

Chapter 379

**(House Bill 431)**

AN ACT concerning

**Foster Care Recipients and Unaccompanied Homeless Youth –  
Employment Program  
(Fostering Employment Act of 2018)**

FOR the purpose of establishing the Fostering Employment Program to provide employment opportunities for certain foster care recipients and unaccompanied homeless youth through training leading to certain credentials; requiring the Department of Human Services and the Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation jointly to supervise the Program; requiring the Department of Human Services, in coordination with the Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation, to develop and implement the Program and coordinate with local departments of social services and local workforce development boards; requiring the Program to provide certain foster care recipients and unaccompanied homeless youth with opportunities to obtain certain credentials through certain registered apprenticeship programs or certain job readiness training; establishing that a certain foster care recipient or unaccompanied homeless youth who meets certain requirements is eligible to receive funding under the Program; authorizing the Department of Human Services and the Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation jointly to adopt certain regulations; defining certain terms; and generally relating to the Fostering Employment Program.

BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,  
Article – Human Services  
Section 4–101(a) and (c)  
Annotated Code of Maryland  
(2007 Volume and 2017 Supplement)

BY adding to  
Article – Human Services  
Section 4–305  
Annotated Code of Maryland  
(2007 Volume and 2017 Supplement)

SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,  
That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

**Article – Human Services**

4–101.

(a) In this title the following words have the meanings indicated.

(c) “Department” means the Department of Human Services.

**4-305.**

**(A) (1) IN THIS SECTION THE FOLLOWING WORDS HAVE THE MEANINGS INDICATED.**

**(2) “CREDENTIAL” MEANS A RECOGNIZED:**

**(I) EDUCATIONAL DIPLOMA;**

**(II) CERTIFICATE OR DEGREE;**

**(III) OCCUPATIONAL LICENSE;**

**(IV) APPRENTICESHIP CERTIFICATE;**

**(V) INDUSTRY-RECOGNIZED CERTIFICATION; OR**

**(VI) AWARD FOR SKILLS ATTAINMENT AND COMPLETION, ISSUED BY AN APPROVED TRAINING PROVIDER IN THE STATE OR THIRD-PARTY CREDENTIAL PROVIDER.**

**(3) “FOSTER CARE RECIPIENT” HAS THE MEANING STATED IN § 15-106.1 OF THE EDUCATION ARTICLE.**

**(4) (I) “JOB READINESS TRAINING” MEANS TRAINING FOR THE PURPOSE OF ASSISTING AND SUPPORTING JOBSEEKERS IN OVERCOMING INDIVIDUAL BARRIERS TO EMPLOYMENT AND DEVELOPING THE SKILLS NECESSARY TO MAINTAIN EMPLOYMENT AND TO QUALIFY FOR SKILLS TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES.**

**(II) “JOB READINESS TRAINING” INCLUDES:**

**1. OCCUPATIONAL SKILLS DEVELOPMENT;**

**2. GED PREPARATION;**

**3. LITERACY ADVANCEMENT;**

**4. FINANCIAL STABILITY SERVICES, INCLUDING FINANCIAL COACHING;**

**5. CREDIT COUNSELING; AND**

**6. ASSISTANCE IN MEETING TRAINING-RELATED TRANSPORTATION AND CHILD CARE NEEDS.**

**(5) “PROGRAM” MEANS THE FOSTERING EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM ESTABLISHED UNDER THIS SECTION.**

**(6) “REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM” MEANS A FORMAL TRAINING PROGRAM APPROVED AND REGISTERED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR, LICENSING, AND REGULATION, OR BY THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF LABOR’S OFFICE OF APPRENTICESHIP.**

**(7) “TRAINING PROVIDER” MEANS AN ENTITY THAT:**

**(I) PROVIDES TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT SERVICES TO INDIVIDUALS DESCRIBED IN § 11-504(B) OF THE LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT ARTICLE; OR**

**(II) IS AWARDED A STRATEGIC INDUSTRY PARTNERSHIP GRANT UNDER § 11-703 OF THE LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT ARTICLE.**

**(8) “UNACCOMPANIED HOMELESS YOUTH” ~~HAS THE MEANING STATED IN § 15-106.1 OF THE EDUCATION ARTICLE~~ MEANS A CHILD OR YOUTH WHO:**

**(I) HAS HAD A CONSISTENT PRESENCE IN THE STATE FOR AT LEAST 1 YEAR BEFORE ENROLLMENT IN A JOB READINESS TRAINING PROGRAM OR REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM THAT IS DOCUMENTED BY SCHOOL, EMPLOYMENT, OR OTHER RECORDS;**

**(II) IS NOT IN THE PHYSICAL CUSTODY OF A PARENT OR GUARDIAN;**

**(III) IS A HOMELESS CHILD OR YOUTH, AS DEFINED BY THE MCKINNEY-VENTO HOMELESS ASSISTANCE ACT; AND**

**(IV) WAS DETERMINED TO BE A HOMELESS CHILD OR YOUTH BY:**

**1. A MARYLAND LOCAL SCHOOL SYSTEM HOMELESS LIAISON, AS DEFINED BY THE MCKINNEY-VENTO HOMELESS ASSISTANCE ACT;**

**2. A DIRECTOR OR A DESIGNEE OF THE DIRECTOR OF A MARYLAND-BASED PROGRAM FUNDED UNDER THE RUNAWAY AND HOMELESS YOUTH ACT; OR**

**3. A DIRECTOR OR A DESIGNEE OF THE DIRECTOR OF A MARYLAND-BASED PROGRAM FUNDED UNDER TITLE IV, SUBTITLE B OF THE MCKINNEY-VENTO HOMELESS ASSISTANCE ACT.**

**(9) “WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AREA” MEANS A GEOGRAPHIC AREA DESIGNATED BY THE GOVERNOR IN ACCORDANCE WITH § 106 OF THE FEDERAL WORKFORCE INNOVATION AND OPPORTUNITY ACT.**

**(B) THERE IS A FOSTERING EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM.**

**(C) THE DEPARTMENT AND THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR, LICENSING, AND REGULATION SHALL JOINTLY SUPERVISE THE PROGRAM.**

**(D) THE PURPOSE OF THE PROGRAM IS TO PROVIDE EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR FOSTER CARE RECIPIENTS AND UNACCOMPANIED HOMELESS YOUTH THROUGH TRAINING THAT LEADS TO INDUSTRY-RECOGNIZED CREDENTIALS.**

**(E) THE DEPARTMENT, IN COORDINATION WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR, LICENSING, AND REGULATION, SHALL:**

**(1) DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT THE PROGRAM; AND**

**(2) COORDINATE WITH:**

**(I) THE LOCAL DEPARTMENTS OF SOCIAL SERVICES; AND**

**(II) THE LOCAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARDS IN THE STATE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AREAS.**

**(F) THE PROGRAM SHALL PROVIDE FOSTER CARE RECIPIENTS AND UNACCOMPANIED HOMELESS YOUTH WITH OPPORTUNITIES TO OBTAIN CREDENTIALS THROUGH:**

**(1) A REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM; OR**

**(2) JOB READINESS TRAINING.**

**(G) A FOSTER CARE RECIPIENT OR AN UNACCOMPANIED HOMELESS YOUTH WHO IS NOT ~~OTHERWISE ELIGIBLE TO RECEIVE A TUITION EXEMPTION~~ EXEMPT FROM PAYING TUITION UNDER § 15-106.1 OF THE EDUCATION ARTICLE IS ELIGIBLE TO RECEIVE FUNDING UNDER THE PROGRAM IF THE INDIVIDUAL IS:**

**(1) AT LEAST 16 YEARS OF AGE; AND**

**(2) ENROLLED IN:**

**(I) A REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM; OR**

**(II) JOB READINESS TRAINING THROUGH A TRAINING PROVIDER FUNDED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR, LICENSING, AND REGULATION.**

**(H) THE DEPARTMENT AND THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR, LICENSING, AND REGULATION JOINTLY MAY ADOPT REGULATIONS TO CARRY OUT THIS SECTION.**

SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect July 1, 2018.

**Approved by the Governor, May 8, 2018.**