of 18 and 49 who has no dependents and is able to work.

Each year Washington could request waivers from Food and Nutrition Services (FNS) to exempt areas of our state from this rule. Areas which have an unemployment rate 20% above the national average are eligible for such a waiver. During the Great Recession and until January 1, 2016, all of Washington state was exempt.

In calendar year 2016, two counties (King and Snohomish) and most of a third county (Pierce) were not waived from the ABAWD rules. In 2017, only one county (King) was not waived.

Annual requests will continue to be submitted to Food and Nutrition Services (FNS) to exempt qualified counties from the ABAWD requirements. In non-exempt counties with SNAP recipients that fall into the ABAWD category, those recipients must work, have a personal exemption (such as pregnancy or chronic homelessness), or participate in employment and training activities to remain eligible to receive food benefits. Each ABAWD is given three safety net months in a 36-month period during which they could continue to receive food benefits even if they failed to meet the ABAWD work requirements.

Subsequent changes to the areas of the state covered by the ABAWD exemption were addressed in Appendix 8 – Major Changes in ESA Programs by Month.

2014

The Agricultural Act of 2014 (Public Law 113-79) was signed into law by President Obama on February 7, 2014 and is commonly known as the “Farm Bill.” The Farm Bill set national agricultural, nutrition, conservation, and forestry policy. The SNAP provisions of the bill were designed to improve oversight by the

USDA and state program operations and administration.

SNAP eligibility rules and benefit levels are, for the most part, set at the federal level and uniform across the nation, though states have flexibility to tailor aspects of the program. To address concerns regarding eligibility, benefits, and inappropriate shelter or medical expenses, the deductions have been tightened up under the Act.

The Act specifies individuals who are not eligible for SNAP, such as lottery winners, affluent college students, permanently disqualified, and deceased individuals. Ex-felons convicted of particularly heinous crimes (such as murder, aggravated sexual abuse, sexual exploitation or abuse of children) who have served their sentence were also prohibited from participating in SNAP unless they complied with the terms of their parole. Further, the bill codified existing USDA policy that households with an elderly or disabled member cannot deduct legalized medical marijuana expenses as a SNAP medical deduction.

In addition, SNAP allowed deductions from gross income for certain essential household expenses. Each state sets a Standard Utility Allowance (SUA) reflecting typical utility costs for low-income households that incur heating and cooling costs apart from their rent. No longer can a SNAP recipient qualify for SUA because they receive a minimal LIHEAP benefit in lieu of showing copies of their bills. The 2014 Farm Bill required a household to receive a LIHEAP benefit of greater than $20 a year in order to qualify for the SUA. As of January 1, 2015, the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) issues a more substantial LIHEAP benefit meeting the new requirement for households who are not eligible for the SUA without receiving the payment.

The Farm Bill also had multiple provisions to strengthen program integrity by investing new resources in fraud detection and prevention, launching a new federal and state partnership on retailer fraud, and enhancing tools for fraud detection.

The Farm Bill included three major modifications to prioritize employment and training (E&T) services and program outcomes within SNAP E&T:

(1) Pilot Projects to Test Innovative Strategies;
(2) E&T Reporting and Monitoring; and Additional Funds for E&T.

2010

The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010 and the Health Care and Reconciliation Act of 2010 is referred to collectively as the "Affordable Care Act" or "ACA." The ACA was enacted in 2010 under two separate provisions – Public Law 114-148 and Public Law 111-152. Different parts of the ACA took effect at different times. Of most significance to public assistance programs, the eligibility rules and eligibility processes for determining Medicaid changed significantly effective October 1, 2013. Under a federal option, Washington state opted to create a state-run Health Benefit Exchange portal called the Washington Healthplanfinder. In addition to providing access to health insurance to individuals and employers, Healthplanfinder provides real-time automated eligibility determinations for most Medicaid applicants. Beginning January 1, 2014, families and pregnant individuals with

Modified Adjusted Gross Income (MAGI) below the required federal poverty level (FPL) became eligible for Medicaid. Washington also opted to participate in Medicaid Expansion, which allowed individuals with incomes below 138% of the Federal Poverty Level to qualify for Medicaid. Eligibility for most Medicaid programs under the ACA is determined using a new simplified automated system that is no longer tied to eligibility for TANF, SNAP, or other Economic Services Administration (ESA) programs; therefore, the management of medical assistance eligibility and related IT system processes were moved to the Health Benefit Exchange (HBE) and Health Care Authority (HCA). The Economic Services Administration continues to determine eligibility for some medical assistance programs (called Classic Medical), including medical programs for persons who are elderly (age 65 or older), blind or disabled.

2009

American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA), Public Law 111-5, was enacted on February 17, 2009. An economic stimulus bill designed to address the nation's economic crisis, this Act provided funding under Title II, Assistance for Unemployed Workers and Struggling Families, in several key areas: (1) SNAP – provided a 13.6 percent increase in maximum benefits, which equated to a $24 increase for a one-person household; (2) Unemployment Benefits – provided an extension of the Emergency Unemployment Compensation program through December 31, 2009; (3) Medical Assistance – provided an extension for Transitional Medical Assistance (TMA) through December 31, 2010; (4) TANF – established a TANF Emergency Contingency Fund to provide additional funds to states that experienced an increase in their TANF caseload and expenditures, short-term non-recurring benefits, or subsidized employment programs. States were eligible to receive 80% of the increase in expenditures between FFY 2007 and FFY 2008 (whichever was less) and FFY 2009. Funding was made available for FFY 2009 and 2010 and was limited to 50% of the combined annual TANF awards for the two-year period. The Act modified the TANF carry-forward rules to allow states to carry forward unexpended TANF and emergency contingency funds to the next year without the requirement to spend the funds on assistance. It modified the caseload reduction credit calculation to use FFY 2007 or 2008, or the prior year (whichever would be most advantageous to the state); and (5) Social Security Act (SSA), State Supplemental Income (SSI), and Railroad Retirement (RR) Benefits – it allowed a one-time $250 payment to be made to recipients.

2008

Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (2008 Farm Bill), Public Law 110-234, was enacted on May 22, 2008. The Farm Bill renamed the Food Stamp Program as the "Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program" (SNAP). The Food Stamp Act of 1977 was now to be called the "Food and Nutrition Act of 2008."

Key changes to SNAP program eligibility and benefit levels included increases in the Standard Income Deduction (from $134 to $144) and a $16 increase in the minimum benefit for one-person and two-person households. It also removed the cap on the dependent care deduction, excluded combat pay as income, excluded retirement and educational accounts as a resource and instituted annual resource

limit adjustments to keep pace with inflation. It established state options to expand simplified reporting (for migrant/seasonal farm workers, homeless and elderly disabled households) and to provide transitional benefits for state-funded assistance programs. In addition, it established new types of disqualifications for fraud.

Key administrative changes included a state option to allow telephonic signature, a requirement for FNS to develop standards and establish state data collection and reporting requirements related to a state's major changes in program design, and new federal match requirements for automated systems related to systemic errors, access and payment accuracy. The Act also made the following changes to the Food Stamp Employment & Training program: more time to expend allocations, added job retention services as an allowable employment and training activity, and eased participation restrictions for volunteers. In addition, states that had a nutrition education program were now required to notify food assistance applicants and participants of the availability of nutrition education "to the maximum extent practicable." DSHS currently contracts with Washington State University and the Washington State Department of Health to provide Nutrition Education services.

2006

The Deficit Reduction Act (DRA), Public Law 109-171, was enacted on February 8, 2006. The TANF program was extended at the FY 2004 funding level through FY 2010. The Act made appropriations and extended the National Random Sample Study of Child Welfare through FY 2010. It revised the formula for the caseload reduction credit with respect to work participation rates and included families receiving assistance under separate state programs in the calculation of work participation rates. It directed the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Secretary to publish regulations for determining whether activities may be counted as work activities, how to count and verify reported hours of work, and work-eligible individuals. It also provided a state penalty for failure to establish or comply with work participation verification procedures.

The Act replaced incentive bonuses to states for a decrease in the illegitimacy rate with healthy marriage promotion and responsible fatherhood grants and limited the use of funds for (1) demonstration projects designed to test the effectiveness of tribal governments or consortia in coordinating the provision of child welfare services to tribal families at risk of child abuse or neglect; and (2) activities promoting responsible fatherhood. It made appropriations for FY2006-FY2010.

Child Care – The Act made appropriations for FY2006-FY2010 for Child Care Development Fund block grants to states for childcare.

Child Support – The Act modified the rule requiring assignment of support rights as a condition of receiving TANF, revised requirements for the distribution of arrearages with respect to families that formerly received TANF, declared that states shall not be required to pay the federal government the federal share of amounts collected on behalf of a family (1) that formerly received TANF, to the extent that the state pays (passes through) the amount to the family; or (2) that currently receives assistance, to the extent a certain portion passed through to the family. It revised requirements for use of the tax refund intercept

program to collect past-due child support on behalf of children who are not minors, reduced from $5,000 to $2,500 the amount of a child support arrearage triggering referral for passport denial, and required that all child support orders include a provision for medical support for children to be provided by either or both parents, and to be enforced. It also provided for a mandatory annual fee of $25 for each case of successful child support collection for a family that had never received TANF, if the state collected more than $500.

2004

Social Security Protection Act of 2004, Public Law 108-203, was enacted on March 2, 2004 providing for a temporary extension to SSI claimants of the system under which the Social Security Administration withholds past-due benefits to pay claimants' attorney fees. This change affected how DSHS received and processed the reimbursement of interim assistance (i.e., General Assistance or other state funds-only benefits paid to or on behalf of SSI claimants).

2002

Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002, Public Law 107-171, was enacted on May 13, 2002, making changes to the **Food Stamp Program** and providing program funding through fiscal year 2007. **Title IV: Nutrition Programs** – **Food Stamp Reauthorization Act of 2002** – **Subtitle A: Food Stamp Program** – The Act amended the **Food Stamp Act of 1977** to exclude the following income for food stamp program eligibility purposes:

(1) Legally obligated child support payments made by a household member on behalf of a person not a member of such household (Note: states could continue to provide a child support deduction, rather than this exclusion. The deduction must be determined before computing the excess shelter expense deduction); and

(2) Income in the form of deferred educational and veterans' educational assistance, state complementary assistance payments, and certain medical assistance not included as income under specified provisions of Titles IV and XIX of the Social Security Act.

The Act revised and increased the standard deduction by tying it to the Federal poverty income guideline, according to household size and indexed for inflation. It authorized states to give a homeless household with some shelter expenses a $143 monthly deduction rather than an excess shelter expense deduction. It also revised utility allowances, eligibility certification provisions, and quality control provisions.

The Act required states with a program website to make on-line applications available in each language in which printed applications were available. It also reduced household reporting requirements and provided high performance bonus payments beginning in FY 2003 to the six states with the highest or most improved performance. States were now authorized to provide up to five months of transitional program benefits to households moving from the TANF program. Employment and training program funding allocations were extended through FY 2006 and additional FY 2002 through 2006 amounts were allocated to states that ensure availability of specified work opportunities.

The Act repealed (1) the 80 percent set-aside for able-bodied adults without dependents; (2)

the maintenance-of-effort requirement to access new unmatched funds; and (3) the limits on the amount states were reimbursed for each work slot offered. It increased the monthly cap on the amount states may reimburse participants for transportation and other work expenses for FY 2002 through 2009 from $25 to $50.

It amended the **Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996** to make all legal immigrant children, regardless of U.S. entry date, eligible for the SSI and food stamp programs beginning in FY 2004. It also made the following individuals eligible for food stamps: (1) qualified aliens who have resided in the U.S. for 5 years and (2) blind or disabled aliens who lawfully reside in the U.S. and receive disability cash or medical benefits.

1997

Balanced Budget Act (BBA) of 1997, Public Law 105-33, was enacted on August 5, 1997 making changes and implementing numerous technical corrections to the **Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA) of 1996**, Public Law 104-193. The BBA (1) established the Welfare-to-Work Block Grant, (2) limited the amount of TANF funds that can be transferred to Title XX – Social Services Block Grant (SSBG) to 10% of the TANF block grant and removed the requirement to transfer $2 to the Child Care & Development Block Grant (CCDBG) for every $1 transferred to the SSBG, (3) increased from 20% to 30% of individuals in all families (and in 2-parent families) the limitation on the number of persons who may be treated as engaged in work by reason of participation in a vocational education program, or — for teen heads of households — maintenance of satisfactory school attendance, and (4) extended the refugee/asylee eligibility period for SSI/Medicaid eligibility from 5 to 7 years, included Cuban and Haitian entrants in this category, and provided a 5-year food stamp eligibility for these aliens. The following technical corrections were also made: (1) revised the computation method for out-of-wedlock reduction bonuses, (2) modified the MOE requirements for the Contingency Fund, (3) revised work requirements so that a family with a disabled parent is not treated as a 2-parent family, allowed the minimum work requirement for a 2-parent family to be shared between both parents with a 55 hour per week minimum, allowed a caretaker of a child under age 6 to meet work requirements if working 20 hours per week, and allowed 12 weeks of job search to count as work during any period a state meets the contingency fund definition of "needy state," (4) TANF penalties were modified so that the penalty amount was now 5% in the first year, and increased by 2% per year up to 21% maximum, and (5) the drug felon disqualification rule was modified to apply to convictions for conduct that occurred after 8/22/96.

1996

Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA) of 1996, Public Law 104-193, was signed into law on August 22, 1996 giving states choices in how to structure their welfare programs. Federal funding was provided in the form of the **TANF** block grant and was fixed at the same level for five years. TANF replaced the Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) program and ended the entitlement status of welfare benefits. PRWORA provided new federal childcare funds, reauthorized the Child Care and Development

Block Grant (CCDBG), and required these combined funds to be administered as a unified program under the **Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF)**. PRWORA also allowed states to transfer up to 30% of the TANF block grant into the CCDBG and the Title XX – Social Services Block Grant (SSBG) but limited the amount transferable to SSBG to 10% of the TANF block grant and required that $2 be transferred to the CCDBG for every $1 transferred to the SSBG. In this first major overhaul of welfare in 60 years, welfare receipt was limited to 5 years. The law contained strong work requirements and penalties for states that failed to meet them, i.e., 5% of the TANF grant for failure to meet work participation rates with the amount increasing in subsequent years by up to an additional 2% up to a limit of 21%. In addition, there was a performance bonus to reward states for moving welfare recipients into jobs, state maintenance of effort requirements, comprehensive child support enforcement requirements, and supports for families moving from welfare to work, including at least one year of transitional Medicaid when a family leaves welfare for work.

1990

Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (OBRA) of 1990, Public Law 101-508, was enacted on November 5, 1990. Children were not considered members of AFDC assistance units when determining eligibility for AFDC benefits. Their income and resources were not counted toward family income and resource limits when they were recipients of Title IV-E, state, or local foster care maintenance or adoption support payments or a combination of these types of payments and the inclusion of the adopted child in the assistance unit would result in lower benefits for the family. Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) was considered an exempt resource during the month of receipt and the following month by the AFDC and GA-U Programs. Any EITC remaining in the second month following the month of receipt now applied towards the Resource Ceiling. States now had the option of specifying which categories of families must report monthly and which method of income budgeting to use (prospective or retrospective budgeting). The Act excluded the income and resources of a child receiving state or local foster care maintenance payments from eligibility or payment determinations for AFDC. It also amended the AFDC program to provide childcare to low-income families not receiving AFDC benefits when the state determined there was a need for care in order to work and the family was at risk of becoming dependent upon the AFDC program.

1989

Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (OBRA) of 1989, Public Law 101-239, became law on December 19, 1989 and amended the **Child Support Enforcement Amendments of 1984**, Public Law 98-378, to permanently extend the provision to continue a family's Medicaid (Title XIX) eligibility when the family became ineligible for AFDC due to the collection or increased collection of child support under Part D of Title IV (Child Support and Establishment of Paternity) of the Social Security Act. The Act established a new AFDC quality control system which imposed penalties on states based upon a sliding scale which reflected the degree to which a state's AFDC error rate exceeds the national average. It also considered overpayments and underpayments in determining error rates and established a Quality Control Review Panel for dispute

resolution between states and the federal government.

1988

Family Support Act (FSA) of 1988, Public Law 100-485, was enacted on October 13, 1988 and targeted services to those most likely to become long-term welfare recipients. The Act created the **Job Opportunities and Basic Skills (JOBS)** program, which focused on education and training, and provided childcare and medical assistance to recipients for 12 months after they left AFDC with employment. It made changes to the 6-out-of-13 work quarter requirement for AFDC-Employable and to the "principal wage earner" criteria. It increased the childcare disregard to $175 per child/per month ($200 for a child under age 2), the work expense disregard to $90, and disregarded EITC. The Act established the state option to require that unmarried minor parents must live with a parent, legal guardian or other adult relative, or in an adult-supervised living arrangement to be eligible for AFDC. With the enactment of FSA of 1988, states now had to revise their need and payment standards every 3 years and could create wage supplementation and community work experience programs.

1986

Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA) of 1985, Public Law 99-272, enacted on April 7, 1986 formally established the two-parent AFDC-Employable (AFDC-E) program, which was previously known as the AFDC-Unemployed Father program. The Act provided that certain education or training programs might qualify as quarters of work for AFDC eligibility purposes.

1984

Deficit Reduction Act (DEFRA) of 1984, Public Law 98-369, enacted on July 18, 1984 instituted significant changes to the AFDC program. The 185% of Need eligibility test was created, the $75 work expense deduction was applied to both full- and part-time employment, the $30 and 1/3 earned income disregard was limited to 4 months followed by a $30 disregard for 8 months, and the term "earned income" was defined to mean gross income before deductions. Burial plots, funeral arrangements, and real property that a family was making a good faith effort to sell, were excluded as resources. Retrospective budgeting was made mandatory for monthly reporting households, but optional for other cases; monthly reporting was made mandatory for families with a recent work history or earned income, EITC was declared to be an excluded income, and women in the third trimester of pregnancy were excluded from participation in the Work Incentive (WIN) program. Lump sum income eligibility rules were changed to allow recalculation of the period of ineligibility when an event occurs that would have changed the family's need for that month, the money became unavailable, or the family incurred medical expenses, which offset the lump sum. Overpayment recovery was waived when the cost of recovery exceeded the debt, aliens became ineligible for 3 years when their sponsor was a public or private agency, and information disclosure to law enforcement was permitted when the AFDC recipient was a fugitive felon. The Act established the $50 child support pass-through payment and the exclusion of the earned income of a full-time child for 6 months for purposes of the AFDC gross income test.

Child Support Enforcement Amendments of 1984, Public Law 98-378, signed into law on August 16, 1984, provided four months of continued Medicaid eligibility for families that lost AFDC eligibility because of the collection or increased collection of child support.

1983

Social Security Amendments of 1983, Public Law 98-21, became law on April 20, 1983 and amended Title IV to exclude from the definition of "income" any support or maintenance assistance furnished to a family based on need, including home energy assistance.

Supplemental Appropriations Act, 1984, Public Law 98-181, became law on November 30, 1983 and declared that utility payments made by persons living in federally assisted low-income housing projects were to be considered rental payments for purposes of determining eligibility and payment amounts under the AFDC program.

1982

Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA), Public Law 97-300, enacted on October 13, 1982 established participation targets for AFDC recipients, aged 16 and older, in Adult and Youth programs, and provided earnings disregards for child participants.

Tax Equity and Fiscal Responsibility Act (TEFRA) of 1982, Public Law 97-248, was enacted on September 3, 1982 and amended AFDC eligibility to allow rounding of benefits down to the next lower whole dollar, eliminated payment of benefits for a whole month when eligibility was determined later in the month, and required states to not consider a parent absent from the home due to active duty in a uniformed service. With this Act, states were now allowed to require employment search as an eligibility criterion and could prorate need and payment standards for children living with other non-applying individuals.

1981

Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (OBRA) of 1981, Public Law 97-35, was signed into law on August 13, 1981 and allowed welfare-to-work demonstration projects to begin in many states. States could now require welfare recipients to go into training, job search, or unpaid work experience in exchange for their AFDC grants. It revised the method for determining earned income by changing the order in which the work expense, childcare, and $30 and 1/3 earned income disregards were applied in order to maximize the amount of countable income to be deducted from the grant. It eliminated payments for work-related childcare expenses and implemented a new childcare expense deduction to be deducted from earned income. The $30 and 1/3 earned income disregard was restricted to 4 months and the recipient was required to be off AFDC for 12 months before being eligible to receive the disregard again. The Act prohibited grant payments below $10, instituted the "principal wage earner" concept for eligibility determinations, thereby replacing references to "mother" and "father" in compliance with *Westcott v. Califano*. It permitted AFDC payments to a pregnant woman (with no other eligible child) during her last month of pregnancy or within the following three-month period if the child would be eligible for AFDC. With this Act, OBRA began determining monthly eligibility based upon the resources at hand during the month and the monthly benefit amount based upon the income and resources of the prior month.

1979

U.S. Supreme Court Decision *Westcott v. Califano* ruled in June 1979 that Section 407 of the Social Security Act regarding unemployed fathers was unconstitutional because of the discriminatory nature of the gender distinction. The court extended benefits of the AFDC-Unemployed Father program to similarly situated unemployed mothers, thereby removing the gender distinction.

1970

Federal regulations required states to guard against payments to ineligible welfare applicants. States were now required to monitor their active AFDC caseloads, compute errors made in determining eligibility, and pay penalties for high error rates.

1967

Amendments to the Social Security Act established the **Work Incentive Program (WIN)**, which added employment services to AFDC, and directed states to emphasize work rather than welfare

1963

Medicaid and **Food Stamp** programs were created; AFDC recipients were automatically eligible for both programs.

1961

Amendments to the Social Security Act led to a new emphasis on social services. Families with two parents were now able to receive AFDC based upon the unemployment of the father (AFDC-Unemployed Father). Welfare caseloads began to grow, for both one- and two-parent families.

1935

The Aid to Dependent Children (ADC) program (later known as **Aid to Families with Dependent Children or AFDC**) was created as part of the Social Security Act. AFDC supported poor children whose parents were dead, absent, or incapacitated.

Washington State Legislative History, 1987 – 2025

2025

Substitute House Bill (SHB) 1652, *Child support pass through* (Chapter 174, Laws of 2024)
Effective January 1, 2026 (though delayed in the following Legislative session by House Bill [HB] 2039 [Chapter 402, Laws of 2025]), all current child support collected each month will be passed through to families receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and these amounts will also be disregarded (not counted) when determining TANF eligibility and benefit amounts.

Substitute House Bill (SHB) 2007 (Chapter 181, Laws of 2024), *Expanding time limit exemptions applicable to cash assistance programs.*
Effective July 1, 2024, families with a child under the age of two, who are eligible for the infant, toddler or post-partum WorkFirst participation exemption, can access TANF beyond 60-months.

House Bill (HB) 2415 (Chapter 154, Laws of 2024), *Expanding economic assistance for individuals who are eligible for TANF*.
Effective January 1, 2025, the Diversion Cash Assistance (DCA) maximum payment was increased to $2,000.

Substitute Senate Bill (SSB) 5950 (Chapter 376, Laws of 2024), *2023-2025 Supplemental Operating Budget*
Includes the following:

- Funding to support implementation of ESHB 1652, SHB 2007, and HB 2415 (noted above).
- Funding to implement the Summer EBT program. Known as SUN Bucks, this program will provide a total of $120 in food benefits per child to families under 185% of FPL who have school-aged children that would typically receive free or reduced meals.
- One-time funding ($25,250,000- including 5 FTE for SFY 25) provided to Office of Refugee and Immigrant Assistance to expand support services for individuals newly arriving to the United States who do not qualify for federal refugee resettlement program services.
- Funding to replace skimmed or cloned cash assistance up to two times in a federal fiscal year. Also supports ongoing state funded Food Assistance Program for legal immigrants (FAP) replacements. Any unspent funds are set to lapse on September 30, 2024, or on the date that the federal government ends the requirement that stolen Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits must be replaced, whichever is later. Effective July 1, 2024.
- One time reinvestment of WorkFirst Service funds to support issuance of Housing and Utility Support Services. Effective July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025.
- Funding for an additional one-time cash benefit available through the Pandemic Emergency Assistance Fund. Federal funds cover a one-time cash benefit for TANF and SNAP recipients, while these state funds cover benefits for recipients of State Family Assistance (SFA) and FAP. This additional benefit was issued in April 2024.
- Funding to support full implementation of HB 1128 (Chapter 201, Laws of 2023), which increased the Personal Needs Allowance

(PNA) for individuals receiving care in a medical institution or residential setting from $70 to $100. In some circumstances, the State Supplemental Payment (SSP) is leveraged to bridge a gap between the capped SSI benefit which can be dedicated to PNA. This bill provided funding to increase in the SSP payment in these circumstances to meet the new PNA level.

- Funding for system changes, staffing, and caseload impacts associated with the federal Fiscal Responsibility Act. FRA made several changes to SNAP work requirements for ABAWDs, including work requirements for participants age 50 to 54 and new work participation exemptions.
- Funding provided to domestic violence shelters in specific counties to maintain existing service levels.

2024

Senate Bill (SB) 5187 (Chapter 475, Laws of 2023), *Biennium 23-25 Operating Budget*. Effective July 1, 2023, the budget provided funding for the following:

- Funding to support implementation of policy changes in 2SHB 1447.
- 8% payment standard increase for all ESA cash programs. Effective January 1, 2024.
- Implementation of SB 5338 from the 2023 Legislative Session, which supports a benefit specifically targeted at mitigating diaper-related costs for TANF families with a child under the age of three. Effective November 1, 2023.
- Extending Ongoing Additional Requirements (OAR) benefits to Housing and Essential Needs (HEN) Referral recipients, and adding services such as transportation, internet, veterinary costs for service animals, dentures, eye glasses and optometrist exams, hearing aids and boarding for animals (effective April 1, 2024).
- A culturally and linguistically appropriate outreach campaign to raise awareness around EBT fraud.
- Unaccompanied children sponsorship stabilization and a study to assess needs and develop recommendations for ongoing supports for this population.
- Increased ongoing support for naturalization services.
- Increased ongoing support for domestic violence victim services.

Second Substitute House Bill (2SHB) 1447 (Chapter 418, Laws of 2023), *Strengthening the ability of assistance programs to meet foundational needs of children, adults, and families.*

- Abolished the TANF time limit for households headed by a parent who is ineligible for assistance due to factors such as receipt of SSI, their legal status, or their immigration status. Effective July 1, 2023.
- Expanded good cause reasons used to determine whether a WorkFirst family should face financial sanction for situations where the parent does not engage in agreed upon activities within their service and participation plan. Effective July 23, 2023.
- Increased asset and resource limits for ESA cash assistance programs, doubling the resource limit from $6,000 to $12,000 and completely exempting one vehicle (no matter the value) and retirement/pension-related funds or accounts. Effective February 1, 2024.

- Changes to earned income disregard policy for ESA cash assistance programs, allowing for the first $500 of earned income to be fully disregarded from benefit calculations, with remaining income disregarded at 50%. Effective August 1, 2024.

Substitute House Bill (SHB) 1260 (Chapter 289, Laws 2023), Accelerating stability *for people with a work-limiting disability or incapacity.*

- Expanded good cause reasons for not participating in substance use disorder assessment or treatment as a condition of eligibility for the Aged, Blind, or Disabled (ABD), HEN Referral, and Pregnant Women Assistance (PWA) programs. Effective July 23, 2023.
- Allowed the department to determine the income standard for the ABD and HEN Referral program up to 100% of the federal poverty level. Effective July 23, 2023.
- Eliminated the requirement for ABD program recipients to repay the state for benefits received for the same period as federal Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits were received. The monetary value of ABD benefits paid prior to October 1, 2025, that is duplicated by the person's receipt of SSI benefits for the same period, remains a debt due to the state that is subject to recovery. Originally effective October 1, 2025, but subsequently delayed in the 2025 Legislative session per House Bill (HB) 2040 (Chapter 402, Laws of 2025).

House Bill (HB) 1128 (Chapter 201, Laws of 2023), *Raising the residential personal needs allowance.* Increased the Personal Needs Allowance (PNA) for individuals receiving care in a medical institution or residential setting from $70 to $100. Because SSP is leveraged to bridge the gap between the capped SSI amount which can be dedicated to PNA, this bill requires an increase in the SSP payment to these households to meet the new PNA level. Effective July 1, 2023.

Substitute Senate Bill (SSB) 5398 (Chapter 401, Laws of 2023), *Domestic violence funding allocation*. Required the department to convene a workgroup to review and update the formula used to determine the allocation of funding for domestic violence victim services agencies, and report recommendations to the legislature. Implementation of any of the funding allocation recommendations adopted by the department must be effective July 1, 2025.

Substitute House Bill (SHB) 2368 (Chapter 153, Laws of 2024), *Assisting refugees and immigrants by describing the role of the office of refugee and immigrant assistance (ORIA) in administering federal funding regarding refugee support services and authorizing ORIA to administer services to immigrants*. Effective June 6, 2024. This bill established scope of refugee and immigrant assistance administered by ORIA, including statewide coordination of efforts to support immigrant and refugee resettlement. This bill also expanded scope of ORIA to administer services to immigrants who are ineligible for federal services and to contract with external entities to provide those services.

2023

Senate Bill (SB) 5693 (Chapter 297, Laws of 2022), *Supplemental Operating Budget.* Effective July 1, 2022, the budget provided funding for the following:

- Implementation of a state-funded employment and training program for recipients of FAP.
- Elimination of the ABD program mid-certification review (MCR). Note: The MCR was eliminated for recipients age 65 or older effective July 1, 2020.
- Continued suspension of the TANF 60-month time limit through June 30, 2023.
- Increasing the maximum monthly TANF grant from the eight-person to a ten-person standard.
- Increasing WorkFirst support service funding for housing, utility and diaper needs of families receiving TANF.
- Contracts with nonprofit organizations to provide services for refugees and immigrants that arrive in Washington state on or after July 1, 2021, and are eligible for federal refugee resettlement services, including those from Afghanistan and Ukraine.

Additionally, the following were funded effective September 1, 2022:

- Expansion of the ABD program to individuals between the ages of 21 and 64 who reside in a public mental health institution (e.g. Eastern or Western State Hospital). Eligible individuals receive a maximum monthly payment of $41.62 to cover clothing, personal maintenance, and necessary incidentals.
- Increase of the ABD cash grant standard to $417 for a single individual or $528 for a married couple. This aligns with the grant standard for TANF and other cash assistance programs.

House Bill (HB) 1748 (Chapter 208, Laws of 2022), ***Aged, Blind, or Disabled Program Eligibility for Victims of Human Trafficking.*** Effective July 1, 2022, this agency request legislation expanded ABD, HEN Referral, and PWA eligibility to victims of human trafficking who meet all other program eligibility requirements. This change also further expanded Medical Care Services (MCS) eligibility to victims of human trafficking determined eligible for ABD or HEN Referral.

House Bill (HB) 1755 (Chapter 24, Laws of 2022), ***Temporary assistance for needy families time limit extensions during times of high unemployment.*** Effective July 1, 2022, this agency request legislation created a new TANF time limit extension for situations where the last published Washington state unemployment rate is equal to or greater than seven percent.

Substitute Senate Bill (SSB) 5729 (Chapter 163, Laws of 2022), ***Creating a good cause exception to administrative hearing deadlines for applicants or recipients of certain public assistance benefits.*** Effective July 1, 2023, to the extent allowable under federal law, this bill created good cause exceptions for public and medical assistance administrative hearing request deadlines up to one year after the Department decision is made.

Substitute Senate Bill (SSB) 5785 (Chapter 98, Laws of 2022), ***Transitional Food Assistance.*** Effective January 1, 2024, this request legislation expanded Transitional Food Assistance access to non-sanctioned household members of a TANF assistance unit when TANF ends for reasons other than sanction. If the TANF household includes a sanctioned household member, the remaining household members may receive TFA.

Substitute Senate Bill (SSB) 5838 (Chapter 100, Laws of 2022), ***Providing a monthly diaper subsidy for parents or other caregivers receiving temporary assistance for needy families.*** Effective November 1, 2023, this bill allowed the Department to provide, with funds appropriated for this specific purpose, an additional monthly cash benefit to TANF households with a child under age three in order to assist with child-related expenses such as diapers.

2022

Senate Bill (SB) 5092 (Chapter 334, Laws of 2021), ***Operating Budget*****.** Effective July 1, 2021, the budget provided funding for the following:

- A 15% grant increase for the TANF, Refugee Cash Assistance (RCA), and PWA programs.
- Suspension of the TANF 60-month time limit through June 30, 2022.
- Pandemic Emergency Assistance for eligible families receiving SFA or FAP.
- Continuation of the Washington Immigrant Relief Fund through SFY 2023.
- An additional $2.6 million for SFY 2023 for the Department of Commerce HEN Program.

Second Substitute Senate Bill (2SSB) 5214 (Chapter 239, Laws of 2021), ***Economic assistance programs.*** Effective July 25, 2021, this bill provided a new TANF time limit extension (TLE) when a client receives TANF during a month on or after March 2020, the state's unemployment rate was 7% or above, and the client is otherwise eligible. The new extension category is applied after all other TLE criteria have been exhausted and is equal to the number of months the recipient received TANF when the state's unemployment rate was 7% or above.

Substitute House Bill (SHB) 1151 (Chapter 9, Laws of 2021)[1], ***Bolstering economic recovery by providing public assistance to households in need.*** Effective July 1, 2022, Section 2 of this Department request legislation provided for a one-time cash benefit and five months of transitional food assistance to non-TANF families with children exiting Basic Food due to increased income or voluntary closure. Section 3 requires the Department to begin basing the cash assistance need standard on a broadly used national standard reflecting current household goods and services to meet basic needs as of July 1, 2022.

2021

Senate Bill (**SB) 5092** ***Operating Budget*** **(Chapter 334, Laws of 2021).** Effective July 1, 2021, the budget provided funding for the following:

- A 15% grant increase for the TANF, RCA, and PWA programs.
- Suspension of the TANF 60-month time limit through June 30, 2022.
- Pandemic Emergency Assistance for eligible families receiving SFA or FAP.
- Continuation of the Washington Immigrant Relief Fund through SFY23.
- Additional $2.6 million for SFY23 for the Department of Commerce HEN Program.

[1] Section 1 of this legislation was implemented in SFY 2021. See Washington State Legislative History: 2021.

Second Substitute Senate Bill (2SSB) 5214 (Chapter 239, Laws of 2021), ***Economic assistance programs.*** Effective July 25, 2021, this bill provided a new TANF time limit extension (TLE) when a client receives TANF during a month on or after March 2020, the state's unemployment rate was 7% or above, and the client is otherwise eligible. The new extension category is applied after all other TLE criteria have been exhausted and is equal to the number of months the recipient received TANF when the state's unemployment rate was 7% or above.

Engrossed Substitute House Bill (ESHB) 1368 (Chapter 3, Laws of 2021), ***Responding to the COVID-19 pandemic through state actions supported by federal funding,*** appropriated over $90 million to ESA from the Coronavirus Relief Fund under the federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act.

- $65 million toward continuation of the Immigrant Relief Fund.
- $12 million for the Disaster Cash Assistance Program, contingent on the enactment of SHB 1151.
- $4.7 million provided for January through March 2021 to increase state Food Assistance Program allotments to align with federal SNAP COVID-related benefit increases.
- $9 million provided for January through June 2021 to support increased TANF caseloads due to COVID-related policy changes.

Substitute House Bill (SHB) 1151 (Chapter 9, Laws of 2021), ***Bolstering economic recovery by providing public assistance to households in need.*** Effective March 31, 2021, Section 1 of this Department request legislation modified the Disaster Cash Assistance Program (DCAP) to allow ESA to issue DCAP assistance more than once in a 12-month period during a state of emergency, as ordered by the Governor. Effective July 1, 2022, Section 2 of this Department request legislation provides for a one-time cash benefit and five months of transitional food assistance to non-TANF families with children exiting SNAP due to increased income or voluntary closure. Section 3 required the Department to begin basing the cash assistance need standard on a broadly used national standard reflecting current household goods and services to meet basic needs as of July 1, 2022.

2020

Engrossed Substitute Senate Bill (ESSB) 6168 (Chapter 357, Laws of 2020), ***Operating Budget- Supplemental*** **Effective July 1, 2020. The budget provided funding to:**

- Eliminate the supplied shelter grant standard for the Aged, Blind, or Disabled; TANF; RCA; and PWA programs.
- Eliminate the mid-certification review for ABD recipients age 65 years or older.
- Implement legislation passed in the 2020 session, including Child Support Pass-through (2SSB 5144), Trafficking Victim Assistance (3SSB 5164), and Revising Economic Assistance Programs (2SSB 6478 and 2SHB 2441).
- Provide implicit bias training and continuation of the Poverty Reduction Workgroup Steering Committee.
- Continue implementation of the federally compliant Asset Verification

System for asset-based Medicaid eligibility system.

- Fund a Department of Commerce housing assistance pilot program for recipients of Social Security Administration assistance in King, Snohomish, Pierce, Kitsap, Thurston, and Clark counties. This directly impacts ESA clients (e.g. Aged, Blind, or Disabled program) who transition to federal disability assistance.

Second Substitute Senate Bill (2SSB) 5144 (Chapter 349, Laws of 2020), ***Implementing child support pass-through payments.*** Effective February 1, 2021, this bill reinstated child support pass-through for families receiving TANF. Child support collections are passed through up to $50 per month for TANF families with one child, and up to $100 per month for families with two or more children. These amounts do not count against a family's TANF grant; however, it is factored into their food benefit eligibility.

Substitute House Bill (SHB) 2441 (Chapter 338, Laws of 2020), ***Improving access to TANF.*** Effective July 1, 2021, this bill removed home visits, immediate sanction closures, and WorkFirst Sanction Re-Open from the TANF WorkFirst sanction process. The bill required the department to reduce the grant of a TANF recipient by the greater of either 40% or the recipients share after two months of continuous noncompliance with WorkFirst requirements. It also required the Department to terminate the grant after twelve months of continuous noncompliance (formerly could be closed immediately or up to two months). This additional time provided recipients with more opportunities to reengage prior to facing financial penalties.

Second Substitute Senate Bill (2SSB) 6478 (Chapter 320, Laws of 2020), ***Revising economic assistance programs.*** Effective July 1, 2021, this bill expanded the 60-month TANF time limit extension criteria to include homelessness as defined in the McKinney-Vento Act. It also required DSHS to submit an annual report regarding racial demographics of recipients terminated from TANF due to sanctions or time limits, including the Department's plan to remedy any racial disproportionality reflected in the data.

Third Substitute Senate Bill (3SSB) 5164 (Chapter 136, Laws of 2020), ***Providing public assistance to victims of human trafficking*****.** This bill expanded eligibility for state-funded public assistance programs including the Food Assistance Program, State Family Assistance, and Medical Care Services to noncitizen victims of human trafficking, as they are defined by the bill, and their qualifying family members, effective February 1, 2022.

Substitute Senate Bill (SSB) 6495 (Chapter 322, Laws of 2020), ***Essential needs and housing support eligibility.*** This Department request legislation allowed individuals determined eligible for the PWA program to receive a referral to the HEN program for 24 consecutive months from the date their PWA eligibility is established. The bill also allowed the Department to set the income eligibility standard for the PWA program. This bill took effect June 11, 2020.

Senate Bill (SB) 6136 (Chapter 64, Laws of 2020), ***Updating restrictions on electronic***

benefit cards, resolved a discrepancy between federal and state EBT policy. This change enabled state licensed beer and/or wine specialty stores, federally authorized as SNAP retailers, to accept EBT cards; no longer requiring disablement of ATM and point-of-sale machines located on the premises. This bill took effect June 11, 2020.

Second Substitute House Bill (2SHB) 1603 (Chapter 343, Laws of 2019), *Revising economic assistance programs by updating standards of need, revising outcome measures and data collected, and reducing barriers to participation,* provided for a new time limit extension for families experiencing homelessness. Families that are homeless and have used up all 60 months of TANF assistance now qualify for additional months of TANF. For purposes of this TANF program change, homelessness means:

- Living outside,
- Living in a building or other location not meant for human habitation,
- Living in a building or other location that you have no legal right to occupy,
- Living in an emergency shelter, or
- Living in a temporary housing program, which may include a transitional or supportive housing program with a limited duration of stay.

This bill also eliminated permanent disqualification from the TANF program due to reoccurring non-compliance with WorkFirst participation requirements. Families who have struggled to meet participation requirements in the past, and as a result were permanently disqualified from receiving TANF and WorkFirst support services, may now reapply for TANF. The legislation also included additional reporting requirements.

Second Substitute House Bill (2SHB) 1893 (Chapter 407, Laws of 2019), *Providing assistance for certain postsecondary students,* required DSHS to consult with the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC) and the Washington Student Achievement Council (WSAC) to seek a waiver from the USDA allowing students to use their electronic benefit transfer (EBT) card at on-campus food retail establishments of Washington's public and private institutions of higher education and report quarterly to the Legislature regarding these efforts through January 1, 2020. This legislation also required the Department to provide written notice to specified parties if federal approval of such waiver is not obtained by January 1, 2020.

Additionally, 2SHB 1893 required DSHS and SBCTC to identify educational programs at the community and technical colleges that would meet the requirements of state-approved employment and training programs for student eligibility for the Washington Basic Food program, with a focus on programs related to science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM). DSHS was required to seek federal approval of such programs by the USDA, if needed. This legislation also required DSHS to maintain and regularly update a list of the identified educational programs.

The bill also permitted, to the extent allowed by federal law, students who are “anticipating participation” in the work-study program to qualify for the Washington Basic Food program. 2SHB 1893 also required DSHS, SBCTC, and WSAC to identify options that could confer categorical eligibility for federal assistance

programs for students who receive the State Need Grant (since replaced by the Washington College Grant) and report those options to the appropriate committees of the Legislature by January 1, 2020.

Lastly, the bill required institutions of higher education to provide written notice to State Need Grant (Washington College Grant) and work-study program recipients of possible eligibility for SNAP and how to apply for SNAP.

2019

Engrossed Substitute House Bill (ESHB) 1109 (Chapter 415, Laws of 2019), Biennium 2019-2021 Operating Budget, was signed into law on May 21, 2019. The budget funded the following:

- Implementation of TANF program policy changes (see 2SHB 1603 – Chapter 343, Laws of 2019).
- Implementation of Automatic Voter Registration as a result of 2018's HB 2595 (Chapter 10, Laws of 2018).
- Increased naturalization services administered through the Office of Refugee and Immigrant Assistance (ORIA).
- Initial implementation work for a federally-compliant Asset Verification System required for certain Medicaid eligibility decisions.
- PWA maximum grant increase from $197.00 to $363.00.
- Continuation of the Working Family Support (WFS) program.

2018

Engrossed Substitute Senate Bill (ESSB) 6032 (Chapter 299, Laws of 2018), 2018 Supplemental Operating Budget, was signed into law on March 27, 2018. A number of policy changes were funded in the operating budget, including:

- A 6.8 percent cash grant increase (in addition to the 2.5 percent increase in the 2017-19 enacted budget) for TANF, and RCA. The cumulative cash grant increase effective July 1, 2018 is 9.3 percent.
- A reduction in funding for TANF/WorkFirst partner contracts; $886,000 in SFY17 and $1.1 million in SFY19.
- Funding to increase the public assistance program vehicle exemption to a value of no more than $10,000 (from $5,000) and all other assets to $6,000 (from $1,000) (see ESSHB 1831).
- Funding to provide for staff and incapacity exam costs as a result of the increased HEN referrals (see SHB 2667).
- An increased Personal Needs Allowance (PNA) for recipients of SSP who are in an institutional setting to $70 (from $58.43) per month effective January 1, 2019. Effective January 1, 2020, the PNA for these recipients will be adjusted annually by the percentage cost-of-living-adjustment for federal Social Security benefits (see SHB 2651).

Substitute House Bill (SHB) 2651 (Chapter 137, Laws of 2018), *Increasing the personal needs allowance for people in residential and institutional care settings*, took effect on January 1, 2019. This bill increases the Personal Needs Allowance (PNA) to $70 (from $58.43) per month for clients in medical institutions and

certain community residential settings. Beginning January 1, 2020, the PNA for these recipients will be adjusted by the percentage of the cost-of-living-Adjustment (COLA) for federal benefits as published by the Social Security Administration.

House Bill (HB) 2816 (Chapter 52, Laws of 2018), *Transferring all aspects of Working Connections Child Care and Seasonal Child Care service delivery to the Department of Children, Youth, and Families*, took effect July 1, 2019. This bill transferred all aspects of Working Connections Child Care (WCCC) and Seasonal Child Care (SCC) service delivery to the Department of Children, Youth and Families (DCYF) and followed the recommendations of a report submitted to the Legislature on December 1, 2017, in accordance with HB 1661, Section 103. The transfer includes all tangible property used in carrying out the program functions, including office equipment, reports, records, and files; any appropriations made to DSHS for the programs' administration; employees engaged in performing program functions; and all rules and pending business before DSHS pertaining to the programs are continued and to be acted upon by DCYF. DCYF assumes all program responsibilities for the WCCC and SCC programs, including determinations of program eligibility, providing services to parents applying for or receiving benefits, making payments to providers, and establishing and monitoring program outcome measures.

Engrossed Third Substitute House Bill (E3SHB) 1482 (Chapter 126, Laws of 2018), *Establishing the legislative-executive WorkFirst poverty reduction oversight task force*, took effect on June 7, 2018. This bill modified the current WorkFirst Legislative Executive Task Force to create the Legislative-Executive WorkFirst Poverty Reduction Oversight Task Force and an Intergenerational Poverty Advisory Committee to lay the groundwork in Washington for advancing intergenerational prosperity and reducing poverty. The task force must make recommendations to the Governor and the Legislature. DSHS is required to develop a five-year plan to address intergenerational poverty, subject to oversight and approval by the task force. Upon approval by the task force, the Department must submit these plans to the Governor and the appropriate committees of the Legislature by December 1, 2019. The task force must review the five-year plan by December 1, 2024, and direct DSHS to update the plan as needed.

Engrossed Second Substitute House Bill (E2SHB) 1831 (Chapter 40, Laws of 2018), *Revising resource limitations for public assistance*, took effect on February 1, 2019. This bill increased the resource limits for cash assistance program eligibility to $6,000 (from $1,000) and exempted the value of one vehicle up to $10,000 (from $5,000).

Engrossed Substitute House Bill (ESHB) 2667, *Improving housing stability for people with disabilities and seniors,* was signed into law and became effective due to an emergency clause on March 13, 2018. The bill expanded eligibility for the HEN program to include recipients of the ABD cash assistance program and expanded eligibility for the HEN Referral program by removing the restriction that disqualified individuals who are primarily incapacitated due to a substance use disorder (Sections 1 and 2). The bill also required the Department to share demographic data of those persons determined

eligible for a referral to the HEN program with Commerce on a monthly basis (Section 3 took effect on June 7, 2018).

2017

Substitute House Bill (SHB) 1624 (Chapter 9, Laws of 2017), ***Concerning Working Connections Child Care Eligibility for Vulnerable Children*****,** took effect on December 1, 2018. This bill made certain populations of vulnerable children eligible for the Working Connections Child Care (WCCC) subsidy program for a minimum of twelve months. Effective December 1, 2018, a child will be eligible for WCCC if: (a) the child received child protective services (CPS), child welfare services (CWS) or services through a family assessment response (FAR) within the prior six months; (b) has been referred for childcare as part of the family's case management; and (c) is residing with a biological parent or guardian.

Second Engrossed Second Substitute House Bill (2E2SHB) 1661 (Chapter 6, Laws of 2017), ***Creating the Department of Children, Youth and Families*****,** took effect on October 19, 2017. This bill allowed for the creation of the Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) by merging Department of Early Learning (DEL) with the Department of Social and Health Services' (DSHS) Children's Administration (CA) effective July 1, 2018, and DSHS Juvenile Rehabilitation (JRA) effective July 1, 2019. The bill required DSHS, DEL, and DCYF to prepare a plan for transferring Working Connections Child Care eligibility to DCYF effective July 1, 2019. This bill recodified RCWs pertaining to the current departments and transfers control to the new department.

Senate Bill (SB) 5118, (Chapter 270) , Laws of 2017*), Increasing the Personal Needs Allowance for Persons Receiving State-Financed Care*, took effect on July 1, 2017. This bill allowed for a personal needs allowance (PNA) increase to reflect the cost-of-living adjustments (COLA) made to federal Social Security benefits for Medicaid-eligible residents in institutions and community-based residential settings receiving long-term care, developmental disabilities, or mental health services.

Second Substitute Senate Bill (2SSB) 5347 (Chapter 156, Laws of 2017), ***Concerning the Definition of Work Activity for the Purposes of the WorkFirst Program***, took effect on July 23, 2017. This bill amended RCW 74.08A.250 to allow for expansion of vocational education as an approvable work activity from 12 months to 24 months.

Substitute Senate Bill (SSB) 5883, the 2017-2019 Operating Biennium Budget was signed into law on June 30, 2017. A number of policy changes were funded in the operating budget, including:

- TANF, and Refugee Cash Assistance program grants will increase by 2.5 percent beginning in SFY 2019;
- Means tests for kinship caregivers will be repealed (see 2ESSB 5890);
- Working Family Support received funding to continue the program through the biennium, and;
- Infant exemptions from work, for TANF parents, was extended for children up to 24 months

Second Engrossed Substitute Senate Bill (2ESSB) 5890 Chapter 20, Laws of 2017),

Concerning Foster Care and Adoption Support, took effect on October 19, 2017. This bill facilitated and supported permanency for children in the foster care system, including through promoting adoption. Section 16, as of July 1, 2018, repealed income means testing for nonparent caregivers applying for or receiving Child-Only TANF grants on behalf of the children in their care.

Engrossed Second Substitute Bill (ESSB) 5898 (Chapter 21, Laws of 2017), *Concerning Eligibility for Public Assistance Programs*, took effect on October 19, 2017. This bill removed outdated WorkFirst suspension dates and amends RCW 74.08a.260 to suspend WorkFirst participation for TANF recipients with a child under age two. It modified the good cause reasons for failure to participate by adding in the recipients with a child under age two. It adds language that parents with a child under age two and claiming good cause exemption may still be required to participate in the activities noted in subsections (2a-d) and (3). Subsection (5) limits a good cause exemption under subsection (1)(b) to a maximum of twenty-four months in a parent's lifetime. Subsection (3) notes the Department shall work with a parent claiming good cause exemption to participate in programs and services regarding parenting skills and promote child well-being, including but not limited to home visitation programs.

2016

Second Substitute House Bill (2SHB) 2877, *Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program – Benefit Distribution Dates*, was signed into law on March 29, 2016. It required the Department to expand distribution dates for SNAP benefits from the 1st to the 10th of every month to the 1st through the 20th of every month, beginning February 1, 2017.

Substitute Senate Bill (SSB) 6430, *Medical Assistance Programs – Continuity of Care*, was signed into law on March 31, 2016. It required the Health Care Authority (HCA) and the Community Services Division (CSD) of the DSHS Economic Services Administration to suspend, rather than terminate, medical assistance benefits for persons who are incarcerated or committed to a state hospital, beginning July 1, 2017. HCA must allow a person to apply for medical assistance during incarceration, whether or not the release date of the person is known; eligibility is suspended until the individual is released.

2015

Second Engrossed Second Substitute House Bill (2E2SHB) 1491, *the Early Start Act*, was signed into law on July 6, 2015. The Act required the Department of Early Learning (DEL) to establish and implement Working Connections Child Care (WCCC) policies that promote stability and quality of care for children from low-income households, focus on school readiness for young learners, and use outcome measures that promote stability, quality and continuity of the early care and education program. It promoted stability by maintaining authorizations for WCCC subsidies for 12 months regardless of most changes in family employment, other approved activities, schedule, or income, beginning July 1, 2016. To receive subsidy payment for care of children below school age, existing licensed childcare providers must enroll (August 2016), progress (August 2017) and meet standards (December 2019) set under Early Achievers, the state quality rating and improvement system for childcare. New

providers must follow a similar timeline for meeting standards. The Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program, the state's comprehensive pre-kindergarten program for three- and four-year-old children from low-income families, is to expand to serve all eligible children by the 2020-2021 school year.

Engrossed Substitute Senate Bill (ESSB) 6052, the 2015-2017 Operating Biennium Budget was signed into law on June 30, 2015. Several policy changes were funded in the operating budget, including:

(1) Elimination of the Washington Telephone Assistance Program (WTAP) funding;
(2) Increase in TANF grant standards by 9%; and
(3) Increase in FAP benefit amount to 100% of the SNAP benefit amount.

2014

House Bill (HB) 2585, TANF – *Benefits for a Child* was signed into law on March 27, 2014. The bill created greater parity for non-parental caregivers by amending RCW 74.12.037 to allow a 50% unearned income disregard for TANF child-only cases involving non-parental caregivers, many of whom are kinship caregivers (such as a grandparent, aunt, uncle or other relative). This change was intended to ease the financial burden for these families, as many non-parental caregivers live on fixed incomes. The effective date for implementation of the 50% unearned income disregard for non-parental caregivers was November 1, 2014.

Senate Bill (SB) 6573, *Changing the Effective Date of Modifications to the ABD cash assistance and the Housing and HEN programs* was signed into law on April 3, 2014. A statutory change in 2013 directed DSHS to determine program eligibility for the ABD program using less restrictive standards for the duration of a person's disabling condition (from 12 months to 9 months) and consideration of past work (from 15 years to 10 years) during the period of January 2014 through June 2015. Enacting SB 6573 into law changed the date for reverting to the more restrictive standards for program eligibility from July 1, 2015 to July 1, 2014.

Engrossed Substitute Senate Bill (ESSB) 6002, the 2014 Supplemental Operating Budget, was signed into law on April 4, 2014. Several WorkFirst policy changes were funded through the supplemental operating budget:

1) Implementation of a 15% incentive payment, beginning April 15, 2015, to WorkFirst households that participate in their Individual Responsibility Plan (IRP) for 20 hours or more a week;
2) Implementation of a TANF home visiting service for at-risk expectant parents, families with newborns and young children under age 5, and families receiving Rapid Rehousing services. These home visits promote healthy child development and address issues such as maternal and child health, positive parenting, and safe home environments.
3) Increased funding for work study through the community and technical colleges for WorkFirst clients;
4) Modified the Additional Requirements for Emergent Needs (AREN) program to a maximum of $750 per household in a

12-month period rather than in a lifetime;

5) Modified the WorkFirst sanction policy from a four-month period to a two-month period and implemented a home visit program for clients who do not attend an in-person meeting regarding their IRP prior to termination for non-compliance;
6) Adjusted funding for the Diversion Cash Assistance (DCA), Tribal TANF Maintenance of Effort (MOE), and WorkFirst contracts;
7) Gave one-time funding to complete Lean process projects and technical assistance visits to local Community Service Offices (CSOs); and
8) Implemented a mandatory Orientation for WorkFirst clients.

2013

Substitute House Bill (SHB) 2069, *Continuation of Safety Net Benefits for Persons Determined to Have a Physical or Mental Disability*, was signed into law on June 30. The bill redefined eligibility for the ABD program by making it less restrictive than SSI disability criteria, reducing the minimum incapacity duration from 12 to 9 months, and reducing consideration of an individual's ability to perform past work from 15 to 10 years. The less restrictive disability standard will be in place for 18 months only, from January 1, 2014 through June 30, 2015. After that, the program will revert to the more restrictive standards now in place. The bill also replaced the current mechanism for determining potential eligibility HEN. To be potentially eligible for HEN currently, an individual must receive Medical Care Services (MCS). SHB 2069 replaced the MCS requirement for HEN with an incapacity determination by DSHS intended to identify individuals who are "eligible for referral" to HEN services. MCS eligibility was also narrowed to only ABD and HEN recipients who are ineligible for Medicaid expansion. The effective dates for these changes range from January 1, 2014 to July 1, 2015 (Section 2 only).

Second Engrossed Substitute House Bill (2ESSHB) 1971, *Concerning Communications Services Reform*, was signed into law on June 30. The bill repealed the excise tax that funds the Washington Telephone Assistance Program (WTAP) and required the program to be funded by a biennial State General Fund appropriation. It prohibited WTAP enrollment from exceeding appropriated funds for the program and required DSHS to close WTAP if there was a danger of overspending. The effective date for the legislation is August 1, 2013.

Second Engrossed Substitute Senate Bill (2ESSB) 5595, New Customer Service Standards for Working Connections Child Care, was signed into law on May 23. The bill required the Department to provide training on professionalism to employees working with parents who apply for or are receiving WCCC; return WCCC-related telephone calls to parents within two business days; develop an electronic process by which WCCC parents can submit required forms and information; provide 10 day advance notice to providers and parents of loss of WCCC benefits; and provide parents with easy to understand information on the services they are eligible for, hearing rights, and the parent's responsibilities in obtaining and maintaining eligibility for WCCC. The effective date for the bill is July 28, 2013.

Engrossed Second Substitute House Bill (E2SHB) 1723, Expanding and Streamlining

Early Learning Services and Programs, was signed into law on May 21. The bill put into statute the 200% FPL income eligibility threshold for the Working Connections Child Care (WCCC) program. It also required an increase in the base rate for WCCC providers, provided tiered rate enhancements to providers who meet specific requirements, and increased the subsidy rate for WCCC providers who enrolled in Level 2 of the Early Achievers program. The effective date for the rate changes is September 1, 2013.

2012

Third Engrossed Substitute House Bill (3ESHB) 2127, the supplemental budget, was enacted and made the following changes: **(1)** TANF Payment Standard – the maximum TANF cash grant increased from $726 to $941 for families of 6 or more; **(2)** FAP – funding was provided at 50% of the benefit level for the federal SNAP; **(3)** Child Care Subsidy Program eligibility increased from 175% to 200% FPL and certifications increased from 6-month to 12-month periods; **(4)** WorkFirst Services – funding was reduced by about $821,000 (1.1%); **(5)** Division of Child Support – funding was provided for 16 additional FTEs in SFY 2013 (effective July 1, 2012) to increase the amount of child support collected and retained by the state; and **(6)** Department of Early Learning – provided $100,000 for contracts with independent consultants to evaluate and recommend the optimum system for the eligibility determination process for childcare, with a report due to the Office of Financial Management and Legislature by December 31, 2012.

2011

Engrossed Substitute Senate Bill (ESSB) 5921 was enacted to make fundamental reforms to the WorkFirst program. This legislation: **(1)** suspended work participation for parents of one child under age two or two children under age six from July 1, 2011 through June 30, 2012; **(2)** created a Legislative-Executive WorkFirst Oversight Task Force to oversee implementation of the WorkFirst TANF redesign; **(3)** established an income eligibility of 300% FPL for non-parental Child-Only TANF cases and established a sliding scale benefit standard for a child when the caregiver's income is above 200% but below 300% FPL; **(4)** prohibited DSHS from counting SSI income when determining TANF eligibility; **(5)** imposed the 60-month time limit on all parents of children who receive Child-Only TANF, provided this was "consistent with federal funding requirements and makes hardship extensions available to these parents effective September 1, 2011;" **(6)** allowed DSHS to implement a permanent disqualification for adults who had been terminated due to a WorkFirst noncompliance sanction three or more times since March 1, 2007; **(7)** added voluntary service at a licensed childcare, preschool or elementary school where the parent's child is enrolled as an allowable work activity and allowed parenting or life skills education; **(8)** made it a condition of eligibility for childcare subsidy programs that the applicant or recipient must seek child support enforcement services from the DSHS Division of Child Support, unless DSHS finds that the applicant or recipient has good cause not to cooperate; **(9)** required DSHS and the Department of Early Learning to develop a plan for monitoring WCCC attendance, to be implemented by January 2013, and conduct an assessment of current

subsidized childcare eligibility, reporting on both to the Legislature by December 31, 2011; **(10)** required DSHS, in consultation with its Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) contractor and others, to strategize how to help recipients maintain bank accounts, increase their financial literacy and financial management skills, and minimize their ATM fee costs with a report due to Legislature by December 1, 2011; **(11)** required DSHS, in its EBT contracts, to require that any surcharge or transaction fee be disclosed to clients at the point of transaction; **(12)** expanded prohibitions on use of EBT cards, limited use of card to recipients, forbade sale of cards, and made violators subject to a possible civil penalty; **(13)** required certain businesses to disable ATMs and point-of-sale machines by January 1, 2012; **(14)** established an Office of Fraud and Accountability (OFA) in the Secretary's office, with responsibility to: conduct independent investigations; refer to law enforcement when appropriate; maximize overpayment collections; recommend new policies and procedures to mitigate the risk of fraud and abuse; analyze alternatives to the cash benefit delivery system; determine appropriate deployment of investigative resources; and report to the Legislature by December 31, 2011; and **(15)** DSHS was directed to establish an incentive pilot that would give staff who work directly with clients an additional eight hours of paid leave for helping clients reach outcomes to be determined by DSHS. While the Governor vetoed Section 3 of the bill regarding competitive performance-based contracting, the Governor directed the Department of Social and Health Services and the WorkFirst Subcabinet to act on the Legislature's direction in 2ESHB 1087 to competitively contract all work activities under the 1997 law.

Engrossed Substitute House Bill (ESHB) 2082 was enacted to make fundamental reforms to the Disability Lifeline program. The key provisions included: **(1)** all components of the Disability Lifeline program were terminated effective October 31, 2011; **(2)** ABD, PWA, and Essential Needs and Housing Support programs were created effective November 1, 2011 (to be eligible for the ABD program, a person must be aged 65 or older, blind by SSA standards, or determined likely to meet the SSI disability standard); **(3)** individuals who were eligible for Medical Care Services (MCS) would be referred to the Essential Needs and Housing Support program (no cash grant was provided under this program); **(4)** the Department of Commerce was required to provide services under the Essential Needs and Housing Support program; **(5)** individuals who were eligible for the ABD and PWA programs would now be eligible for cash assistance and medical benefits; **(6)** ESHB 2082 allowed the Health Care Authority (HCA) to freeze new MCS enrollments and establish a waiting list if it appeared that continued enrollment would result in MCS expenditures exceeding the appropriated level for a particular fiscal year; and **(7)** DSHS was now required to review the cases of all persons who received MCS benefits for 12 months and annually thereafter to determine whether they would meet the standards for the ABD program.

2010

Substitute House Bill (SHB) 2684 was enacted to establish an Opportunity Employment and Education Center (OCEE) within the Seattle Community College District, which would house various educational and social services providers to integrate access to benefit programs and services. The bill also required the State Board for Community and Technical

Colleges (SBCTC) to make recommendations on the location of an additional center by December 1, 2010. The center is required to provide services including Basic Food, TANF and WorkFirst, general assistance, and SSI facilitation. This bill became effective June 10, 2010. The OCEE is located on the campus of the North Seattle Community College.

Engrossed Second Substitute House Bill (E2SHB) 2782 was enacted containing three distinct provisions: **(1)** it required the creation of an "Opportunity Portal," a web-based universal application/benefit portal that would make it easier for low-income families and individuals to apply for and access a broad array of services and benefits. Creation of the "Opportunity Portal" was contingent upon the state securing private funding by December 2010; **(2)** it required the expansion of the Basic Food Employment and Training program to three additional community colleges or community-based locations and increased capacity at existing locations, subject to federal approval. Recipients of Basic Food, unless exempt, were required to participate in the program, which included job search workshops and assistance with job placement; **(3)** It required DSHS to end the General Assistance program and create the Disability Lifeline program. Major changes to the program included a new name; implementing time limits of 24 months out of 60 months, effective September 1, 2010 through June 13, 2013; creating a housing voucher program that will be administered by the Department of Commerce; requiring the development and use of a new assessment tool, which must be used to determine whether Division of Vocational Rehabilitation programs could assist Disability Lifeline recipients in returning to work; requiring DSHS as part of the application process to ask the applicant if they ever served in the US military and if so, DSHS was required to confer with the state or federal Department of Veterans Affairs to determine whether the applicant was eligible for any benefits or programs offered to veterans; and requiring DSHS to contract with a managed health care system or other qualified entity to operate a project aimed at screening and quickly transitioning individuals with a disability who are likely to qualify for federal disability benefits into the Disability Lifeline Expedited Program, previously known as GA-X. The pilot began in King, Pierce, and Spokane counties on July 1, 2010 and was to be expanded statewide by October 1, 2011. This bill became effective March 29, 2010.

Engrossed Second Substitute House Bill (E2SHB) 3141 was enacted requiring a 12-month childcare authorization period for children in the Working Connections Child Care program who were enrolled in the Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP), Head Start, and Early Head Start. The change was effective July 1, 2010. The Governor vetoed other sections of the bill, including the section requiring a proposal for implementing three pathways for WorkFirst, Washington's TANF program, which focused on employment, education and training and disability support. With the signing of the bill, the Governor directed the WorkFirst Subcabinet to develop a redesign plan for WorkFirst that meets the needs of WorkFirst families to obtain employment and achieve family self-sufficiency. The target date for completing the TANF Redesign plan was December 2010. This bill became effective June 10, 2010.

Substitute Senate Bill (SSB) 6893 suspended the child support pass-through effective May 1, 2011.

2009

House Bill (HB) 1270 was enacted allowing DSHS and HCA to adopt electronic signatures for online applications for benefits. This provision became effective July 26, 2009.

Substitute Senate Bill (SSB) 6024 eliminated the 45-day processing timeframe for General Assistance applications filed by a person confined in a correctional facility or institution. The provision became effective November 1, 2009.

Substitute House Bill (SHB) 2071 allowed DSHS to continue to decide whether education and training (including higher education) for a WorkFirst recipient was appropriate. SHBS 2071 encouraged DSHS to make more use of education and training opportunities but referred to moving the recipient into full-time WorkFirst activities as quickly as possible; giving DSHS the latitude to make the decision on what would be the best activity for the recipient. The Bill required DSHS to describe services available to the recipient either during or after WorkFirst to enable the recipient to not only obtain and keep employment but advance in the workplace and increase wage earning potential over time. This bill became effective July 26, 2009.

Engrossed Substitute House Bill (ESHB) 1244, the operating budget, r*equired DSHS to make the following changes:* **(1)** in regions with high numbers of GA-U clients, coordination with local workforce development councils to expedite access to worker retraining programs; **(2)** identify GA-U clients who would be eligible for federal disability benefits if they became a naturalized citizen, and give them priority to naturalization services funded through DSHS; **(3)** work with the Washington State Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) to develop a process for referring GA-U clients who may be eligible for veteran's services; **(4)** outstation DVA staff in selected Community Services Offices in King and Pierce counties to facilitate applications for veteran's services; **(5)** intensively evaluate persons who have received GA-U for more than 12 months. For those with an impairment that would not qualify for federal disability benefits, the Bill allowed expedited referrals to services that can eliminate or minimize barriers to employment, like mental health treatment, substance abuse treatment, and vocational rehabilitation services that are available through the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation; **(6)** implement 50% earned income disregard for GA – the same as TANF; and **(7)** provide ten additional SSI Facilitators.

2008

Engrossed Substitute House Bill (ESHB) 2687, the operating budget, was enacted effective July 1, 2008. Section 207 of the budget: **(1)** provided a 3% grant increase to TANF/CEAP households for increased housing costs; **(2)** increased the gross income limit for Basic Food eligibility to 200% FPL; and **(3)** provided five additional SSI Facilitators for the General Assistance program.

Senate Bill (SB) 6950 provided a limited waiver or suspension of statutory obligations during officially declared emergencies. Section 201 expanded eligibility for Consolidated Emergency Assistance Program (CEAP) benefits to individuals without children during a Governor-declared state of emergency. The Bill provided

the foundation for the Disaster Cash Assistance Program.

2007

Second Substitute Senate Bill (2SSB) 6016 was enacted allowing a parent to be exempt from WorkFirst participation requirements while a child was under 12 months old but limiting the exemption to 12 months in the parent's lifetime (the federal limit). The bill allowed DSHS to require the parent to participate in part-time mental health, alcohol or drug treatment, domestic violence services, or parenting education or skills training during the exemption period if indicated by an assessment. Parenting skills training could now include voluntary home visitation services, if available.

Substitute Senate Bill (SSB) 5830 directed DSHS to work with the Washington Council for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (WCPCAN), Department of Health, Department of Early Learning, and Family Policy Council to coordinate or consolidate home visitation services for children and families. These services were now required to address risk factors for child abuse and neglect and poor education outcomes for children, including family poverty and lack of parental education and job skills.

Second Substitute House Bill (2SHB) 1088 required DSHS to collaborate with county juvenile court administrators and the Juvenile Rehabilitation Administration to conduct expedited medical determinations and restore medical assistance upon release for youth confined in a JRA or county-run juvenile detention facility. Youth to be served were any who received medical assistance prior to entering the institution or detention facility or who were "likely to be eligible upon release."

Second Substitute House Bill (2SHB) 1201 provided Medicaid coverage to individuals between the ages of 18 and 21 who aged out of foster care or an out-of-home placement at age 18. It required DSHS to help youth approaching age 21 to apply for the Basic Health Plan.

Substitute Senate Bill (SSB) 5093 was enacted as part of the Governor's plan for all children in Washington state to have health care coverage by 2010 and to improve access. It required DSHS to simplify and streamline applications and review processes to avoid breaks in coverage, expand coverage to include children in families at higher income levels and to cover children not eligible for Medicaid, charge premiums or make unsubsidized coverage available to children in higher income families, participate with the Department of Early Learning, Department of Health, local public schools and others, in education and outreach efforts, and develop a feasibility study and implementation plan for an online medical assistance application integrated with the Automated Client Eligibility System (ACES). It allowed DSHS to freeze enrollment for non-Medicaid-eligible children and for children in higher income families. The SFY 2008 budget provided ESA with funding for increased workload and to out-station eligibility workers in support of outreach efforts.

Pathway to Engagement Budget Proviso required DSHS to collaborate with community partners and represented staff to identify additional services for WorkFirst parents in sanction status and families whose WorkFirst cash benefits had ended as a result of a non-compliance sanction. Services were required to be complementary to services already provided by DSHS, voluntary for parents, and delivered

through performance-based contracts with community-based organizations.

WorkFirst Career Services Budget Proviso authorized DSHS to establish a post-TANF work transition program.

2006

Engrossed Second Substitute House Bill (E2SHB) 1290 was enacted requiring expedited eligibility determinations and timely access to medical assistance for persons with mental disorders being released from confinement. Additionally, it required collaboration with the Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs (WASPC), the Department of Corrections (DOC), and the Social Security Administration (SSA) to develop processes and procedures for coordination. DSHS was directed to phase in the new procedures on a statewide basis and continue to evaluate funding needs as the program was implemented.

Substitute House Bill (SHB) 2394 required the Department of Social and Health Services to start assessing WorkFirst parents for financial literacy during the comprehensive evaluation effective January 1, 2007. The Bill directed DSHS to offer referrals to financial literacy services available in the local communities to all WorkFirst parents to assist them in becoming self-sufficient and financially stable.

Medicaid Treatment Child Care (MTCC) Budget Proviso required DSHS to contract for MTCC services and authorize care for eligible children referred by TANF caseworkers and public health nurses.

2005

Engrossed Second Substitute Senate Bill (E2SSB) 5213 exercises the state option to exempt individuals convicted of a drug-related felony from the TANF ban on receipt of benefits. The statutorily mandated effective date was September 1, 2005.

2004

Senate Bill (SB) 6411 required DSHS to implement simplified reporting for the Basic Food program beginning October 2004. In addition, Basic Food eligibility restrictions for persons convicted of a drug-related felony were removed effective July 2004. The restriction prohibiting fleeing felons from receiving Basic Food is still applicable.

2003

Substitute House Bill (SHB) 1624 was signed into law on May 7, 2003 permanently Authorizing the Washington Telephone Assistance Program (WTAP), which was scheduled to expire on June 30, 2003. In addition to permanently authorizing the WTAP program, effective July 1, 2003, the program was expanded to include Community Service Voice Mail (CSVM) as a component. DSHS was directed to enter into an agreement with the Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development to provide a portion of the WTAP budget for operation of CSVM, which will provide homeless individuals with a community service voice mail box.

1997

Engrossed House Bill (EHB) 3901, the **Washington WorkFirst TANF Act**, was signed into law on April 17, 1997. It established the **WorkFirst** program in Washington state and replaced the Aid to Families with Dependent

Children (AFDC) program. The Success Through Employment Program (STEP) Waiver 48 of 60-Month Time Limit was repealed and replaced with a five-year lifetime limit for cash assistance. The earned income exemption was increased to 50% of gross wages, overpayments due to retrospective budgeting were eliminated, and the 100% of Need test was eliminated. The vehicle equity limit was raised to $5,000, a vehicle used to transport a disabled individual is totally exempt, and savings accounts up to $3,000 are allowed. Pregnant teen and teen parent requirements for education went into effect. Diversion services were implemented as an alternative to cash assistance. The Division of Child Support (DCS) non-cooperation sanction was replaced with a 25% grant reduction and eligibility review cycles were extended from six to twelve months. Various child support enforcement remedies required by PRWORA were adopted. The bill created the DCS license suspension program for delinquent child support obligors and provided for license suspension as a sanction for a person who, or entity which, fails to comply with a DCS withholding notice, lien or subpoena.

1995

As required by E2SHB 2798, the **Success Through Employment Program (STEP)** waiver application was submitted to U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) on January 30. The proposed project start date was July 1, 1995, end date June 30, 2005, and project area was statewide. The waiver requested permission to establish length of stay grant reductions and elimination of the 100-hour rule.

1994

Engrossed Second Substitute House Bill (E2SHB) 2798 Welfare System Reform was enacted on April 2, 1994, and addressed the issues of lengthy stays on welfare, lack of access to vocational education and training, inadequate emphasis on employment by the social welfare system and teen pregnancy as obstacles to achieving economic independence. DSHS was instructed to (1) reduce AFDC grants by 10 percent per year for some families that received welfare for 48 out of 60 months, (2) waive the 100-hour rule for AFDC recipients, (3) train staff to emphasize the expectation that recipients will enter employment, and (4) determine the most appropriate living situation for unmarried pregnant teens who receive public assistance. Target populations included applicants and recipients who received AFDC for 36 of the preceding 60 months, custodial parents under the age of 24 who have not completed high school or who had little or no work experience, and families in which the youngest child was within 2 years of being ineligible for AFDC because of age. DSHS was directed to seek approval from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) for implementation of the time limit provisions, waiver of the 100-hour rule for recipients, and statewide implementation (known as the STEP Waiver). The Employment Partnership Program (EPP) was modified to allow contracting out to public or private nonprofit organizations. In addition, authority to establish wage subsidy projects to enable AFDC grants to be paid as wage subsidies was moved from the Employment Security Department to DSHS. It established authority for a child's irrevocable trust account, with a limit of $4,000, for future educational use. DSHS was directed to actively develop mechanisms to

refer disabled persons currently receiving AFDC to the federal SSI program.

1993

House Bill (HB) 1197 instructed DSHS to (1) "segment" the AFDC population, (2) match services to the needs of each segment, (3) focus AFDC on employment, and (4) seek federal waivers that allowed families to keep more of their earnings from employment while receiving AFDC.

1990

Washington implemented the federal Family Support Act of 1988, Public Law 100-485, establishing the Job Opportunities and Basic Skills (JOBS) program. Participation was voluntary for welfare recipients.

1987

The Family Independence Program (FIP), a 5-year welfare reform demonstration, began in 1987. FIP provided (1) financial incentives to obtain education, training, and employment, (2) cash rather than Food Stamps, (3) social services during FIP participation, and (4) childcare and medical coupons for 12 months after exiting, if the recipient left FIP with employment.