
SENATE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Senator Anna Caballero, Chair
2025 - 2026 Regular Session

AB 79 (Arambula) - Public social services: higher education

Version: March 24, 2025

Urgency: No

Hearing Date: August 18, 2025

Policy Vote: HUMAN S. 5 - 0, ED. 7 - 0

Mandate: Yes

Consultant: Agnes Lee

Bill Summary: AB 79 would require the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) to develop a training focused on public social services topics, as specified, to be available for campus basic needs directors, staff of a campus basic needs center, other designated professional staff from each campus of an institution of public higher education, and county human services eligibility workers.

Fiscal Impact:

- The CDSS estimates one-time General Fund costs of \$445,000 in 2025-26 and \$433,000 in 2026-27 for state administration.
- Unknown potential costs to counties for administration. Costs would be potentially reimbursable by the state, subject to a determination by the Commission on State Mandates.

Background: Current law requires a county human services agency to designate at least one employee as a staff liaison to serve as a point of contact for academic counselors and other relevant professional staff at a campus of an institution of public higher education located within the county. The county staff liaison must provide information on programs and services offered by the county agency that may be available to students attending a campus of an institution of public higher education within the county. The purpose of designating a county staff liaison to serve as a point of contact is to facilitate the connection between students in need of services and programs offered by the agency that may be available to students. Current law requires a county human services agency, with input from the public institutions of higher education located within the county, to develop protocols for engagement between the agency and a campus of an institution of public higher education located within the county.

Current law requires each campus of the California Community Colleges (CCC) and California State University (CSU), and requests each campus of the University of California (UC), to establish the position of the basic needs coordinator to serve as the single point of contact for students experiencing basic needs insecurity related to basic needs services and resources.

Proposed Law: Specific provisions of the bill would:

- Require county human services agencies to additionally include input from basic needs directors, basic needs coordinators, or designated staff from each campus of

a public institution of higher education, when developing protocols for engagement between the agency and a campus of an institution of public higher education located within the county.

- Require CDSS, in consultation with specified stakeholders, to develop a training to be available for basic needs directors, staff of a campus basic needs center, other designated professional staff from each campus of an institution of higher education, and county eligibility workers; and require the training to focus on public social services topics, including all of the following:
 - Local Programs that Increase Employability (LPIE) familiarity.
 - Department of Health Care Services and CDSS policy updates, including review of the CalFresh Student Eligibility Handbook.
 - Other college student related training, including information related to financial aid, scholarships, dependent status, eligibility criteria for public social services programs, and other information related to the needs specific to college students.
- Require CDSS to convene a workgroup that meets quarterly to share best practices, address challenges, and identify statewide issues, as specified.
- Require CDSS, on or before May 1, 2027 and every three years thereafter, in collaboration with specified stakeholders, to submit a report to the Legislature with findings and recommendations relating to enrollment success trends, best practices, and services offered by the CDSS that may be available to students attending a campus of an institution of public higher education.

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