

ASSEMBLY BILL

No. 2311

Introduced by Assembly Member Bradford

February 21, 2014

An act to amend Section 17001.5 of the Welfare and Institutions Code, relating to public social services.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 2311, as introduced, Bradford. General assistance: employable veterans.

Existing law requires each county to provide aid to its indigent residents not supported by other means. These county programs are known as general assistance programs.

Existing law permits a county to prohibit an employable individual from receiving general assistance benefits for more than 3 months in any 12-month period, whether or not the months are consecutive, if he or she has been offered an opportunity to attend job skills or job training sessions.

This bill would provide that the prohibition shall not apply to an employable veteran who was honorably discharged from the armed forces. By expanding eligibility for general assistance programs, this bill would impose a state-mandated local program.

The California Constitution requires the state to reimburse local agencies and school districts for certain costs mandated by the state. Statutory provisions establish procedures for making that reimbursement.

This bill would provide that, if the Commission on State Mandates determines that the bill contains costs mandated by the state, reimbursement for those costs shall be made pursuant to these statutory provisions.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: yes.
State-mandated local program: yes.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

1 SECTION 1. This act shall be known and may be cited as the
2 General Assistance “Thank You For Your Service” Act of 2014.
3 SEC. 2. Section 17001.5 of the Welfare and Institutions Code
4 is amended to read:
5 17001.5. (a) Notwithstanding any other ~~provision~~ of law,
6 including, but not limited to, Section 17000.5, the board of
7 supervisors of each county, or the agency authorized by the county
8 charter, may do any of the following:
9 (1) (A) Adopt residency requirements for purposes of
10 determining a persons’ eligibility for general assistance. Any
11 residence requirement under this paragraph shall not exceed 15
12 days.
13 (B) Nothing in this paragraph shall be construed to authorize
14 the adoption of a requirement that an applicant or recipient have
15 an address or to require a homeless person to acquire an address.
16 (2) (A) Establish a standard of general assistance for applicants
17 and recipients who share housing with one or more unrelated
18 persons or with one or more persons who are not legally
19 responsible for the applicant or recipient. The standard of general
20 assistance aid established pursuant to Section 17000.5 for a single
21 adult applicant or recipient may be reduced pursuant to this
22 paragraph by not more than the following percentages, as
23 appropriate:
24 (i) Fifteen percent if the applicant or recipient shares housing
25 with one other person described in this subparagraph.
26 (ii) Twenty percent if the applicant or recipient shares housing
27 with two other persons described in this subparagraph.
28 (iii) Twenty-five percent if the applicant or recipient shares
29 housing with three or more other persons described in this
30 paragraph.
31 (B) Any standard of aid adopted pursuant to this paragraph shall
32 constitute a sufficient standard of aid for any recipient who shares
33 housing.

1 (C) Counties with shared housing reductions larger than the
2 amounts specified in subparagraph (A) as of August 19, 1992, may
3 continue to apply those adjustments.

4 (3) Discontinue aid under this part for a period of not more than
5 180 days with respect to any recipient who is employable and has
6 received aid under this part for three months if the recipient engages
7 in any of the following conduct:

8 (A) Fails, or refuses, without good cause, to participate in a
9 qualified job training program, participation of which is a condition
10 of receipt of assistance.

11 (B) After completion of a job training program, fails, or refuses,
12 without good cause, to accept an offer of appropriate employment.

13 (C) Persistently fails, or refuses, without good cause, to
14 cooperate with the county in its efforts to do any of the following:

15 (i) Enroll the recipient in a job training program.

16 (ii) After completion of a job training program, locate and secure
17 appropriate employment for the recipient.

18 (D) For purposes of this paragraph, lack of good cause may be
19 demonstrated by a showing of any of the following:

20 (i) The willful failure, or refusal, of the recipient to participate
21 in a job training program, accept appropriate employment, or
22 cooperate in enrolling in a training program or locating
23 employment.

24 (ii) Not less than three separate acts of negligent failure of the
25 recipient to engage in any of the activities described in clause (i).

26 (4) Prohibit an employable ~~individual~~ *individual, other than an*
27 *employable veteran who was honorably discharged from the armed*
28 *forces*, from receiving aid under this part for more than three
29 months in any 12-month period, whether or not the months are
30 consecutive. This paragraph shall apply to aid received on or after
31 the effective date of this paragraph. This paragraph shall apply
32 only to those individuals who have been offered an opportunity to
33 attend job skills or job training sessions.

34 (5) Notwithstanding paragraph (3), discontinue aid to, or
35 sanction, recipients for failure or refusal without good cause to
36 follow program requirements. For purposes of this subdivision,
37 lack of good cause may be demonstrated by a showing of either
38 (A) willful failure or refusal of the recipient to follow program
39 requirements, or (B) not less than three separate acts of negligent
40 failure of the recipient to follow program requirements.

1 (b) (1) The Legislative Analyst shall conduct an evaluation of
2 the impact of this section on general assistance recipients and
3 applicants.
4 (2) The evaluation required by paragraph (1) shall include, but
5 need not be limited to, all of the following:
6 (A) The impact on the extent of homelessness among applicants
7 and recipients of general assistance.
8 (B) The rate at which recipients of general assistance are
9 sanctioned by county welfare departments.
10 (C) The impact of the 15-day residency requirement on
11 applicants or recipients of general assistance, including how often
12 the requirement is invoked.
13 (3) The Legislative Analyst shall, in the conduct of the study
14 required by this section, consult with the State Department of
15 Social Services, the County Welfare Directors Association, and
16 organizations that advocate on behalf of recipients of general
17 assistance.
18 (c) A county may provide aid pursuant to Section 17000.5 either
19 by cash assistance, in-kind aid, a two-party payment, voucher
20 payment, or check drawn to the order of a third-party provider of
21 services to the recipient. Nothing shall restrict a county from
22 providing more than one method of aid to an individual recipient.
23 SEC. 3. If the Commission on State Mandates determines that
24 this act contains costs mandated by the state, reimbursement to
25 local agencies and school districts for those costs shall be made
26 pursuant to Part 7 (commencing with Section 17500) of Division
27 4 of Title 2 of the Government Code.

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