
SECOND SUBSTITUTE SENATE BILL 5718

AS AMENDED BY THE HOUSE

Passed Legislature - 2019 Regular Session

State of Washington

66th Legislature

2019 Regular Session

By Senate Ways & Means (originally sponsored by Senators Saldaña, Hasegawa, Nguyen, O'Ban, Das, Keiser, Kuderer, and Zeiger)

READ FIRST TIME 03/01/19.

1 AN ACT Relating to establishing the child welfare housing
2 assistance program that provides housing assistance to parents
3 reunifying with a child and parents at risk of having a child
4 removed; adding a new section to chapter 74.13 RCW; creating a new
5 section; and providing an expiration date.

6 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

7 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** A new section is added to chapter 74.13
8 RCW to read as follows:

9 (1) Beginning July 1, 2020, the department shall establish a
10 child welfare housing assistance pilot program, which provides
11 housing vouchers, rental assistance, navigation, and other support
12 services to eligible families.

13 (a) The department shall operate or contract for the operation of
14 the child welfare housing assistance pilot program under subsection
15 (3) of this section in one county west of the crest of the Cascade
16 mountain range and one county east of the crest of the Cascade
17 mountain range.

18 (b) The child welfare housing assistance pilot program is
19 intended to shorten the time that children remain in out-of-home
20 care.

1 (2) A parent with a child who is dependent pursuant to chapter
2 13.34 RCW and whose primary remaining barrier to reunification is the
3 lack of appropriate housing is eligible for the child welfare housing
4 assistance pilot program.

5 (3) The department shall contract with an outside entity or
6 entities to operate the child welfare housing assistance pilot
7 program. If no outside entity or entities are available to operate
8 the program or specific parts of the program, the department may
9 operate the program or the specific parts that are not operated by an
10 outside entity.

11 (4) Families may be referred to the child welfare housing
12 assistance pilot program by a caseworker, an attorney, a guardian ad
13 litem as defined in chapter 13.34 RCW, a child welfare parent mentor
14 as defined in RCW 2.70.060, an office of public defense social
15 worker, or the court.

16 (5) The department shall consult with a stakeholder group that
17 must include, but is not limited to, the following:

18 (a) Parent allies;

19 (b) Parent attorneys and social workers managed by the office of
20 public defense parent representation program;

21 (c) The department of commerce;

22 (d) Housing experts;

23 (e) Community-based organizations;

24 (f) Advocates; and

25 (g) Behavioral health providers.

26 (6) The stakeholder group established in subsection (5) of this
27 section shall begin meeting after the effective date of this section
28 and assist the department in design of the child welfare housing
29 assistance pilot program in areas including, but not limited to:

30 (a) Equitable racial, geographic, ethnic, and gender distribution
31 of program support;

32 (b) Eligibility criteria;

33 (c) Creating a definition of homeless for purposes of eligibility
34 for the program; and

35 (d) Options for program design that include outside entities
36 operating the entire program or specific parts of the program.

37 (7) By December 1, 2021, the department shall report outcomes for
38 the child welfare housing assistance pilot program to the oversight
39 board for children, youth, and families established pursuant to RCW

1 43.216.015. The report must include racial, geographic, ethnic, and
2 gender distribution of program support.

3 (8) The child welfare housing assistance pilot program
4 established in this section is subject to the availability of funds
5 appropriated for this purpose.

6 (9) This section expires June 30, 2022.

7 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** If specific funding for the purposes of
8 this act, referencing this act by bill or chapter number, is not
9 provided by June 30, 2019, in the omnibus appropriations act, this
10 act is null and void.

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