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## SENATE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Senator Sabrina Cervantes, Chair  
2025 - 2026 Regular Session

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### AB 2769 (Ahrens) - Adoption Assistance Program: eligibility

**Version:** June 8, 2026

**Urgency:** No

**Hearing Date:** June 29, 2026

**Policy Vote:** HUMAN S. 4 - 0

**Mandate:** Yes

**Consultant:** Agnes Lee

**Bill Summary:** AB 2769 would expand eligibility criteria for the Adoption Assistance Program (AAP) for certain nonminors, as specified.

#### Fiscal Impact:

- Unknown ongoing General Fund costs for AAP benefits due to expanded program eligibility.
- Unknown one-time General Fund costs, potentially hundreds of thousands, for automation updates.
- Unknown costs to counties for administration. To the extent the bill increases county costs already borne by a local agency for programs or levels of service mandated by the 2011 Realignment, the bill would apply to local agencies only to the extent that the state provides annual funding for the cost increases.

**Background:** The AAP is an entitlement program to provide financial assistance and/or medical coverage to facilitate the adoption of children who otherwise would remain in long-term foster care. The Adoption Assistance and Child Welfare Act of 1980 created federal incentives to encourage the adoption of special needs children. California law establishes AAP with the intent to provide the security and stability of a permanent home through adoption. AAP eligible children may receive federal funded or state/nonfederal funded AAP benefits. In limited circumstances, a child adopted through the independent adoption, private agency adoption, or Tribal adoption process may be eligible for AAP benefits.

Current law provides that a child, among other eligibility criteria, is eligible for the AAP under any of the following criteria:

- The child is under 18 years of age.
- The child is under 21 years of age and has a mental or physical handicap that warrants the continuation of assistance.
- The child is under 21 years of age, has attained 16 years of age before the adoption assistance agreement became effective, and meets specified conditions related to education and work participation.

**Proposed Law:** Specific provisions of the bill would:

- Expand eligibility criteria for the AAP, effective January 1, 2027, to include a nonminor who is 18 years of age, is under an adoption assistance agreement that became effective before the nonminor's 16th birthday, was, prior to attaining 18 years of age, attending high school or the equivalent level of vocational or technical training on a full-time basis or pursuing a high school equivalency certificate, continues in such attendance, continues to reside with the adoptive parent, and remains otherwise eligible.
- Provide that a nonminor, as described above, is eligible for AAP until the date of completion of the program they are attending or the nonminor's 19th birthday, whichever occurs first.

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