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1 IN THE HOUSE

2 HOUSE BILL NO. 171

3 IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

4 SIXTEENTH LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION

5 A BILL

6 For an Act entitled: "An Act establishing a training and education program
7 to expand employment opportunities for low-income
8 persons; repealing the work incentive program; and
9 providing for an effective date."

10 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:

11 * Section 1. AS 47.25 is amended by adding new sections to read:

12 ARTICLE 3A. JOB TRAINING AND EDUCATION PROGRAM (GROW).

13 Sec. 47.25.421. AUTHORIZATION TO IMPLEMENT PROGRAM. (a) In
14 order to provide persons receiving aid under AS 47.25.310 - 47.25.420
15 (Aid to Families with Dependent Children) with incentives, opportuni-
16 ties, and necessary services for employment, training, and participa-
17 tion in the nation's economy and to relieve their dependence on the
18 federal and state social services and welfare system, the department
19 shall administer the generating real opportunities for work (GROW)
20 program.

21 (b) In implementing the program, the department shall

22 (1) execute on behalf of the state the agreements or con-
23 tracts with appropriate federal agencies that are necessary to enable
24 the state to meet the requirements of federal law;

25 (2) receive and expend money made available for the program
26 by the state or federal government;

27 (3) supervise the expenditure of the money and the conduct
28 of the program;

29 (4) make reports and supply certifications that are

1 required in relation to the program; and

2 (5) otherwise cooperate with the federal government and its
3 departments and agencies in the administration of the program.

4 (c) The department may carry out the program directly or through
5 arrangements or under contracts with administrative entities involved
6 with the Job Training in Partnership Act (P.L. 97-300), as amended,
7 with state and local education agencies, and with other public
8 agencies or private organizations, including community-based organiza-
9 tions acceptable under federal regulations. Whether the department
10 operates the program directly or through contract, the department
11 shall ensure that the program is coordinated with programs operated in
12 the state under the Job Training in Partnership Act and with other
13 relevant employment, training, and education programs available in the
14 state. The department shall consult with the Department of Education
15 and the Department of Labor to promote coordination of the planning
16 and delivery of services under the program with programs operated by
17 those departments.

18 Sec. 47.25.423. PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS. (a) The department shall
19 require participation in the program by all persons required to par-
20 ticipate under federal law. The department may not require participa-
21 tion in the program by a person who is not required by federal law to
22 participate except as provided in AS 47.25.425(d).

23 (b) The department shall allow applicants for and recipients of
24 aid under AS 47.25.310 - 47.25.420 to participate in the program on a
25 voluntary basis if they are not required to participate under (a) of
26 this section.

27 Sec. 47.25.425. PROGRAM COMPONENTS. (a) The department shall
28 offer to a participant in the program the following types of services
29 and activities to the extent indicated as appropriate by the initial

1 assessment under AS 47.25.427(a):

2 (1) educational activities, including high school or equiv-
3 alent education combined with job training as needed, basic and reme-
4 dial education to achieve a basic literacy level, and education for
5 individuals with limited English proficiency;

6 (2) job skills training;

7 (3) job readiness activities to help prepare participants
8 for work;

9 (4) job development and job placement;

10 (5) on-the-job training; and

11 (6) a work supplementation program.

12 (b) The program components required under (a) of this section
13 must conform to the requirements of federal law so as to ensure the
14 maximum federal financial participation in the costs of the program.

15 (c) To further the purposes of the work supplementation program,
16 the department shall use the options allowed under federal law to

17 (1) adjust the levels of the standards of need set by the
18 department under AS 47.25.320(a) to the extent the department con-
19 siders it to be appropriate; the need standards in effect in areas of
20 the state in which the work supplementation program is in operation
21 may differ from the need standards in effect in other areas; the need
22 standards for categories of recipients may vary among the categories
23 to the extent appropriate on the basis of ability to participate in
24 the work supplementation program;

25 (2) adjust the amount of aid given to categories of partic-
26 ipants who receive aid under AS 47.25.310 - 47.25.420 in order to
27 offset increases in benefits from needs-related programs other than
28 aid to families with dependent children as the department determines
29 to be appropriate;

1 (3) adjust retrospective budgeting requirements and the
2 amount of earned income to be disregarded to the extent allowed by
3 federal law so as to encourage participation in the work supplemen-
4 tation program and to decrease disincentives for retaining employment;
5 and

6 (4) supplement jobs in the public and private sectors, as
7 appropriate.

8 (d) In the case of a person who is a custodial parent under the
9 age of 25, has not successfully completed a high school education or
10 its equivalent, and is receiving aid under AS 47.25.310 - 47.25.420
11 because of the unemployment of a family's principal wage earner, the
12 department shall require the person to participate in educational
13 activities directed toward the attainment of a high school diploma or
14 its equivalent on a full-time basis. Notwithstanding AS 47.25.423(a),
15 this requirement is applicable to a person who would otherwise be
16 exempt from participation because the person personally provides care
17 for a child under three years of age and to a person who would other-
18 wise be exempt from full-time participation because the person person-
19 ally provides care for a child under six years of age.

20 (e) The department may include job search and community work
21 experience components in the program as those components are described
22 in federal law. The department may not require job search by a par-
23 ticipant for more than four weeks in any period of 12 consecutive
24 months before assigning the participant to another program component
25 indicated as appropriate by the assessment described in AS 47.25.-
26 427. After assigning the participant to another program component,
27 the department shall require the participant to continue job search
28 activities for another four weeks or until the participant finds a
29 job, whichever is shorter. During this additional four weeks of job

1 search activity, the person's required participation in other program
2 components may not exceed 20 hours a week.

3 Sec. 47.25.427. PROGRAM OPERATION. (a) The department shall
4 assign participants to the various components of the program based on
5 an assessment of each participant's

6 (1) family circumstances;

7 (2) needs for education, child care, and other supportive
8 services;

9 (3) skills, prior work experience, and employability.

10 (b) If the assessment required under (a) of this section indi-
11 cates that more than one program component would be appropriate for a
12 participant, the department shall assign the participant to an appro-
13 priate component chosen by the participant.

14 (c) The department shall require the participant, or the adult
15 caretaker in the family of which the participant is a member, to
16 negotiate and enter into an agreement with the department that spec-
17 ifies the participant's obligations under the program, the duration of
18 participation in the program, and the activities to be conducted and
19 the services to be provided in the course of the participation. The
20 department shall provide the participant with whatever assistance is
21 needed by the participant to review and understand the agreement.

22 (d) Notwithstanding AS 47.25.423(a), the department may not
23 require a person to participate in the program unless the department
24 reimburses that person for

25 (1) costs of adequate child care determined by the depart-
26 ment to be necessary for the person's program participation; and

27 (2) other work-related expenses or expenses related to
28 participation in a training program under AS 47.25.421 - 47.25.429, as
29 determined by the department; this paragraph does not require the

1 department to pay for the cost of tuition and books required for an
2 educational activity approved under the program.

3 Sec. 47.25.429. DEFINITIONS. In AS 47.25.421 - 47.25.429

4 (1) "department" means the Department of Health and Social
5 Services;

6 (2) "participant" means a person who participates in the
7 program;

8 (3) "program" means the generating real opportunities for
9 work (GROW) program established under AS 47.25.421 - 47.25.429.

10 * Sec. 2. AS 47.25.310 is amended to read:

11 sec. 47.25.310. ELIGIBILITY FOR ASSISTANCE. The department
12 shall grant assistance to the family of each dependent child and each
13 pregnant woman it determines is eligible for assistance under AS 47.-
14 25.310 - 47.25.420 if the family or woman satisfies the requirements
15 for participation in the GROW program established under AS 47.25.421 -
16 47.25.429 [, OR TO EMPLOYERS UNDER A WORK INCENTIVE PROGRAM ESTAB-
17 LISHED BY AS 23.15.650, AND BY 42 U.S.C. 633(e)(1) (SOCIAL SECURITY
18 ACT, WIN PROGRAM), AS AMENDED].

19 * Sec. 3. AS 23.15.650 is repealed.

20 * Sec. 4. This Act takes effect April 1, 1990.