

LEGISLATURE OF NEBRASKA
ONE HUNDRED NINTH LEGISLATURE
FIRST SESSION

LEGISLATIVE BILL 379

Introduced by Andersen, 49; Clements, 2; Dover, 19; Holdcroft, 36; Ibach, 44; Kauth, 31; Lippincott, 34; McKeon, 41; Sorrentino, 39; Storm, 23; Strommen, 47.

Read first time January 16, 2025

Committee: Health and Human Services

- 1 A BILL FOR AN ACT relating to the Welfare Reform Act; to amend section
- 2 68-1724, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement, 2024; to change the
- 3 maximum time limit for receipt of cash assistance; and to repeal the
- 4 original section.
- 5 Be it enacted by the people of the State of Nebraska,

1 **Section 1.** Section 68-1724, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement,
2 2024, is amended to read:

3 68-1724 (1) Cash assistance shall be provided for a period or
4 periods of time not to exceed a total of twenty-four ~~sixty~~ months for
5 recipient families with children subject to the following:

6 (a) If the state fails to meet the specific terms of the self-
7 sufficiency contract developed under section 68-1719, the twenty-four-
8 month ~~sixty-month~~ time limit established in this section shall be
9 extended;

10 (b) The twenty-four-month ~~sixty-month~~ time period for cash
11 assistance shall begin within the first month of eligibility;

12 (c) When no longer eligible to receive cash assistance, assistance
13 shall be available to reimburse work-related child care expenses even if
14 the recipient family has not achieved economic self-sufficiency. The
15 amount of such assistance shall be based on a cost-shared plan between
16 the recipient family and the state which shall provide assistance up to
17 two hundred percent of the federal poverty level prior to October 1,
18 2026, or one hundred eighty-five percent of the federal poverty level on
19 and after October 1, 2026. A recipient family may be required to
20 contribute up to twenty percent of such family's gross income for child
21 care. It is the intent of the Legislature that transitional health care
22 coverage be made available on a sliding-scale basis to individuals and
23 families with incomes up to one hundred eighty-five percent of the
24 federal poverty level if other health care coverage is not available; and

25 (d) The self-sufficiency contract shall be revised and cash
26 assistance extended when there is no job available for adult members of
27 the recipient family. It is the intent of the Legislature that available
28 job shall mean a job which results in an income of at least equal to the
29 amount of cash assistance that would have been available if receiving
30 assistance minus unearned income available to the recipient family.

31 The department shall develop policy guidelines to allow for cash

1 assistance to persons who have received the maximum cash assistance
2 provided by this section and who face extreme hardship without additional
3 assistance. For purposes of this section, extreme hardship means a
4 recipient family does not have adequate cash resources to meet the costs
5 of the basic needs of food, clothing, and housing without continuing
6 assistance or the child or children are at risk of losing care by and
7 residence with their parent or parents.

8 (2) Cash assistance conditions under the Welfare Reform Act shall be
9 as follows:

10 (a) Adults in recipient families shall mean individuals at least
11 nineteen years of age living with and related to a child eighteen years
12 of age or younger and shall include parents, siblings, uncles, aunts,
13 cousins, or grandparents, whether the relationship is biological,
14 adoptive, or step;

15 (b) The payment standard shall be based upon family size;

16 (c) The adults in the recipient family shall ensure that the minor
17 children regularly attend school. Education is a valuable personal
18 resource. The cash assistance provided to the recipient family may be
19 reduced when the parent or parents have failed to take reasonable action
20 to encourage the minor children of the recipient family ages sixteen and
21 under to regularly attend school. No reduction of assistance shall be
22 such as may result in extreme hardship. It is the intent of the
23 Legislature that a process be developed to insure communication between
24 the case manager, the parent or parents, and the school to address issues
25 relating to school attendance;

26 (d) Two-parent families which would otherwise be eligible under
27 section 43-504 or a federally approved waiver shall receive cash
28 assistance under this section;

29 (e) For minor parents, the assistance payment shall be based on the
30 minor parent's income. If the minor parent lives with at least one
31 parent, the family's income shall be considered in determining

1 eligibility and cash assistance payment levels for the minor parent. If
2 the minor parent lives independently, support shall be pursued from the
3 parents of the minor parent. If the absent parent of the minor's child is
4 a minor, support from his or her parents shall be pursued. Support from
5 parents as allowed under this subdivision shall not be pursued when the
6 family income is less than three hundred percent of the federal poverty
7 guidelines; and

8 (f) For adults who are not biological or adoptive parents or
9 stepparents of the child or children in the family, if assistance is
10 requested for the entire family, including the adults, a self-sufficiency
11 contract shall be entered into as provided in section 68-1719. If
12 assistance is requested for only the child or children in such a family,
13 such children shall be eligible after consideration of the family's
14 income and if (i) the family cooperates in pursuing child support and
15 (ii) the minor children of the family regularly attend school.

16 **Sec. 2.** Original section 68-1724, Revised Statutes Cumulative
17 Supplement, 2024, is repealed.