

ASSEMBLY, No. 1292

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

Introduced Pending Technical Review by Legislative Counsel

PRE-FILED FOR INTRODUCTION IN THE 1996 SESSION

By Assemblyman GREENWALD

1 AN ACT concerning benefits provided under the aid to families with
2 dependent children program and amending P.L.1991, c.523.

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4 **BE IT ENACTED** by the Senate and General Assembly of the State
5 of New Jersey:

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7 1. Section 7 of P.L.1991, c.523 (C.44:10-25) is amended to read
8 as follows:

9 7. a. Services shall be provided to each participant in the program
10 according to a family plan which includes a written contract. The
11 contract shall be written in English or Spanish, according to the
12 participant's needs. The contract shall be signed by the participant and
13 a program representative who shall act as a case manager, advocate
14 and broker of services for the participant and the participant's family,
15 and shall set forth the specific mutual obligations of the participant and
16 the program and a detailed plan for the participant and the participant's
17 family. The family plan and contract, which shall explicitly state the
18 services that the program will provide to the participant, shall be
19 reviewed by both the participant and the program representative at
20 least once a year and may be revised from time to time according to
21 the needs of the participant, the participant's family and the program.

22 b. The services to be provided under the program shall include, but
23 not be limited to: job development and placement in full-time
24 permanent jobs, preferably in the private sector; counseling and
25 vocational assessment; intensive remedial education, including
26 instruction in English-as-a-second language; financial and other
27 assistance for higher education, including four-year and community
28 colleges, and for post-secondary vocational training programs; job
29 search assistance; community work experience; employment skills
30 training focused on a specific job; and on-the-job training in an
31 employment setting.

32 c. The program shall be designed to ensure that each participant

EXPLANATION - Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets [thus] in the above bill is not enacted and intended to be omitted in the law.

Matter underlined thus is new matter.

1 and member of the participant's family, as age appropriate, has attained
2 the equivalent of a high school degree, before assigning that person to
3 a vocational-related activity under the program. The commissioner
4 may exempt a participant or member of the participant's family from
5 this requirement if the commissioner determines that: based upon an
6 assessment of the person's ability and aptitude, the person lacks a
7 reasonable prospect of being able to successfully complete the
8 academic requirements of a high school or equivalency program of
9 study, in which case the commissioner shall refer the person to an
10 alternative educational program as appropriate; or the person is
11 gainfully employed or engaged in a job search or job training activity,
12 in which case the program representative acting pursuant to the
13 provisions of subsection a. of this section shall review the person's
14 progress on a quarterly basis to assess whether the person's exemption
15 from this requirement should continue.

16 Subject to federal approval, the commissioner shall adopt
17 regulations to provide a financial incentive, by means of an increased
18 monthly grant or one-time cash bonus or a combination thereof, for a
19 participant or member of the participant's family who is engaged in a
20 high school or equivalency program of study, based upon school
21 attendance and academic achievement. The commissioner shall
22 request a waiver of federal regulations from the United States
23 Secretary of Health and Human Services to provide the financial
24 incentive.

25 d. The program shall assign one or more persons in each county
26 which is participating in the program to be responsible, on a full-time
27 basis, for job development for persons who have completed their
28 educational or training activities under the program, with an emphasis
29 on finding and creating permanent full-time unsubsidized jobs,
30 preferably in the private sector, which offer wages and benefits that
31 are adequate to support recipients and their families.

32 e. The commissioner, in consultation with the Commissioners of
33 Commerce and Economic Development and Labor, and with the
34 private industry councils established pursuant to section 18 of
35 P.L.1989, c.293 (C.34:15C-15), shall develop a program to recruit
36 private sector employers in each county to offer employment to
37 persons who have completed their educational or training activities
38 under the program.

39 f. The commissioner, in consultation with the Chancellor of Higher
40 Education and the Commissioner of Education, shall, within the limits
41 of available funds, provide financial assistance through the New Jersey
42 Educational Opportunity Fund established pursuant to P.L.1968, c.142
43 (C.18A:71-28 et seq.) and other State student assistance programs, in
44 an amount sufficient to cover all tuition and educational expenses, to
45 each program participant or other family member who has been
46 accepted into an institution of higher education, including public

1 four-year colleges and community colleges, or a post-secondary
2 vocational training program, according to standards established by the
3 commissioner.

4 g. The program shall provide supportive services to a program
5 participant as a last resort when no other source is available therefor
6 and when these services are included in the family plan. The
7 supportive services shall include, but not be limited to, one or more of
8 the following:

9 (1) day care services for the participant's child, to be provided for
10 up to one year if the participant becomes ineligible for financial
11 assistance under P.L.1959, c.86 (C.44:10-1 et seq.) as a result of
12 earned income and to be purchased through a voucher issued to the
13 participant by the program, which may be used to obtain care at a
14 State licensed child care center or school age child care program, or
15 at a family day care home approved by the department, that accepts
16 the voucher, or to be provided through an alternative child care
17 arrangement agreed to by the participant and the program
18 representative acting pursuant to the provisions of subsection a. of this
19 section;

20 (2) transportation services, to be provided directly by the program
21 or through an allowance or other means of subsidy by which the
22 participant may purchase transportation; and

23 (3) health insurance coverage, to be provided by a participant's
24 employer, or through a continuation of Medicaid benefits pursuant to
25 P.L.1968, c.413 (C.30:4D-1 et seq.) for up to two years if the
26 participant becomes ineligible for financial assistance under P.L.1959,
27 c.86 (C.44:10-1 et seq.) as a result of earned income; or health care
28 services to be provided by a school-based health care program.

29 (cf: P.L.1991, c.523, s.7)

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31 2. This act shall take effect immediately.

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STATEMENT

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36 This bill requires the Commissioner of Human Services to adopt
37 regulations to provide a financial incentive under the Family
38 Development Initiative established pursuant to P.L.1991, c.523
39 (C.44:10-19 et seq.) for a program participant (who is a recipient of
40 aid to families with dependent children benefits) or a member of the
41 participant's family who is engaged in a high school or equivalency
42 program of study, based upon school attendance and academic
43 achievement. The commissioner is directed to request a waiver of
44 federal regulations from the United States Secretary of Health and
45 Human Services for this purpose.

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3 Provides for financial incentives for AFDC recipients based upon

4 school attendance and academic record.