
OLR Bill Analysis

sHB 5053

AN ACT CONCERNING THE GOVERNOR'S BUDGET RECOMMENDATIONS FOR HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES.

SUMMARY

This bill (1) transitions certain emergency medical services (EMS)-related positions into classified service; (2) allows, rather than requires, the Chief Workforce Officer (CWO) to establish a Human Services Career Pipeline Program; and (3) consolidates, aligns, and makes other changes to reporting requirements related to services for people with intellectual or developmental disabilities (IDD) and autism.

The bill requires the Department of Administrative Services (DAS) commissioner to transition the regional EMS coordinator and assistant regional EMS coordinator positions and incumbents into the classified service. To the extent these employees are performing jobs that would normally be within a current executive branch bargaining unit, the bill requires (1) the jobs to be added to the bargaining unit's descriptions and (2) employees in the jobs to be deemed part of the bargaining unit. The DAS commissioner must transition these employees beginning January 30, 2024, and do so in consultation with the Department of Public Health commissioner.

Current law requires the CWO to establish a Human Services Career Pipeline Program by July 1, 2024, and report annually on it to various legislative committees starting January 1, 2026. The bill instead allows the CWO to establish the career pipeline, with no deadline and within available appropriations, and only requires the annual report if the pipeline is established. The bill also adds a reporting requirement on the plan the CWO must develop for the pipeline program.

Lastly, the bill makes technical and conforming changes.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

HUMAN SERVICES CAREER PIPELINE PROGRAM

The bill allows, rather than requires, the CWO to establish a Human Services Career Pipeline Program. By law, the career pipeline must (1) ensure enough trained providers are available to serve elderly people and people with IDD, physical disabilities, cognitive impairment, or mental illness; and (2) include training and certification for cardiopulmonary resuscitation, first aid, medication administration, job placement, and incentives for retentions in the human services labor sector after the program ends. (A separate part of the existing law, unchanged by the bill, maintains the requirement that CWO establish a career pipeline in consultation with various executive branch agencies.)

By law, the CWO must consult with the Department of Labor commissioner to develop a plan for the career pipeline. The bill requires CWO to report on the plan, including recommendations for establishing the career pipeline and estimated funding needed to implement the plan. Under the bill, CWO must submit the report by January 1, 2025, to the Aging, Appropriations, Higher Education and Employment Advancement, Human Services, Labor, and Public Health committees.

Current law requires the CWO to report annually to the same committees described above on the career pipeline's development and implementation beginning by January 1, 2026. The bill only requires this report if the career pipeline is established.

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

IDD Reports (§§ 2 & 4)

Current law requires DDS to report annually to the Appropriations and Public Health committees on the number of people eligible for (1) DDS services who have unmet residential care needs or employment opportunity and day services needs or (2) DDS's behavioral services program who are waiting for a funding allocation.

Separately, current law requires OPM's statewide coordinator for IDD services to report annually to the Appropriations, Human Services, and Public Health committees certain information on waitlists for DDS Medicaid waivers.

The bill generally merges these two reporting requirements by eliminating them and instead requiring that DDS, in consultation with OPM's statewide coordinator for IDD services, report the following information annually by January 1 to the Appropriations, Human Services, and Public Health committees:

1. the number and ages of people (a) waiting for services in DDS's Medicaid waiver programs; (b) currently served by these waivers; (c) waiting for residential care under the waivers; (d) receiving residential care under the waivers; (e) served under these waivers but waiting for additional services, including a brief description of awaited services; and (f) added to and subtracted from waiver waiting lists in the previous calendar year;
2. the number of people with IDD (other than autism) who have unmet employment opportunity and day service needs;
3. whether the waiver waiting lists have increased or decreased over the previous calendar year, and, if so, by how much;
4. recommendations to further reduce the waiver waiting lists and associated costs; and
5. measurable data for people eligible for DDS's Medicaid waivers for people with IDD, including how many of them are enrolled in postsecondary education, their employment status, their living arrangements, and the age of any guardians they live with.

The bill also requires the DDS commissioner to post the report on the department's website.

Autism Reports (§§ 3 & 6)

Current law requires DSS to report annually to the Human Services Committee on its Division of Autism Spectrum Disorder Services and the Autism Spectrum Disorder Advisory Council. Under current law, this report must include certain information on people (1) served by the autism Medicaid waiver and (2) waiting for services.

Separately, current law requires OPM's statewide coordinator for autism services, in consultation with DSS, to report certain information on the Medicaid autism waiver to the Appropriations and Human Services committees.

The bill generally merges these two reporting requirements by eliminating them and instead requiring that DSS, in consultation with OPM's statewide coordinator for autism services, report much of the same information current law requires the statewide coordinator to report. Specifically, under the bill, DSS must report the following information annually by January 1 to the Appropriations and Human Services committees:

1. the number and ages of people (a) currently served by the Medicaid autism waiver; (b) receiving services under the waiver; (c) waiting for residential care; (d) receiving residential care through the waiver; (e) served under the waiver but waiting for additional waiver services, including a brief description of awaited services; and (f) added to and taken off the waitlist in the previous calendar year;
2. whether the waitlist for the Medicaid autism waiver has increased or decreased in the previous calendar year and, if so, by how many people;
3. recommendations to further reduce the waiting list and associated costs; and
4. measurable data on people eligible for the Medicaid autism waiver, including how many of them are enrolled in postsecondary education, their employment status, their living arrangements, and the age of any guardians they live with.

The bill also requires the DSS commissioner to post the report on the department's website.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Human Services Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute Change of Reference - APP
Yea 15 Nay 7 (03/19/2024)

Appropriations Committee

Joint Favorable
Yea 38 Nay 13 (04/04/2024)