RCW 43.216.800 General policies. (1) The department shall establish and implement policies in the working connections child care program to promote stability and quality of care for children from low-income households. These policies shall focus on supporting school readiness for young learners. Policies for the expenditure of funds constituting the working connections child care program must be consistent with the outcome measures established by the department and the standards established in this section intended to promote stability, quality, and continuity of early care and education programming.

(2) As recommended by P.L. 113-186, authorizations for the working connections child care subsidy are effective for 12 months.

(3)(a) The department must extend the homeless grace period, as adopted in department rule as of January 1, 2020, from a four-month grace period to a 12-month grace period.

(b) For the purposes of this subsection, "homeless" means being without a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence as described in the federal McKinney-Vento homeless assistance act (42 U.S.C. Sec. 11434a) as it existed on January 1, 2020. [2025 c 412 s 15; 2024 c 67 s 1. Prior: 2023 c 294 s 1; 2023 c 222 s 3; 2021 c 199 s 202; 2020 c 279 s 2. Formerly RCW 43.216.136.]

Conflict with federal requirements—Effective date—2025 c 412: See notes following RCW 43.216.556.

Effective date—2023 c 222 s 3: "Section 3 of this act takes effect October 1, 2023." [2023 c 222 s 6.]

Findings—Intent—2023 c 222: "(1) The legislature acknowledges that the working connections child care program provides quality child care for families. The legislature intends to increase access to this program for certain families.

(2) The legislature recognizes that child care providers are struggling to hire and retain child care employees. As stated in RCW 43.216.749, the legislature intends to systemically increase child care subsidy rates over time until rates are equal to the full cost of providing high quality child care to help address these workforce issues. The legislature intends to provide child care employees with access to the working connections child care program as a more immediate benefit while acknowledging that this benefit may not be needed as child care subsidy rates increase.

(3) As stated in RCW 2.30.010, the legislature recognizes that therapeutic courts provide an opportunity for defendants or respondents to obtain treatment services to address particular issues that may have contributed to the conduct that led to their issue before the court. The legislature intends to provide those participating in these courts with access to the working connections child care program to help support their success in these courts and to provide stable and high quality child care for their families.

(4) The legislature acknowledges that the working connections child care program requires children to have a certain immigration status to be eligible. The legislature intends to expand the working connections child care program to provide access to child care for these families." [2023 c 222 s 1.]

Effective date—2021 c 199 ss 201, 202, 301, 309, and 504: See note following RCW 43.216.802.

Short title—Findings—Intent—Conflict with federal requirements —2021 c 199: See notes following RCW 43.216.770.

Effective date—2020 c 279: "This act takes effect July 1, 2020." [2020 c 279 s 4.]