STATE OF OKLAHOMA

2nd Session of the 48th Legislature (2002)

HOUSE BILL HB2018 By: Mitchell

AS INTRODUCED

An Act relating to poor persons; amending 56 O.S. 2001, Section 230.50, which relates to the Statewide Temporary Assistance Responsibility System (STARS); updating language; and declaring an emergency.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF OKLAHOMA:

SECTION 1. AMENDATORY 56 O.S. 2001, Section 230.50, is amended to read as follows:

Section 230.50 A. Sections ~~1~~ 230.50 through ~~26~~ 230.75 and 241.1 through 241.3 of this ~~act~~ title shall be known and may be cited as the "Statewide Temporary Assistance Responsibility System (STARS)".

B. 1. There is hereby established the Statewide Temporary Assistance Responsibility System (STARS) which shall consist of programs and services to be offered by the state with funds provided by the temporary assistance for needy families block grant authorized by Section 103 of the federal Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996, P.L. 104-193, in addition to other monies appropriated by law.

2. The STARS shall consist of integrated and coordinated programs and services that will provide recipients with the necessary tools to enable them to make the transition from reliance on public assistance programs to becoming independent, self-sufficient citizens who are capable of supporting themselves and their families. Such programs and services include but are not limited to: career guidance and employment preparation, job

referral, vocational and technical training, child care initiatives, literacy development, adult basic education, and medical assistance.

3. The Oklahoma Legislature further recognizes the importance of encouraging establishment of statewide, One-stop Career/Employment Centers that would link existing resources and federal and state programs for utilization by persons receiving temporary assistance, and underemployed and unemployed persons.

C. The Department of Human Services shall be responsible for:

1. Implementing the federal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Act (TANF);

2. Carrying out the projects and programs specified in the STARS. The Department shall implement the provisions of the STARS to the fullest extent permitted by law and in accordance with the terms and conditions specified by the federal government;

3. Expediting the acquisition of any federal waivers necessary to implement the provisions of STARS through amendments, combined waivers, requests and in any other such manner authorized by federal law and regulations; and

4. Working in close and continuous coordination with appropriate federal officials and preparing and submitting completely and in a timely manner all forms and data required by federal officials to implement STARS.

D. In administering the STARS, the Department shall collaborate with the Oklahoma Employment Security Commission, the Department of Commerce, the State Department of Health and the State Department of Education and any other state or federal agency necessary to implement the provisions of the STARS.

E. In submitting any state plan or amendments to the state plan to the federal government in order to obtain a temporary assistance for needy families block grant or child care and development block grant, the Department shall seek the maximum block grant funding and federal contingency fund allocations that are available pursuant to

the federal Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996, P.L. 104-193.

F. The Commission for Human Services shall promulgate rules for developing any projects and programs to implement the STARS.

G. 1. The Department of Human Services is directed to file with the Speaker of the House of Representatives and the President Pro Tempore of the Senate a copy of any waiver application or request for amendment or exemption filed with the federal government, copies of correspondence to and from the federal government explaining and elaborating upon said applications, and final documentation of any waivers, amendments, and exemptions granted by the federal government pursuant to the STARS.

2. On or before February 1, 1998, for the previous six-month period, and on or before February 1 of each year, for the previous fiscal year, the Department shall provide a written report on each project and program specified in the STARS to the Legislature and the Governor which identifies:

a. total number of new applications received by the Department for TANF, food stamps and child care, and the number of cases actually certified,

b. number of recipients who signed a personal responsibility agreement pursuant to the TANF program,

c. number of cases closed by the Department and the reasons for the case closures,

d. the number of persons who reapplied for benefits pursuant to the TANF program after a case had been closed,

e. number of recipients who completed an employability assessment by level of education,

f. the total number of recipients who completed an employability assessment, and the number who were initially referred for:

(1) literacy assessment,

(2) adult basic education or remediation classes,

(3) job skills development or vocational training,

(4) employment,

(5) other,

g. of the total number of recipients assessed for literacy skills, the number who scored:

(1) at or below 6th grade level,

(2) at 7th or 8th grade level,

(3) at 9th or 10th grade level,

(4) above 10th grade level,

h. number of sanctions imposed for violations of the provisions of the STARS or rules promulgated pursuant thereto or any other provision of law or rule relating to receipt of benefits by a recipient and the reasons for imposing the sanction,

i. percentage of recipients in allowable work activities,

j. number of recipients in each allowable work activity and the length of time spent in that activity,

k. number of recipients employed by state agencies and contract service providers,

l. number of recipients entering the workforce by occupation types,

m. estimated average monthly earnings for employed aid recipients,

n. average monthly number of hours worked by recipients,

o. number of qualified aliens applying for assistance pursuant to the STARS and number of applications certified by the Department, and

p. such other information deemed necessary by the Department.

SECTION 2. It being immediately necessary for the preservation of the public peace, health and safety, an emergency is hereby declared to exist, by reason whereof this act shall take effect and be in full force from and after its passage and approval.

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