



NOVEMBER 11, 2025

SENATOR VINCENT HUGHES
Democratic Chairman

HUMAN SERVICES CODE

House Bill 749, as amended by A02129

Section 403. Uniformity in Administration of Assistance; Regulations as to Assistance

Requires the Department of Human Services (DHS), on a quarterly basis, to check income and employment records held by the Department of Labor and Industry (L&I) against recipients of medical assistance and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits.

Requires the DHS, on a monthly basis, to check death certificates at the Bureau of Vital Statistics against recipients of medical assistance and SNAP benefits.

Section 408.3. Copayments for Subsidized Child Care

Adds considerations to support economic self-sufficiency to factors when setting child care copays. Repeals the minimum copay of \$5.00 per week and requirement of incremental increases based on income and replaces it with amounts in accordance with Federal and State law and rounded to the nearest whole dollar. The minimum copayments amounts do not apply to special populations determined by DHS in accordance with the State plan. These changes are necessary for federal compliance.

Repeals the current annual income and redetermination provisions that limit copays and replaces them with new provisions that a family's annual copayment shall be: not less than 3% and not more than 7% of the family's annual income if the family income is at or below 235% of the Federal Poverty level, or not less than 7% nor more than 12%, if the family's income exceeds 235% of the Federal Poverty level.

Repeals the current minimum work requirements and replaces them with a requirement that at the time of an initial determination, the family's annual income may not exceed 200% of the Federal poverty level. At redetermination, the family's annual income may not exceed 235% of the Federal poverty level or 85% of the State median income for a family of the same size, whichever is lower. A family may qualify for subsidized child care if the family income exceeds 235% of the Federal poverty level but does not exceed 300% of the Federal poverty level or 85% of the State median income for a family of the same size, whichever is lower, only to the extent funds are appropriated by the General Assembly.

For fiscal year 2023-2024 and each fiscal year thereafter, no less than \$25,000,000 from money appropriated for child care services shall be used for a family that may qualify for subsidized child care if the family income exceeds 235% of the Federal poverty level but does not exceed 300% of the Federal poverty level or 85% of the State median income for a family of the same size, whichever is lower. This language is moved from the Fiscal Code.

Senator Vincent J. Hughes, Democratic Chair

Senator Patty Kim, Democratic Vice-Chair

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For twelve months after the initial determination or a redetermination of eligibility, a child shall remain eligible for subsidized child care regardless of either: a temporary change in the parent or caregiver's status as working or attending a job training or educational program or an increase in the family's annual income, if the income does not exceed 85% of the State median income for a family of the same size.

Section 414.1. Report on Transition to Chip-Enabled Access Cards

Requires DHS to prepare a report on the feasibility of transitioning current SNAP benefit cards from magnetic stripe access to chip-enabled access. The report shall include an assessment of the financial impact, operational considerations and proposed implementation strategies for such a transition. Additionally, the report shall include:

- A cost analysis of replacing magnetic stripe access cards with chip-enabled access cards, including an itemized estimate of anticipated expenditures by the following:
 - DHS costs associated with changing the cards; and,
 - DHS and county assistance offices costs associated with system modifications.
- A review of other states that have implemented a chip-enabled card, and including:
 - Identification of best practices and operational insights.
 - Recommended strategies to minimize service disruptions, including pilot programs and point-of-sale testing protocols at authorized SNAP retailers.
 - Identification of cost saving measures and methods to reduce the implementation timeline.
- A proposed implementation timeline that outlines key milestones and estimated timeframes for each phase of transition.

The report shall be submitted, within 30 days, to:

- The chairs and minority chairs of the Appropriations Committees of the Senate and House;
- The chair and minority chair of the Senate Health and Human Services Committee;
- The chair and minority chair of the House Health Committee; and,
- The chair and minority chair of the House Human Services Committee.

Section 437. Reports to the General Assembly

Requires DHS to submit an annual report to the chair and minority chair of the Senate Health and Human Services Committee and the chair and minority chair of the House Human Services Committee that includes the following:

- Details on information relating to any changes in how lottery winnings are counted as available resources for cash assistance applicants, including:
 - The number of applicants who reported lottery winnings of \$600 or more as an available resource.
 - The number of applicants who were ineligible for assistance due to lottery winnings of \$600 or more.
 - Details on any gaps in communication between DHS and county assistance offices which may have resulted in the failed reporting of lottery winnings of \$600 or more.

Human Services Code

Senate Democratic Appropriations Committee

Author: Lisa Fleming, Michael Deery

- Details regarding current strategies between DHS and the Lottery in reporting lottery winnings.
- The number of motor vehicles annually counted as resources.
- The average equity value of motor vehicles counted as resources.
- Information regarding annual replacement of access devices, including:
 - The number of recipients who request a first replacement during the year.
 - The number of additional replacement access devices issued during the year.
 - The number of times the fee for a replacement access device was not assessed during the year.
 - The number of recipients annually reported to the Office of the Inspector General for requesting two or more access devices in a calendar year.
- The number of instances during the year when recipients attempted to make purchases or withdraw funds in violation of prohibitions on uses in law.
- Details highlighting any changes in reports submitted in previous years.
- Any recommendations to the General Assembly to improve the administration of assistance.

The reporting shall be limited to data that is available to DHS and does not require system changes.

Section 441.1. Persons Eligible for Medical Assistance

Changes the temporary suspension time (from two years) for an individual receiving medical assistance who becomes incarcerated to match federal law. Strikes the notification from the correctional institution of an inmate’s release as requirement to restore a previously incarcerated individual’s medical assistance benefits.

Section 443.12. Nonemergency Medical Transportation Services

Requires DHS, in consultation with the Department of Aging and the Department of Transportation, to conduct a study regarding the use of a statewide brokerage model to provide nonemergency medical transportation services to medical assistance recipients. The study shall include:

- An analysis of current Federal and State laws and regulations controlling nonemergency medical transportation and other human services transportation programs, including the authorized methods of delivery and limitations or restrictions on the methods of delivery.
- An analysis of effectiveness and efficiency of current nonemergency transportation service delivery as it relates to each human service program.
- A review of other states’ models of delivery nonemergency medical transportation, including the number of states utilizing a brokerage model and the effect that model has had on public transit.
- An analysis of the positive and negative impacts of maintaining the current transportation delivery model versus a brokerage model, including how it relates to local governments and the financial impacts.
- An analysis of the impact of the different delivery models on consumers, including on quality and service availability.

The study shall be completed within 180 days and shall be delivered to the Secretary of Aging, the Secretary of Human Services, the Secretary of Transportation, the chairs and minority chairs of the

Human Services Code

Senate Democratic Appropriations Committee

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House and Senate Appropriations Committees, the chair and minority chair of the Senate Health and Human Services Committee, and the chair and minority chair of the House Health Committee.

Section 443.16. Abrogation of Regulatory Requirements for Payment for Outpatient Behavioral Health Facilities

Abrogates sections 1153.14(6) and 1223.14(11) from 55 Pa. Code to the extent that they limit medical assistance payments only for behavioral health services provided within the physical confines of a behavioral health clinic facility.

Section 476. SNAP Benefit Reporting

Within 12 months and each year thereafter, DHS shall review the financial costs, distribution and utilization of benefits under SNAP and report the following aggregate information:

- The total number of recipients statewide and county levels.
- The total amount of benefits distributed at the statewide and county levels.
- The total number of recipients who have SNAP balances of \$2,000 or more for a continuous period of at least six months, including recipients who maintain a balance:
 - between \$2,000 and \$4,999;
 - between \$5,000 and \$9,999; or,
 - more than \$10,000.
- The total number of recipients and total amount of benefits distributed in each legislative district.
- An overview of SNAP benefit distribution schedule based on caseloads and census data, including data from other states that utilize more than ten payment issuance days, and any recommendations for changes to the distribution schedule.
 - After the first report, this provision shall be reviewed every five years.
- The Commonwealth's SNAP payment error rate for each of the last five years and the department's recommendations for reducing or maintaining an error rate below 6%.
- Programmatic and financial impacts to the Commonwealth from Federal changes to SNAP made after January 1, 2025.
- Any other data DHS deems necessary.

Within 15 days of the completion of the report, DHS shall send a copy to the chair and minority chair of the Senate Health and Human Services Committee; the chair and minority chair of the House Health Committee; and the chair and minority chair of the House Human Services Committee. The completed report also shall be posted on the DHS website.

If the report includes recommendations for changes to the SNAP payment distribution, DHS shall develop and implement updates to the payment system after consultation with an advisory committee and subject to appropriation by the General Assembly. If the implementation of changes results in costs, DHS shall pay for the costs using funding from the Enterprise and Technology Restricted Account. Prior to updates being submitted to the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), DHS shall transmit notice of the proposed update for publication in the Pennsylvania Bulletin. If changes are approved by USDA, DHS shall update the distribution schedule on their website.

Human Services Code

Senate Democratic Appropriations Committee

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