

LEGISLATURE OF NEBRASKA

ONE HUNDRED SECOND LEGISLATURE

SECOND SESSION

LEGISLATIVE BILL 825

Introduced by Dubas, 34; Cook, 13; Gloor, 35; Krist, 10; Lathrop,
12; McGill, 26; Nordquist, 7.

Read first time January 05, 2012

Committee:

A BILL

- 1 FOR AN ACT relating to social services; to establish local offices
- 2 for access to public benefit programs; to provide duties
- 3 for the Department of Health and Human Services; and to
- 4 require high-quality services for clients.
- 5 Be it enacted by the people of the State of Nebraska,

1 Section 1. (1) The Department of Health and Human
2 Services shall establish multiple, integrated access points for
3 public benefit programs administered by the department in order to
4 assure that Nebraskans who rely on such programs will be able to
5 utilize them effectively.

6 (2) The department shall establish or reestablish twenty-
7 five local offices throughout the state to provide in-person services
8 to department clients. To the extent possible, such local offices
9 shall be established or reestablished by October 1, 2012, in office
10 locations or in buildings or structures currently or recently used by
11 the State of Nebraska to house local health and human services
12 offices.

13 (3) The local offices shall be open a minimum of forty
14 hours per week and shall be staffed by case workers and necessary
15 support staff to perform the following activities:

16 (a) Help clients complete benefit and renewal
17 applications;

18 (b) Screen clients for program eligibility;

19 (c) Interview clients for benefit eligibility and benefit
20 renewal eligibility;

21 (d) Determine program eligibility of the client; and

22 (e) Answer client questions in-person.

23 (4) The local offices shall, to the greatest extent
24 possible, complete the application process described in subsection
25 (3) of this section within twenty-four hours after the client comes

1 to the local office to apply for benefits or for the renewal of
2 benefits.

3 (5) Each local office shall be equipped with a reasonable
4 number of computers, telephones, and scanning equipment for client
5 use.

6 Sec. 2. (1) The Department of Health and Human Services
7 shall provide high-quality services for clients who apply for or
8 receive benefits under public benefit programs administered by the
9 department.

10 (2) The department shall utilize both department case
11 workers who are located in call centers and dedicated, specialized
12 department employees or units who will provide in-person assistance
13 to specific clients.

14 (3) Dedicated, specialized department employees or units
15 shall be utilized for:

16 (a) Persons with chronic physical or mental disorders and
17 the elderly that require the provision of medical and personal care
18 services on a recurring or continuing basis; and

19 (b) Complex cases, including medicaid waiver cases,
20 medicaid spousal impoverishment cases, disability cases, and other
21 similar cases.

22 (4) The dedicated, specialized department employees or
23 units shall be placed in the local offices established or
24 reestablished under section 1 of this act and shall be accessible to
25 department caseworkers in call centers.