

(2) No person shall operate any motor vehicle on a public highway while wearing any headset or earphones connected to any electronic device capable of receiving a radio broadcast or playing a sound recording for the purpose of transmitting a sound to the human auditory senses and which headset or earphones muffle or exclude other sounds.

(3) This section does not apply to authorized emergency vehicles.

Passed the House February 25, 1987.

Passed the Senate April 13, 1987.

Approved by the Governor April 23, 1987.

Filed in Office of Secretary of State April 23, 1987.

CHAPTER 177

[Engrossed Substitute House Bill No. 665]

PILOT SUPPLEMENTAL SECURITY INCOME REFERRAL PROGRAM

AN ACT Relating to public assistance; creating new sections; providing an effective date; and declaring an emergency.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of the State of Washington:

NEW SECTION. Sec. 1. The legislature finds that many clients who apply for and receive state general assistance have long-term disabilities that would qualify them for federal supplemental security income benefits. Further, these clients, because of their disabilities, need assistance in making application for supplemental security income benefits and filing appeals to unfavorable eligibility determinations in a timely manner.

It is the intent of the legislature that the department of social and health services assist state general assistance clients with long-term disabilities in taking the steps necessary to apply for and receive federal supplemental security income benefits.

NEW SECTION. Sec. 2. The department of social and health services shall establish a pilot supplemental security income referral program to begin July 1, 1987. The pilot program shall be located in at least two urban areas of the state and one rural which shall be in eastern Washington. The program shall assist state general assistance clients in qualifying for supplemental security income benefits, including, as necessary, obtaining required medical information, filing timely appeals, and obtaining appropriate legal assistance. The department shall designate a supplemental security income referral program facilitator in each community service office in the pilot program. The program facilitator shall have the following responsibilities:

(1) Prepare and present information regarding the benefits of the federal supplemental security income program and its eligibility determination process to all general assistance applicants and recipients;

(2) Assist general assistance applicants and recipients in compiling necessary medical information on all disabilities, applying for supplemental

security income benefits, filing timely appeals, and obtaining legal assistance. The program facilitator shall provide each general assistance applicant or recipient with a release form which, if signed by the client, authorizes the department to provide pertinent information to a legal representative. Failure to authorize such a release shall not affect the client's eligibility for general assistance benefits;

(3) Immediately upon denial of reconsideration, refer all applicants and recipients who may be eligible for supplemental security income benefits to legal representatives with expertise in social security disability law, and facilitate setting of appointments and supplying records or other necessary information to such legal representatives. When an attorney-client relationship is established, pertinent medical information shall be supplied directly to the legal representative. If a referral does not result in an attorney-client relationship, the client shall be rereferred to a different legal representative. Failure to establish such a relationship shall not affect the client's eligibility for general assistance benefits; and

(4) Provide educational materials to physicians and other medical professionals describing the supplemental security income assistance program and the kinds of medical information required to be determined eligible.

NEW SECTION. Sec. 3. The department shall contract with an individual or group with expertise in social security disability law for supplemental security income referral program coordination services. The program coordinator shall have the following duties:

(1) To develop and coordinate a referral panel from which the names of competent practitioners having expertise in social security disability law can be made available to clients by the supplemental security income referral program facilitators; to coordinate referrals and ensure that attorneys to whom clients are referred are willing to represent general assistance clients on a contingency fee basis and can demonstrate adequate malpractice insurance coverage;

(2) To monitor each community service office referral program and assess effectiveness of the referral process for clients disabled because of developmental disability or mental illness, including overseeing activities of legal representatives to assure their timely and appropriate response to referrals;

(3) To develop and present training materials for community service office caseworkers, supplemental security income referral program facilitators, and health care and legal professionals to promote accurate and complete medical assessment and reporting of the clients' disabilities, and to expand the availability of legal representation for general assistance clients; and

(4) To report to the department of social and health services by November 1, 1988, its findings regarding the administration of the supplemental security income referral program and any recommendations for program improvement.

NEW SECTION. Sec. 4. (1) By December 1, 1988, the department shall submit a written report to the ways and means committees of the senate and house of representatives, including the following information:

(a) The number and acceptance rate of referrals made to legal representatives;

(b) The number and outcome of appeals made to the administrative hearings level of the social security administration;

(c) An accounting of cost savings attributable to the supplemental security income referral program;

(d) A general evaluation and any recommendations for changes to the program.

(2) The department shall incorporate the findings and recommendations of the program coordinator in its report to the legislature.

NEW SECTION. Sec. 5. No acts or omissions by the department, its employees or agents, nor acts or omissions by the supplemental security income referral coordinator, its employees or agents may give rise to liability for negligent referrals.

NEW SECTION. Sec. 6. This act is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, and safety, the support of the state government and its existing public institutions, and shall take effect July 1, 1987.

Passed the House March 16, 1987.

Passed the Senate April 14, 1987.

Approved by the Governor April 23, 1987.

Filed in Office of Secretary of State April 23, 1987.

CHAPTER 178

[House Bill No. 261]

CENTENNIAL LICENSE PLATES

AN ACT Relating to state centennial license plates; reenacting and amending RCW 46.16.650 and 46.16.270; and declaring an emergency.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of the State of Washington:

Sec. 1. Section 1, chapter 280, Laws of 1986 and RCW 46.16.650 are each reenacted and amended to read as follows:

In order to help publicize and commemorate the state's 1989 anniversary celebration of its admission to the Union, a new centennial design shall