
SENATE COMMITTEE ON BUDGET AND FISCAL REVIEW

Senator Scott Wiener, Chair
2025 - 2026 Regular

Bill No:	AB 119	Hearing Date:	July 14, 2025
Author:	Committee on Budget		
Version:	June 27, 2025 As amended		
Urgency:	No	Fiscal:	Yes
Consultant:	Elizabeth Schmitt		

Subject: Public social services trailer bill

Summary: Provides for statutory changes necessary to enact human services related provisions of the Budget Act of 2025.

Proposed Law: As part of the 2025-26 budget package, this bill makes statutory changes to implement the budget act. This bill includes the following provisions:

- 1) Makes implementation of the Tiered Rate Structure for foster care subject to appropriation by the Legislature in 2027. Makes various technical and conforming changes related to the Tiered Rate Structure implementation.
- 2) Makes various changes to streamline the CalWORKs program experience, as follows:
 - a. Revises the sequence of activities for counties and CalWORKs participants upon enrollment in the CalWORKs program as follows: orientation and appraisal; initial engagement activities, such as family stabilization; assessment and welfare-to-work plan development; and work activities. Requires the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) to develop an updated streamlined appraisal tool designed to improve efficiency while maintaining the ability to assess participant strengths and barriers, informed by a stakeholder workgroup.
 - b. Expands allowable activities under a CalWORKs welfare-to-work plan to include educational activities, such as obtaining a high school diploma, postsecondary education leading to a degree or certificate, career-specific education, and other activities that improve employment opportunities and family well-being.
 - c. Requires transportation costs included in a welfare-to-work plan to be advanced to CalWORKs participants.
 - d. Makes job club an optional program component.
 - e. Requires a county to verify a CalWORKs participant has secured child care prior to issuing a sanction.
 - f. Defers sanctions during the initial 90 days of CalWORKs program participation.
 - g. Simplifies the process for curing a sanction for individuals who are meeting federal work requirements.
 - h. Repeals the requirement that any future federal Work Participation Rate penalties be passed on to counties.

- 3) Extends the suspension of grantee dollar-for-dollar match requirements for counties and tribes offering services through the Home Safe program.
- 4) Extends the suspension of grantee dollar-for-dollar match requirements for counties and tribes offering services through the Bringing Families Home program.
- 5) Removes the sunset on the requirement for counties and tribes offering services through the Housing and Disability Advocacy Program to seek reimbursement of funds used for housing assistance, general assistance, or general relief from the Social Security program pursuant to an interim assistance reimbursement agreement.
- 6) Initiates various changes related to mandated reporter training in child welfare, as follows:
 - a. Expresses legislative intent that training for mandated reporters include the definition of general neglect in the child welfare system.
 - b. Requires the California Child Welfare Council to establish a Mandated Reporting Advisory Committee, which includes representatives of county agencies, labor organizations, community-based organizations, and parents and youth directly impacted by the child welfare system.
 - c. Requires future county plans for prevention services to include the county's plans to provide information for mandated reporters regarding the resources available to support families in their communities.
 - d. Requires CDSS, through the State Office of Child Abuse Prevention, with participation of individuals with lived experience, county child welfare agencies, and other stakeholders, to develop a standardized curriculum for mandated reporters, by July 1, 2027.
 - e. Requires the standardized curriculum for mandated reporters to include various components, including but not limited to: the history of mandated reporting laws; California's Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Act, the federal Indian Child Welfare Act, best practice for defining "reasonable suspicion" and "substantial risk"; differences between "severe neglect" and "general neglect," as defined; California child abuse, neglect, and disproportionality data; definitions of bias and trauma; the impact on families of making a child abuse or neglect report to child protective services; considerations for specified populations; decision-making processes and tools for mandated reporters; and education and information on community resources.
 - f. Requires CDSS to make the standardized curriculum for mandated reporters available online.
 - g. Allows CDSS to contract for the development, maintenance, and online hosting of the training, and allows CDSS to charge an appropriate fee to offset the cost of generating individual completion certificates for the training, as specified.
 - h. Requires employers with one or more mandated reporters to strongly encourage completion of training using the standardized curriculum, with certain exemptions for volunteers and mandated reporters who are

otherwise required by law to receive training in child abuse and neglect identification and reporting, as specified.

- i. Clarifies that county child welfare services departments do not need to substantiate or have allegations of abuse, neglect, or exploitation in order to provide voluntary services and stabilization support to families.
- 7) Requires CDSS to develop a strategic plan for how the department's methodology and outreach strategies may be implemented and executed to maximize benefits for those eligible for CalFresh. Requires CDSS to consult with specified stakeholders in the development of this plan, and to complete the plan by July 1, 2027.
- 8) Makes technical and conforming changes.

Fiscal Effect: Appropriates \$100,000 from the Federal Trust Fund to CDSS for child welfare programs.

Support: None on file.

Opposed: None on file.

-- END --