
HOUSE BILL 2368

State of Washington

68th Legislature

2024 Regular Session

By Representatives Gregerson, Eslick, Thai, Low, and Senn

1 AN ACT Relating to assisting refugees and immigrants by
2 describing the role of the office of refugee and immigrant assistance
3 within the department of social and health services in administering
4 federal funding regarding refugee support services and authorizing
5 the office of refugee and immigrant assistance within the department
6 of social and health services to administer services to immigrants;
7 and adding a new chapter to Title 74 RCW.

8 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

9 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The purpose of this chapter is to
10 establish the scope of refugee and immigrant assistance administered
11 by the office of refugee and immigrant assistance within the
12 department.

13 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** The definitions in this section apply
14 throughout this chapter unless the context clearly requires
15 otherwise.

16 (1) "Department" means the department of social and health
17 services.

18 (2) "Federal act" means Title IV of the federal immigration and
19 nationality act, 8 U.S.C. Sec. 1521 et seq. as amended, including any
20 federal rules adopted pursuant to the federal act.

1 (3) "Immigrant" means a person who has arrived in the United
2 States and the state of Washington from another country seeking
3 residence who is not a naturalized citizen.

4 (4) "Refugee" means a person admitted into the United States
5 under section 207 of the immigration and nationality act and others
6 who are eligible for federal refugee resettlement services under the
7 federal act.

8 (5) "State plan" means the Washington state plan for refugee
9 resettlement described in section 4 of this act.

10 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** The department shall coordinate state,
11 federal, and local efforts to support the economic and social
12 integration of immigrants and refugees arriving and resettling in
13 Washington.

14 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** The department is designated as the single
15 state agency responsible for the development, review, and
16 administration of the Washington state plan for refugee resettlement.
17 The department shall submit the state plan to and seek approval from
18 the federal office of refugee resettlement within the federal
19 department of health and human services according to the federal act.

20 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 5.** (1) The department shall provide refugee
21 cash assistance, refugee medical assistance, and refugee support
22 services in accordance with the federal act and the state plan.

23 (2) The refugee support services described in this section may
24 include:

- 25 (a) Employment services;
- 26 (b) English language instruction;
- 27 (c) Case management; and
- 28 (d) Other services or assistance consistent with the federal act.

29 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 6.** (1) The department may administer services
30 to immigrants who are ineligible for federal services described in
31 section 5 of this act.

32 (2) The department may contract with external entities, including
33 community-based organizations, to provide the services authorized
34 under this section.

1 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 7.** The department may adopt rules in order to
2 achieve the purposes of this chapter.

3 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 8.** Sections 1 through 7 of this act
4 constitute a new chapter in Title 74 RCW.

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