
HOUSE BILL 2300

State of Washington

68th Legislature

2024 Regular Session

By Representatives Dent and Reeves

1 AN ACT Relating to child care provider qualifications; amending
2 RCW 43.216.755; and creating a new section.

3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The COVID-19 pandemic had a dramatic
5 impact on all people, but had a particularly dramatic impact on child
6 care and the child care industry. Many child care facilities closed
7 during the COVID-19 pandemic and providers left the child care field.
8 It became clear during the COVID-19 pandemic how critical child care
9 is to the success of every industry as parents need child care to
10 work.

11 The legislature finds that because of the unprecedented impact of
12 the COVID-19 pandemic on the child care industry, the plans of many
13 child care providers to receive education were put on hold as efforts
14 were focused on addressing the immediate needs of child care
15 providers and families. For those reasons, the legislature finds that
16 it is necessary to delay the requirement for child care providers to
17 meet certification and training qualification conditions.

18 To recognize the professionalism and experience of individuals
19 currently in the child care field, the legislature finds that a work
20 equivalency option should be added as an alternative to certification
21 requirements for all child care positions. This work equivalency

1 alternative should take into account the years of service child care
2 providers have committed to educating children, while allowing for
3 upward mobility within the field. Without this alternative, there is
4 an education cliff that discourages child care professionals to
5 remain in the field.

6 **Sec. 2.** RCW 43.216.755 and 2020 c 342 s 2 are each amended to
7 read as follows:

8 (1) By July 1, ~~((2021))~~ 2024, the department shall implement all
9 components of a noncredit-bearing, community-based training pathway
10 for licensed child care providers to meet professional education
11 requirements associated with child care licensure. The community-
12 based training pathway must be offered as an alternative to existing
13 credit-bearing pathways available to providers.

14 (2) The department shall consult with the following stakeholders
15 in the development and implementation of the community-based training
16 pathway: The statewide child care resource and referral network, a
17 community-based training organization that provides training to
18 licensed family day care providers, a statewide organization that
19 represents the interests of family day care providers, a statewide
20 organization that represents the interests of licensed child day care
21 centers, an organization that represents the interests of refugee and
22 immigrant communities, a bilingual child care provider whose first
23 language is not English, an organization that advocates for early
24 learning, an organization representing private and independent
25 schools, and the state board for community and technical colleges.

26 (3) The community-based training pathway must:

27 (a) Align with adopted core competencies for early learning
28 professionals;

29 (b) Be made available to providers in multiple languages;

30 (c) Include culturally relevant practices; ~~((and))~~

31 (d) Be made available at low cost to providers and at prices
32 comparable to the cost of similar community-based trainings, not to
33 exceed ~~((two hundred and fifty dollars))~~ \$250 per person; ~~((and))~~

34 (e) Be accessible to providers in rural and urban settings; and

35 (f) Be made available in an online format.

36 (4) The department shall allow licensed child care providers
37 until at least August 1, ~~((2026))~~ 2033, or until at least seven
38 years following the completion of the department implementing all

1 components of the noncredit-bearing, community-based training pathway
2 described in subsection (1) of this section, whichever is later, to:

3 (a) Comply with child care licensing rules that require a
4 provider to hold an early childhood education initial certificate
5 ((~~or~~)), an early childhood education short certificate, or an early
6 childhood education state certificate; ((~~or~~))

7 (b) Complete community-based trainings; or

8 (c) Demonstrate to the department work experience-based
9 competency after having worked in a licensed child care setting for:

10 (i) A minimum of four years for a person entering work in a
11 licensed child care setting as a center program supervisor, center
12 assistant director, or center director position; or

13 (ii) A minimum of two years after entering work in a licensed
14 child care setting for all other positions except those described in
15 (c)(i) of this subsection. A person who meets the two-year work
16 experience-based competency exemption under this subsection
17 (4)(c)(ii) will continue to meet the work experience-based competency
18 exemption if the person moves into a center program supervisor,
19 center assistant director, or center director position.

20 (5) The department may not require licensed child care providers
21 to complete annual in-service training requirements in order to
22 demonstrate work experience-based competency described under
23 subsection (4)(c) of this section.

24 (6) After August 1, 2033, the department must allow all child
25 care providers who are hired for the first time into a role requiring
26 an early childhood education initial, short, or state certification a
27 minimum of seven years from the person's date of hire into the role
28 requiring such certification to meet the requirements of subsection
29 (4) of this section.

30 ((~~5~~)) (7) For the purposes of this section, "demonstrated
31 competence" means an individual has shown that he or she has the
32 skills to complete the required work independently.

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