

Chapter 74.62 RCW
AGED, BLIND, OR DISABLED ASSISTANCE PROGRAM—PREGNANT WOMEN ASSISTANCE
PROGRAM—ESSENTIAL NEEDS AND HOUSING SUPPORT PROGRAM

Sections

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RCW 74.62.005 Findings—Intent—2011 1st sp.s. c 36. (1) The legislature finds that:

(a) Persons who have a long-term disability and apply for federal supplemental security income benefits should receive assistance while their application for federal benefits is pending;

(b) Persons who are incapacitated from gainful employment for an extended period, but who may not meet the level of severity of a long-term disability, are at increased risk of homelessness; and

(c) Persons who are homeless and suffering from significant medical impairments, mental illness, or substance use disorder face substantial barriers to successful participation in, and completion of, needed medical or behavioral health treatment services. Stable housing increases the likelihood of compliance with and completion of treatment.

(2) Through chapter 36, Laws of 2011 1st sp. sess., the legislature intends to:

(a) Terminate all components of the disability lifeline program created in 2010 and codified in *RCW 74.04.005 and create new programs: (i) To provide financial grants through the aged, blind, or disabled assistance program and the pregnant women assistance program; and (ii) to provide services through the essential needs and housing support program; and

(b) Increase opportunities to utilize limited public funding, combined with private charitable and volunteer efforts to serve persons who are recipients of the benefits provided by the new programs created under chapter 36, Laws of 2011 1st sp. sess. [2023 c 289 § 2; 2011 1st sp.s. c 36 § 1.]

***Reviser's note:** 2011 1st sp.s. c 36 § 8 deleted the definition of "disability lifeline program."

Effective date—2011 1st sp.s. c 36: "Except for sections 6 and 8 of this act, this act is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of the state government and its existing public institutions, and takes effect immediately [June 15, 2011]." [2011 1st sp.s. c 36 § 38.]

RCW 74.62.010 Definitions. For the purposes of this chapter, unless the context indicates otherwise, the following definitions shall apply:

(1) "Aged, blind, and [or] disabled assistance program" means the program established under RCW 74.62.030.

(2) "Department" means the department of social and health services.

(3) "Director" or "secretary" means the secretary of social and health services.

(4) "Essential needs and housing support program" means the program established under RCW 43.185C.220.

(5) "Essential needs support" means personal health and hygiene items, cleaning supplies, other necessary items and transportation passes or tokens provided through an essential needs support entity established under RCW 43.185C.220.

(6) "Housing support" means assistance provided by a designated housing support entity established under RCW 43.185C.220 to maintain existing housing when the client is at substantial risk of becoming homeless, to obtain housing, or to obtain heat, electricity, natural gas, sewer, garbage, and water services when the client is at substantial risk of losing these services.

(7) "Pregnant women assistance program" means the program established under RCW 74.62.030.

(8) In the construction of words and phrases used in this chapter, the singular number shall include the plural, the masculine gender shall include both the feminine and neuter genders, and the present tense shall include the past and future tenses, unless the context thereof shall clearly indicate to the contrary. [2011 1st sp.s. c 36 § 7.]

Effective date—2011 1st sp.s. c 36: See note following RCW 74.62.005.

RCW 74.62.020 Termination of disability lifeline program.

Effective October 31, 2011, the disability lifeline program, as defined under chapter 74.04 RCW, is terminated and all benefits provided under that program shall expire and cease to exist. [2011 1st sp.s. c 36 § 2.]

Effective date—2011 1st sp.s. c 36: See note following RCW 74.62.005.

RCW 74.62.030 Assistance programs—Eligibility criteria. (1) (a)

The aged, blind, or disabled assistance program shall provide financial grants to persons in need who:

(i) Are not eligible to receive supplemental security income, refugee cash assistance, temporary assistance for needy families, or state family assistance benefits;

(ii) Meet the eligibility requirements of subsection (3) of this section; and

(iii) Are aged, blind, or disabled. For purposes of determining eligibility for assistance for the aged, blind, or disabled assistance program, the following definitions apply:

(A) "Aged" means age 65 or older.

(B) "Blind" means statutorily blind as defined for the purpose of determining eligibility for the federal supplemental security income program.

(C) "Disabled" means likely to meet the federal supplemental security income disability standard. In making this determination, the department should give full consideration to the cumulative impact of

an applicant's multiple impairments, an applicant's age, and vocational and educational history.

In determining whether a person is disabled, the department may rely on, but is not limited to, the following:

(I) A previous disability determination by the social security administration or the disability determination service entity within the department; or

(II) A determination that an individual is eligible to receive optional categorically needy medicaid as a disabled person under the federal regulations at 42 C.F.R. Parts 435, Secs. 201(a)(3) and 210.

(b) The following persons are not eligible for the aged, blind, or disabled assistance program:

(i) Persons who are not able to engage in gainful employment due primarily to a substance use disorder. These persons shall be referred to appropriate assessment, treatment, or shelter services. Referrals shall be made at the time of application or at the time of eligibility review. This subsection may not be construed to prohibit the department from granting aged, blind, or disabled assistance benefits to persons with a substance use disorder who are incapacitated due to other physical or mental conditions that meet the eligibility criteria for the aged, blind, or disabled assistance program; or

(ii) Persons for whom there has been a final determination of ineligibility based on age, blindness, or disability for federal supplemental security income benefits.

(c) Persons may receive aged, blind, or disabled assistance benefits and essential needs and housing program support under RCW 43.185C.220 concurrently while pending application for federal supplemental security income benefits. Effective October 1, 2025, a person's receipt of supplemental security income received for the same period as aged, blind, or disabled program assistance as described in this section shall not be considered a debt due to the state and is not subject to recovery. However, the monetary value of aged, blind, or disabled cash assistance paid prior to October 1, 2025, that is duplicated by the person's receipt of supplemental security income for the same period shall be considered a debt due to the state and shall by operation of law be subject to recovery through all available legal remedies.

(2) The pregnant women assistance program shall provide financial grants to persons who:

(a) Are pregnant and in need, based upon the current income and resource standards of the federal temporary assistance for needy families program, but are ineligible for federal temporary assistance for needy families or state family assistance benefits for a reason other than failure to cooperate in program requirements; and

(b) Meet the eligibility requirements of subsection (3) of this section.

(3) To be eligible for the aged, blind, or disabled assistance program under subsection (1) of this section or the pregnant women assistance program under subsection (2) of this section, a person must:

(a) Be a citizen or alien lawfully admitted for permanent residence or otherwise residing in the United States under color of law, or be a victim of human trafficking as defined in RCW 74.04.005;

(b) Meet the income and resource standards described in RCW 74.04.805(1) (d) and (e);

(c) (i) Have furnished the department with their social security number. If the social security number cannot be furnished because it

has not been issued or is not known, an application for a number shall be made prior to authorization of benefits, and the social security number shall be provided to the department upon receipt;

(ii) This requirement does not apply to victims of human trafficking as defined in RCW 74.04.005 if they have not been issued a social security number;

(d) Not have refused or failed without good cause to participate in substance use treatment if an assessment by a certified substance use disorder professional indicates a need for such treatment. Good cause must be found to exist when a person's physical or mental condition, as determined by the department, prevents the person from participating in substance use treatment, when needed outpatient treatment is not available to the person in the county of their residence, when needed inpatient treatment is not available in a location that is reasonably accessible for the person, or when the person is a parent or other relative personally providing care for a minor child or an incapacitated individual living in the same home as the person, and child care or day care would be necessary for the person to participate in substance use disorder treatment, and such care is not available; and

(e) Not have refused or failed to cooperate in obtaining federal aid assistance, without good cause.

(4) Referrals for essential needs and housing support under RCW 43.185C.220 shall be provided to persons found eligible under RCW 74.04.805.

(5) No person may be considered an eligible individual for benefits under this section with respect to any month if during that month the person:

(a) Is fleeing to avoid prosecution of, or to avoid custody or confinement for conviction of, a felony, or an attempt to commit a felony, under the laws of the state of Washington or the place from which the person flees; or

(b) Is violating a condition of probation, community supervision, or parole imposed under federal or state law for a felony or gross misdemeanor conviction.

(6) The department must share client data for individuals eligible for essential needs and housing support with the department of commerce and designated essential needs and housing support entities as required under RCW 43.185C.230. [2023 c 289 § 3; 2022 c 208 § 2; 2018 c 48 § 2; 2013 2nd sp.s. c 10 § 2; 2013 2nd sp.s. c 10 § 1; 2011 1st sp.s. c 36 § 3.]

Effective date—2022 c 208: See note following RCW 74.04.805.

Effective date—2018 c 48 §§ 1 and 2: See note following RCW 74.04.805.

Effective date—2014 c 218; 2013 2nd sp.s. c 10 § 2: "Section 2 of this act takes effect July 1, 2014." [2014 c 218 § 1; 2013 2nd sp.s. c 10 § 10.]

Effective date—2013 2nd sp.s. c 10: "Except for section 2 of this act, this act takes effect January 1, 2014." [2013 2nd sp.s. c 10 § 9.]

Effective date—2011 1st sp.s. c 36: See note following RCW 74.62.005.