

Senate Bill No. 858

CHAPTER 906

An act to add Section 12554 to the Welfare and Institutions Code, relating to public social services, and making an appropriation therefor.

[Approved by Governor October 9, 1999. Filed
with Secretary of State October 10, 1999.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 858, Hughes. Guide, signal, and service dog food allowance.

Existing law provides for the federal Supplemental Security Income (SSI) program and the State Supplementary Program for the Aged, Blind, and Disabled, under which, through a combination of federal and state funds, qualified low-income aged, blind, and disabled persons are provided with cash assistance.

Existing law provides that recipients of these programs who have a guide, signal, or service dog are eligible for a specified monthly dog food allowance.

This bill would also permit a recipient of federal social security disability insurance benefits whose income and resources are not in excess of the federal poverty level and who has a guide, signal, or service dog to receive a dog food and other special need allowance of \$35 per month.

This bill would appropriate \$69,000 from the General Fund to the State Department of Social Services for the implementation of this act during the period commencing January 1, 2000, and ending June 30, 2000.

Appropriation: yes.

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

SECTION 1. Section 12554 is added to the Welfare and Institutions Code, to read:

12554. (a) Notwithstanding Section 12552, special circumstances shall also include the administration and payment by the department pursuant to this section of a recurring special need allowance to every eligible recipient who has a guide dog, signal dog, or other service dog, to pay for dog food and other costs associated with the dog's care and maintenance.

(b) For purposes of this section, the special need allowance shall be thirty-five dollars (\$35) per month.

(c) The department shall mail an application for the allowance to each recipient of benefits under the federal Social Security Disability



Insurance (SSDI) program who is known to the department to have a guide dog, signal dog, or other service dog, or who has requested an application from the department, and who is a legal resident of this state. The application shall include a disclosure of the applicant's resources and all sources and amounts of the applicant's income. The application shall be upon a standard form prescribed by regulations of the department and containing a written declaration that the affirmation is made under penalty of perjury subject to prosecution as the crime of perjury under the Penal Code. The recipient or, if the recipient is incapable, another person as described in Section 11054 may make the affirmation. In order to establish eligibility pursuant to subdivision (e), the applicant shall also be required to present a proof of income statement from the federal Social Security Administration. The department shall grant the special need allowance upon the basis of the affirmation by mailing a monthly warrant in the amount indicated in subdivision (b) to the recipient.

(d) The county welfare department shall cooperate in assisting the recipient in completing his or her application for the special need allowance authorized by this section.

(e) For purposes of this section, "eligible recipient" means any person legally residing in this state who is a recipient of benefits under the federal Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) program, provided for pursuant to Title II of the federal Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. Sec. 401, et seq.) and whose income and resources are not in excess of the federal poverty level. For purposes of determining eligibility under this section, income and resources shall be defined in the same manner as those terms are used in determining eligibility for aid under Chapter 3 (commencing with Section 12000).

SEC. 2. There is hereby appropriated the sum of sixty nine thousand dollars (\$69,000) from the General Fund to the State Department of Social Services for implementation of this act during the period commencing January 1, 2000, and ending June 30, 2000. Not more than 10 percent of the funds appropriated pursuant to this section shall be expended on administrative costs.

