



Health & Human Services Steering Committee
Friday, February 25, 2022 | 9:15—11:15 am (approx.)

Addendum added 2/24/2022

<u>HB22-1259, Modifications to Colorado Works Program</u>			
H-Spon	M. Duran & I. Jodeh	S-Spon	D. Moreno
Summary	<p>The bill allows the state board of human services (state board) to utilize eligibility processes from other public assistance or entitlement programs when promulgating rules for redetermining and verifying eligibility for the Colorado works program (works program).</p> <p>When determining income requirements for the works program, the bill requires the department of human services (state department) to use an income conversion ratio for converting weekly and biweekly income to a monthly amount using the lowest ratio or methodology that results in the lowest monthly income amount allowable under federal law.</p> <p>Current law prohibits a person convicted of a drug-related felony offense from being eligible for assistance under the works program unless the person is determined by a county department of human or social services to have taken action toward rehabilitation. The bill removes the ban on eligibility.</p> <p>The bill requires the state board to promulgate rules establishing statewide standards and procedures that require counties to offer an extension:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beyond the 60-month lifetime maximum for all households that demonstrate good cause, which includes an applicant or participant who is a child-only case, the head of a single parent household and has a child under one year of age, experiencing hardship, or addressing family or medical needs; and • From work requirements to all households that demonstrate good cause, which includes for an applicant or participant who is the head of a single-parent household and has a child under one year of age, experiencing hardship, or addressing family or medical needs. <p>The bill requires the state department to annually review and promulgate rules as necessary to update the standard of need to ensure the standard of need is equitable, promotes economic mobility and self-sufficiency, and reflects the current economic status of the state.</p> <p>The bill requires the state department to disregard any earned income for at least the first 6 months an applicant or participant is employed while enrolled in the works program. The bill requires that the state department determine the amount of earned income that must be disregarded after the first 6 months and ensure a gradual step down of the amount of earned income disregarded and that the appropriate work supports are made available to the applicant or participant.</p> <p>Current law requires the state department to ensure the amount of a basic cash assistance grant that an applicant or participant receives is equal to or exceeds 102% of the need standard for a participant in a similarly sized household on January 1, 2008. By the 2027-28 state fiscal year, and each state fiscal year thereafter, the bill requires the amount of the basic cash assistance grant to equal or exceed 50% of the federal poverty guidelines established by the federal department of health and human services for a similarly sized household for that fiscal year.</p>		

	<p>No later than January 1, 2023, the bill requires the state department to begin phasing in the increase in basic cash assistance that is equal to or exceeds 50% of the federal poverty guidelines.</p> <p>The bill requires a county department to attempt to contact each participant using each method of communication provided by the participant in order to conduct exit and follow-up interviews upon case closure. The bill expands the purpose of the exit and follow-up interviews to include evaluating the participant's experience with the works program, how well the program met the participant's needs and assisted the participant in meeting the participant's goals, and informing the state department of any changes to rules that are needed to improve the participant's experience.</p> <p>The bill requires the state department to monitor impacts to counties' workload in the works program and consult with counties regarding additional need for money to administer the works program.</p> <p>Beginning January 2023, and each January thereafter, the state department is required to submit a report to the general assembly on the effectiveness of the works program.</p> <p>Current law requires the state board to promulgate rules that require a percentage reduction in the basic cash assistance grant upon the imposition of a sanction affecting the grant, with the percentage to be specified in the rules but not to be less than 25%. The bill requires the percentage not to exceed one dollar.</p> <p>No later than September 30, 2022, the bill requires the state department to develop an outreach and engagement plan to promote access to the works program for eligible persons.</p>
Status	Introduced In House - Assigned to Public & Behavioral Health & Human Services
Position	Pending