

THIRD READING

Bill No: AB 2524
Author: Gipson (D)
Amended: 8/13/26 in Senate
Vote: 21

SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE: 7-0, 6/17/26

AYES: Pérez, Ochoa Bogh, Cabaldon, Choi, Cortese, Gonzalez, Reyes

SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE: 7-0, 8/13/26

AYES: Cervantes, Seyarto, Cabaldon, Dahle, Grayson, Richardson, Wahab

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 68-0, 5/21/26 (Consent) - See last page for vote

SUBJECT: Pupils: work permits: issuance

SOURCE: Parents, Educators/Teachers & Students in Action

DIGEST: This bill 1) authorizes county probation departments and county child welfare agencies to issue work permits to certain youth under the jurisdiction of the juvenile court; and 2) establishes requirements governing the issuance, recognition, notification, and revocation of those work permits and authorizes educational rights holders and attorneys representing eligible youth to request work permits on behalf of those youth.

ANALYSIS:

Existing law:

- 1) Expresses the intent of the Legislature that school district, charter school, and private school personnel responsible for issuing work permits possess a working knowledge of California labor laws relating to minors and are trained to provide practical career guidance.
- 2) Authorizes specified individuals to issue work permits to minors, including school district superintendents, charter school chief executive officers, county

superintendents of schools, designated credentialed personnel, and principals of public and private schools.

- 3) Requires a written request from a parent, guardian, foster parent, caregiver, or residential shelter services provider before a work permit may be issued.
- 4) Authorizes school districts, charter schools, and county offices of education to designate qualified personnel to issue work permits and establishes procedures governing permit issuance and revocation.
- 5) Provides that work permit hour limitations are based upon the school calendar of the school attended by the pupil.

This bill:

- 1) Authorizes a county probation department to issue a work permit to a minor who is a ward of the court pursuant to Sections 601 or 602 of the Welfare and Institutions Code.
- 2) Authorizes a county child welfare agency to issue a work permit to a minor who is a dependent child of the court pursuant to Section 300 of the Welfare and Institutions Code.
- 3) Requires work permits issued by a county probation department or county child welfare agency to:
 - a) Be issued only if employment is in the best interest of the minor.
 - b) Be issued on a form containing the information otherwise required for work permits.
 - c) Be recognized by school districts, employers, and state agencies to the same extent as work permits issued by a school district.
- 4) Specifies that the bill does not limit the authority of school districts to issue work permits to pupils enrolled in schools maintained by the district.
- 5) Requires a county probation department or county child welfare agency that issues a work permit to provide written notice to the minor's school district, charter school, or private school personnel responsible for issuing work permits within 60 days.

- 6) Authorizes a school district, charter school, or private school to revoke a work permit issued by a county probation department or county child welfare agency using the same procedures applicable to permits they issue themselves.
- 7) Requires a school district, charter school, or private school that revokes such a permit to provide written notice to the issuing county probation department or county child welfare agency within 60 days.
- 8) Authorizes an educational rights holder or attorney representing an eligible youth to submit the written request required before a work permit may be issued.

Comments

- 1) *Need for the bill.* According to the author, “AB 2524 confronts a harsh reality: foster youth and justice-involved youth are often denied work permits due to school requirements they cannot meet because of instability, trauma, and lack of support. This leaves them vulnerable to exploitation and crime simply to survive. By allowing judicial officers to issue work permits in a youth’s best interest; while tying them to educational progress or job training participation, this bill creates a pathway to lawful employment, stability, and accountability. AB 2524 empowers youth with opportunity, reduces recidivism, and helps break cycles of poverty and exploitation.”

- 2) *Alternative pathway for court-involved youth to obtain work permits.* California generally relies on schools as the primary issuers of work permits for minors. While this system works for most students, youth involved in the child welfare and juvenile justice systems often experience frequent school changes, interrupted enrollment, placement instability, and uncertainty regarding who is authorized to make educational decisions on their behalf. These circumstances can create practical barriers to obtaining a work permit, even when employment may provide valuable work experience, income, and opportunities to develop independence.

This bill authorizes county probation departments and county child welfare agencies to issue work permits directly to youth under their supervision. By creating an additional pathway for permit issuance, the bill seeks to ensure that eligible youth can access employment opportunities even when school-based processes may be difficult to navigate.

- 3) *Why probation departments and child welfare agencies?* As amended, the bill no longer authorizes judicial officers to issue work permits. Instead, that

authority is granted to county probation departments and county child welfare agencies, the public entities that are typically responsible for supervising, supporting, and coordinating services for these youth.

Because these agencies are often most familiar with a youth's placement, educational circumstances, and case plan, the amendments may provide a more practical mechanism for issuing work permits while avoiding the need to involve juvenile courts in what is fundamentally an administrative process. The bill also requires communication between issuing agencies and schools when permits are issued or revoked.

- 4) *Preserving the existing role of schools.* The bill does not replace the traditional role of schools in issuing work permits. School districts, charter schools, and private schools retain their existing authority to issue permits and may revoke permits issued by county probation departments or county child welfare agencies using the same standards that apply to school-issued permits.

As a result, the bill establishes a parallel permitting pathway for a limited population of youth while preserving the existing oversight role of educational agencies.

- 5) *Employment as part of the transition to adulthood.* Youth involved in the foster care and juvenile justice systems often face significant challenges in transitioning successfully to adulthood. Research consistently finds lower rates of educational attainment, employment, and economic stability among these populations relative to their peers.

Part-time employment can provide youth with income, work experience, professional references, and opportunities to develop skills that support long-term self-sufficiency. This bill reflects a policy judgment that reducing administrative barriers to lawful employment may help improve outcomes for court-involved youth while maintaining existing protections governing youth employment.

FISCAL EFFECT: Appropriation: No Fiscal Com.: Yes Local: No

According to the Senate Appropriations Committee:

The bill's authorization for county probation departments and county child welfare agencies to issue work permits is permissive. However, the entities that elect to do so will likely incur additional administrative costs. For example, they would need to develop new procedures to issue the work permits, train staff, and track and monitor the youth that have been issued permits. The extent of these costs would

largely depend on the number of participating county probation departments and county welfare agencies, as well as the number of permits issued each year. This could lead to additional General Fund cost pressures, potentially in the hundreds of thousands of dollars each year.

SUPPORT: (Verified 8/13/26)

Parents, Educators/Teachers & Students in Action (source)

Alameda County Office of Education

California Alliance of Child and Family Services

Center for Oversight and Accountability

Future Leaders California

Los Angeles County Office of Education

Our Streets Dream

Safe Family Justice Centers

Transbordar LLC

WestCal Academy

OPPOSITION: (Verified 8/13/26)

None received

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 68-0, 5/21/26

AYES: Addis, Aguiar-Curry, Ahrens, Alanis, Alvarez, Ávila Farías, Bains, Bauer-Kahan, Bennett, Berman, Boerner, Bonta, Bryan, Calderon, Caloza, Carrillo, Castillo, Connolly, Davies, DeMaio, Dixon, Elhawary, Ellis, Flora, Fong, Gallagher, Gipson, Jeff Gonzalez, Mark González, Hadwick, Haney, Harabedian, Hart, Irwin, Jackson, Johnson, Kalra, Krell, Lee, Macedo, McKinnor, Muratsuchi, Nguyen, Ortega, Pacheco, Papan, Patel, Patterson, Pellerin, Petrie-Norris, Quirk-Silva, Ransom, Michelle Rodriguez, Rogers, Blanca Rubio, Sanchez, Schiavo, Sharp-Collins, Solache, Soria, Stefani, Ta, Tangipa, Valencia, Wallis, Ward, Zbur, Rivas

NO VOTE RECORDED: Arambula, Chen, Gabriel, Garcia, Hoover, Lackey, Lowenthal, Ramos, Celeste Rodriguez, Schultz, Wicks, Wilson

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