
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

SENATE BILL

No. 1407 Session of
2015

INTRODUCED BY BROWNE, NOVEMBER 16, 2016

REFERRED TO AGING AND YOUTH, NOVEMBER 16, 2016

AN ACT

1 Providing for the establishment, implementation and
2 administration of a comprehensive retiree welfare-to-work
3 mentoring program for certain individuals; and imposing
4 additional powers and duties on the Department of Aging.

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 Pennsylvania
9 Retiree Mentoring Works Program Act.

10 Section 2. Declaration of policy.

11 The General Assembly finds and declares as follows:

12 (1) Nationally, employment retention and job advancement
13 for former welfare clients and other low-wage workers has
14 become a major focus in work force development.

15 (2) Mentoring provides an avenue for job advancement for
16 those clients so that they can continue to not only be
17 productive but also to enjoy prosperity and stay on the job.

18 (3) The Retiree Mentoring Works Program is advantageous
19 for business and government because it addresses problems on

1 the employment site, thereby alleviating costly turnover for
2 companies, and because it ensures job retention so welfare
3 rolls may be reduced.

4 (4) By giving benefits to employers, they are made part
5 owners in a program that is helping to solve America's
6 pressing problem of transitioning people from welfare to work
7 and that ensures that those people will remain productive,
8 independent Americans with pride and dignity.

9 (5) In essence, retiree mentors pragmatically teach
10 welfare clients to fight their war on poverty by working
11 their way to prosperity.

12 (6) This Commonwealth is fortunate to have the second
13 largest percentage of older persons in the country and
14 inherent in that distinction is the deep well of knowledge
15 and expertise found in this Commonwealth's population of
16 retired individuals. It is incumbent upon the General
17 Assembly, therefore, to utilize the valuable network of
18 retired Pennsylvanians who may be willing to share their
19 knowledge and expertise for the benefit of all
20 Pennsylvanians.

21 Section 3. Definitions.

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

25 "Client." A resident of this Commonwealth who receives or
26 has received welfare payments or who is a low-wage worker.

27 "Department." The Department of Aging of the Commonwealth.

28 "Program." The Pennsylvania Retiree Mentoring Works Program
29 established by this act.

30 Section 4. Pennsylvania Retiree Mentoring Works Program.

1 (a) Establishment.--There is hereby established within the
2 department a demonstration program to be known as the
3 Pennsylvania Retiree Mentoring Works Program. The purpose of the
4 program shall be to provide mentoring services to assist
5 individuals who are transitioning from welfare or who are low-
6 wage workers to find and retain employment.

7 (b) Mentors.--The department shall select retired
8 individuals who are 55 years of age or older to serve as mentors
9 in the program. The mentors shall assist clients in removing
10 barriers that have been major obstacles to finding and retaining
11 quality employment in rural, urban and suburban regions of this
12 Commonwealth.

13 Section 5. Powers and duties of the Department of Aging.

14 (a) Mentor recruitment and training.--The department shall
15 establish a process for recruiting quality retiree mentors,
16 training those mentors and purchasing the needed technology to
17 make the program operational.

18 (b) Funding opportunities.--The department may seek
19 potential funding opportunities in the form of grants through
20 government agencies as well as private sector dollars to fund
21 the program.

22 (c) Interagency cooperation.--The department shall work in
23 cooperation with the Team PA Workforce Investment Board, the
24 Department of Labor and Industry and the Department of Human
25 Services to ensure the success of this program. The program
26 shall act as a resource to the retention, advancement and rapid
27 reemployment services of the Department of Human Services.

28 (d) Local cooperation.--The department shall work in
29 cooperation with the designated area agencies established in
30 section 2206-A of the act of April 9, 1929 (P.L.177, No.175),

1 known as The Administrative Code of 1929, to provide local
2 involvement in the program.

3 (e) Annual report.--The department shall prepare and submit
4 an annual report to the General Assembly on the program. The
5 report shall include pertinent information regarding the
6 effectiveness of the program, as well as findings and
7 recommendations for changes that may be deemed necessary to
8 improve the program's outcome.

9 Section 6. Responsibilities of mentors.

10 Retiree mentors shall volunteer with the department and shall
11 work as advisors, counselors and teachers to welfare clients,
12 former welfare clients and other low-wage workers in one-on-one
13 scenarios where they cover topics on job-seeking and job-keeping
14 skills, work ethic, responsibility as a trusted employee and the
15 difference between wants and needs.

16 Section 7. Rules and regulations.

17 The department shall develop and promulgate rules and
18 regulations necessary to provide for the administration of the
19 program, no later than six months after the effective date of
20 this section. Implementation of the program shall commence no
21 later than six months following final approval of the
22 regulations.

23 Section 8. Effective date.

24 This act shall take effect immediately.