

JAN 19 2007

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# A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO CHILD CARE.

**BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:**

1           SECTION 1. The legislature finds that high quality child  
2 care plays an important role in a child's healthy development.  
3 Quality child care during the first year enhances development of  
4 the child's brain and cognitive abilities.

5           Unfortunately, many children spend their days in unsafe  
6 settings that lack supportive, nurturing, and enriching care.  
7 This is due in part to the national shortage of licensed and  
8 regulated infant child care professionals. Another factor is  
9 the high cost of child care for children under two years of age,  
10 which requires smaller groups of children and is more labor  
11 intensive and, therefore, more costly to provide. These factors  
12 make it difficult for many low-income parents to find  
13 affordable, quality child care.

14           Child care subsidies for low-income parents and parents  
15 receiving temporary assistance for needy families funds enable  
16 them to work or participate in educational or training programs.  
17 These subsidies have enabled many public assistance recipients



1 to return to the work force. Changes to welfare policy relating  
2 to work requirements have made the option to stay home to care  
3 for very young children impractical for many low-income parents.

4 The purpose of this Act is to allow certain qualifying  
5 recipients of public assistance to provide full-time, at-home  
6 child care to children two years of age or less, and to receive  
7 a percentage of the child care subsidy the State would otherwise  
8 pay for the child care.

9 SECTION 2. Chapter 346, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is  
10 amended by adding a new section to be appropriately designated  
11 and to read as follows:

12 "§346- At-home infant child care program. (a) The  
13 department may grant a child care subsidy to a parent who is a  
14 qualified recipient of public assistance for that parent to  
15 provide full-time, at-home child care for the parent's child age  
16 two years or less if the household:

- 17 (1) Is at or below one hundred fifty per cent of the  
18 federal poverty level for the State;  
19 (2) Has not previously received a lifetime total of  
20 twenty-four months of public assistance;  
21 (3) Is eligible to receive child care assistance; and



- 1        (4) Has fulfilled the following work requirements for at  
2        least one of the three months immediately preceding  
3        entry in the program:
- 4        (A) One hundred twenty hours for a two-parent  
5        household, whether by one or both parents;
- 6        (B) Sixty hours for a single-parent household; or
- 7        (C) Forty hours for a single-parent household while  
8        the parent attends post-secondary education or  
9        training.
- 10       (b) The eligible parent shall:
- 11       (1) Be at least eighteen years of age or have received a  
12       high school diploma or its equivalent;
- 13       (2) Care for the child full-time in the child's home; and
- 14       (3) Care for any other children in the household who are  
15       eligible for child care assistance.
- 16       (c) The maximum rate of the subsidy shall be equal to the  
17       rate established by the department for the care of a child age  
18       two years or less in state licensed family child care settings.  
19       The household shall not receive additional child care subsidies  
20       for other children in the household while receiving benefits  
21       under this section.



1        (d) A participating household shall report any income and  
2 other household changes to the department.

3        (e) A person participating in the at-home infant child  
4 care program under this section shall not forfeit any other  
5 public assistance the person may be receiving. Upon leaving the  
6 at-home infant child care program, a person may resume  
7 participation in any other public assistance programs in which  
8 the person was participating with the same status the person had  
9 prior to participating in the at-home infant child care program.

10       (f) Household members may participate in education and  
11 work activities as long as one or both of the parents provide  
12 full-time, at-home child care for their child age two years or  
13 less.

14       (g) The at-home infant child care program shall be  
15 implemented and funded through the department. The department  
16 shall:

- 17       (1) Determine appropriate funding for the program by  
18       utilizing available funds;  
19       (2) Develop and distribute consumer information regarding  
20       the program to assist parents of children age two  
21       years or less, or expectant parents, in making  
22       informed child care decisions; and



1        (3) Adopt rules in accordance with chapter 91 to implement  
2                    this section.

3        (h) For the purposes of this section, "parent" means a  
4 birth parent, adoptive parent, stepparent, foster parent, or  
5 legal guardian.

6        (i) Assistance under this section shall not establish an  
7 employer-employee relationship between any member of the  
8 qualifying household and the State."

9        SECTION 3. New statutory material is underscored.

10       SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.

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**Report Title:**

Public Assistance; At-Home Infant Child Care Program

**Description:**

Allows certain qualifying recipients of public assistance to provide full-time, at-home child care to children two years of age or less, and to receive a percentage of the child care subsidy the State would otherwise pay for the child care services.

