



State of Wisconsin
2025 - 2026 LEGISLATURE

LRB-1182/P3
EHS:emw&skw

DOA:.....Rice, BB0222 - Child care quality improvement program

FOR 2025-2027 BUDGET -- NOT READY FOR INTRODUCTION

AN ACT ...; relating to: the budget.

Analysis by the Legislative Reference Bureau

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

WISCONSIN WORKS

Child care quality improvement program

This bill authorizes DCF to establish a program for making monthly payments and monthly per-child payments to certified child care providers, licensed child care centers, and child care programs established or contracted for by a school board. This new payment program is in addition to the current law system for providing child care payments under Wisconsin Shares. The bill requires DCF to promulgate rules to implement the program, including establishing eligibility requirements and payment amounts and setting requirements for how recipients may use the payments, and authorizes DCF to promulgate these rules as emergency rules. The bill funds the program through a new appropriation and by allocating federal moneys, including child care development funds and moneys received under the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families block grant program.

The bill eliminates the current law method by which DCF may modify maximum payment rates for child care providers under Wisconsin Shares based on a child care provider's rating under the quality rating system known as YoungStar.

Wisconsin Shares is a part of the Wisconsin Works program under current law, which DCF administers and which provides work experience and benefits for low-income custodial parents who are at least 18 years old. Under current law, an individual who is the parent of a child under the age of 13 or, if the child is disabled, under the age of 19, who needs child care services to participate in various education or work activities, and who satisfies other eligibility criteria may receive a child care subsidy for child care services under Wisconsin Shares.

For further information see the state fiscal estimate, which will be printed as an appendix to this bill.

The people of the state of Wisconsin, represented in senate and assembly, do enact as follows:

BILL**SECTION 1**

SECTION 1. 20.437 (2) (c) of the statutes is created to read:

20.437 (2) (c) *Child care quality improvement program.* The amounts in the schedule for the program under s. 49.133.

****NOTE: This SECTION involves a change in an appropriation that must be reflected in the revised schedule in s. 20.005, stats.

SECTION 2. 49.133 of the statutes is created to read:

49.133 Child care quality improvement program. (1) The department may establish a program under which it may, from the appropriation under s. 20.437 (2) (c) and the allocation under s. 49.175 (1) (qm), make monthly payments and monthly per-child payments to child care providers certified under s. 48.651, child care centers licensed under s. 48.65, and child care programs established or contracted for by a school board under s. 120.13 (14). The department may investigate and recover from payment recipients under this section amounts overpaid or obtained through fraud.

(2) If the department establishes the program under sub. (1), the department shall promulgate rules to implement the program, including establishing eligibility requirements and payment amounts and setting requirements for how recipients may use the payments.

SECTION 3. 49.155 (1g) (i) of the statutes is repealed.

SECTION 4. 49.155 (6) (e) 2., 3. and 5. of the statutes are repealed.

SECTION 9106. Nonstatutory provisions; Children and Families.

(1) CHILD CARE QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM. Using the procedure under s. 227.24, the department of children and families may promulgate the rules required under s. 49.133 (2) as emergency rules. Notwithstanding s. 227.24 (1) (c)

BILL

and (2), emergency rules promulgated under this subsection remain in effect until July 1, 2027, or the date on which permanent rules take effect, whichever is sooner. Notwithstanding s. 227.24 (1) (a), (2) (b), and (3), the department of children and families is not required to provide evidence that promulgating a rule under this subsection as an emergency rule is necessary for the preservation of the public peace, health, safety, or welfare and is not required to provide a finding of emergency for a rule promulgated under this subsection.

(END)