

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL

No. 975 Session of
2011

INTRODUCED BY BISHOP, ROEBUCK, HARKINS, THOMAS, WAGNER,
YOUNGBLOOD, CRUZ AND JOHNSON, MARCH 8, 2011

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN AND YOUTH, MARCH 8, 2011

AN ACT

1 Providing for a comprehensive interagency plan for child day-
2 care services and early childhood development services and
3 for the powers and duties of the Department of Public
4 Welfare.

5 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
6 hereby enacts as follows:

7 Section 1. Short title.

8 This act shall be known and may be cited as the Child Day
9 Care and Early Childhood Development State Plan Act.

10 Section 2. Definitions.

11 The following words and phrases when used in this act shall
12 have the meanings given to them in this section unless the
13 context clearly indicates otherwise:

14 "Child day care." Care in lieu of parental care given for
15 part of the 24-hour day to children under 16 years of age, away
16 from their own homes. The term does not include child day care
17 furnished in places of worship during religious services.

18 "Department." The Department of Public Welfare of the
19 Commonwealth.

1 "Early childhood development services." Services which are
2 intended to provide an environment which enhances the
3 educational, social, cultural, emotional and recreational
4 development of children from birth through eight years of age
5 but which are not intended to serve as a substitute for
6 compulsory academic programs.

7 Section 3. Annual comprehensive State plan for child day-care
8 and early childhood development services.

9 (a) Annual plan.--Through an annual State plan on child day-
10 care and early childhood development services, the department,
11 in coordination with the Department of Health and the Department
12 of Education, shall establish goals and objectives and review
13 and assess the State's child day-care and early childhood
14 development service delivery system, including State efforts to
15 assure the provision of accessible, available and affordable
16 quality child day-care and early childhood development services
17 and a continuum of early childhood programs to the general
18 public. The plan shall be developed in relation to Statewide and
19 local needs and shall take into consideration available
20 demographic studies. It shall reflect the needs of families in
21 different social, economic and cultural circumstances and the
22 needs of children of different ages and stages of development
23 and of children with special needs.

24 (b) Submission.--No later than May 1 of each year, the
25 department shall submit to the Governor, the Chief Clerk of the
26 Senate and the Chief Clerk of the House of Representatives a
27 State plan on child day-care and early childhood development
28 services for the ensuing year.

29 (c) Common policies and practices.--In the development and
30 implementation of an annual State plan, the department shall

1 promote common policies and practices in programs to the fullest
2 extent possible and develop mechanisms for interagency
3 collaboration to create a coordinated State child day-care and
4 early childhood development services delivery system. This
5 subsection includes simplification and coordination of the
6 application process for families needing services.

7 (d) Public hearings.--To prepare the State plan, the
8 department shall hold at least four public hearings in different
9 geographic locations in this Commonwealth to seek input and
10 recommendations from parents, early childhood development
11 professionals, child day-care providers, child advocates,
12 educators, representatives of local government, health and human
13 service organizations, health care professionals, labor
14 organizations, businesses, school officials and other
15 individuals or agencies interested in issues affecting children
16 and families.

17 (e) Contents of plans.--The State plan shall include the
18 following information:

19 (1) A summary of recommendations submitted to the
20 department pursuant to Statewide public hearings and the
21 department's response to the recommendations.

22 (2) The amount of Federal, State and local funds
23 requested for child day-care and early childhood development
24 services and the allocation of these funds, by the type of
25 care and by administrative costs. Funding includes the Social
26 Services Block Grant Act (Public Law 97-35, 42 U.S.C. § 1397
27 et seq.); Titles I and VI of the Personal Responsibility and
28 Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (Public Law
29 104-193, 110 Stat. 2105); the Head Start Act (Public Law
30 97-35, 42 U.S.C. § 9831 et seq.); subarticle (b) of Article

1 XV-D of the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as
2 the Public School Code of 1949; the act of December 19, 1990
3 (P.L.1372, No.212), known as the Early Intervention Services
4 System Act; and other pertinent State appropriations.

5 (3) A description of child day-care, early childhood
6 development and early childhood education programs in this
7 Commonwealth.

8 (4) The following information, if available: the
9 unduplicated number of children served and assisted with
10 Federal, State and local funds, by type of care and age;
11 funding source for the services; the average duration of the
12 child-care service; and the child capacity of regulated
13 providers.

14 (5) Income eligibility guidelines for federally funded
15 and State-funded child day-care and early childhood
16 development services, including, as applicable, sliding fee
17 scales and the extent to which the income guidelines and fee
18 scales are adjusted to reflect the most recent available
19 State income data.

20 (6) The State's practices regarding the monitoring of
21 child day-care and early childhood development programs to
22 ensure the health, safety, welfare and early learning
23 outcomes of children. In describing the monitoring system,
24 the department shall identify the extent of announced and
25 unannounced inspections of regulated providers, the level of
26 compliance with State standards and the staff-to-provider
27 ratio to accomplish this task. This paragraph includes
28 recommendations on ways to improve both the enforcement and
29 monitoring of standards and compliance with standards.

30 (7) The department's coordination, identification or

1 arrangement of training and professional preparation and
2 development for providers in specific program areas that are
3 designed to improve the quality of child day-care and early
4 childhood development services. The department shall identify
5 any Federal, State, local or private funding allocated for
6 training and professional preparation and development; the
7 objectives of the training and professional preparation and
8 development; the way in which training and professional
9 preparation and development will be accomplished; and an
10 evaluation of the previous year's training and professional
11 preparation and development programs.

12 (8) An analysis of any recent demonstration projects
13 related to child day care or early childhood development
14 established by the department or the Department of Health or
15 the Department of Education, using Federal or State funds,
16 along with a summary of the cost of the projects and the
17 findings and recommendations of the department.

18 (9) A summary of any recent reports, data or surveys
19 concerning the compensation of child day-care and early
20 childhood development professionals, loan forgiveness
21 programs, the State's reimbursement rates and any changes in
22 rates recommended by the department.

23 (10) A summary of the most recent available demographic
24 information related to the need for child day-care and early
25 childhood development programs in this Commonwealth.

26 (11) Efforts by the private sector and State and local
27 government to encourage employer-sponsored child day-care
28 services and policies aimed at addressing the child day-care
29 needs of working parents.

30 (12) A description of the responsibilities and programs

1 of various State departments with respect to child day-care
2 and early childhood development services and how coordination
3 among agencies is addressed. The department shall describe
4 its responsibilities and programs under various program
5 offices and related programs or services available through
6 the Department of Aging, the Department of Community and
7 Economic Development, the Department of Education, the
8 Department of Health or the Department of Labor and Industry.

9 (13) Standards, training and professional preparation
10 and development for child day-care providers who receive
11 payment through Federal or State child day-care or early
12 childhood development programs. The standards, training and
13 professional preparation and development shall promote the
14 health, safety and developmental needs of children.

15 (14) Identification of gaps in child day-care and early
16 childhood development services, unmet needs, administrative
17 barriers that serve as obstacles to obtaining services and
18 recommendations on how the State can address these issues.

19 (15) Statutory and regulatory changes recommended by the
20 department to address the quality, affordability and
21 availability of child day-care and early childhood
22 development services.

23 Section 10. Effective date.

24 This act shall take effect in 60 days.