SENATE BILL SB-12

Introduced by Senator Angelique Ashby (D-8)

An act relating to Family Stability Services Act.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB-12, Angelique Ashby (D-8). Family Stability Services Act.

Under existing law, California provides child care assistance to help eligible families pay for and find child care. These services include child care provided through licensed child care centers and family child care homes.

Existing law also provides child care assistance through programs such as CalWORKs. California also has Child Care Resource and Referral programs that help parents find child care and learn about available services.

This bill would create the Family Stability Services Program within the Department of Social Services. The program would give funding to affordable housing projects to help families connect with child care and other family support services.

This bill would allow participating housing projects to work with child care providers and community organizations to help families find child care, preschool, after school programs, and available financial assistance.

This bill would appropriate five million dollars ($5,000,000) from the General Fund to the Department of Social Services to run the program.

Vote: 2/3rds. **Appropriations/fiscal:** yes. **Local program:** no.

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1.

(a) The Family Stability Services Act is established within the Department of Social Services to help families living in eligible affordable housing locate and access existing childcare, early education, and family support services.

(b) The purpose of the program is to reduce barriers that prevent parents and guardians from finding childcare while working, attending school, or seeking employment.

(c) The program shall connect families with existing public and community resources. It shall not create a separate childcare subsidy, replace existing childcare assistance programs, or guarantee that childcare openings or financial assistance will be available.

SECTION 2.

(a) The Department of Social Services shall provide funding to eligible affordable housing projects that meet the requirements of this act.

(b) An eligible affordable housing project is a housing development or housing program that provides affordable housing to low income families or families experiencing housing instability.

(c) To receive funding, a housing project must:

(1) Provide affordable housing or housing assistance to qualifying families.

(2) Assign a staff member or service coordinator to help families find childcare and family support services.

(3) Work with at least one childcare provider, local childcare resource agency, public agency, or nonprofit community organization.

(4) Submit a written plan explaining how it will help families find services and apply for assistance.

(5) Keep records of how funds are spent and how families are helped.

(6) Submit the reports required by this act.

(d) Participating housing projects may work with:

(1) Licensed childcare centers and family childcare homes.

(2) Child Care Resource and Referral agencies that help parents find childcare providers.

(3) CalWORKS Child Care programs and agencies that help eligible families apply for childcare assistance.

(4) California State Preschool Program providers and local school districts.

(5) Local after school programs and nonprofit family support organizations.

(e) The Department of Social Services shall select projects based on their eligibility, the needs of their residents, their community partnerships, and their ability to report results.

SECTION 3.

(a) Participating housing projects shall help families find available services and understand how to access them.

(b) Services may include:

(1) **CalWORKs Child Care**: Help eligible families learn about childcare assistance connected to CalWORKs.

(2) **Child Care Resource and Referral agencies**: Help parents find childcare providers, compare available options, and learn about local services.

(3) **California State Preschool Program**: Help families learn about preschool options and the requirements for enrolling their children.

(4) **After school programs**: Help parents find school based or community programs that provide care outside regular school hours.

(5) **Child care applications**: Help families understand application steps, gather required documents, and contact the correct agency.

(6) **Other family support services**: Connect families with local family resource centers and community organizations.

(c) Existing programs shall continue to determine their own eligibility requirements. This program shall not guarantee childcare placement or financial assistance.

SECTION 4.

(a) Participating housing projects shall prioritize helping:

(1) Low income families.

(2) Families with young children.

(3) Parents who need childcare to work, attend school, or receive job training.

(4) Families having difficulty finding affordable childcare.

(b) These priorities shall not change the eligibility rules of existing childcare programs.

SECTION 5.

(a) Grant funding may be used for:

(1) Hiring staff to help families find childcare.

(2) Informing families about available programs.

(3) Helping with referrals and applications.

(4) Working with childcare providers and community organizations.

(5) Tracking program activities and spending.

(b) Funding shall not replace money already provided to existing childcare programs.

(c) The Department of Social Services shall monitor how grant money is used and make sure projects follow the requirements of this act.

SECTION 6.

(a) Participating housing projects shall submit a report every six months explaining:

(1) How much money was received and spent.

(2) How many families were helped.

(3) Which childcare and family services families were referred to.

(4) Any problems families face, such as waitlists or lack of available childcare.

(b) The Department of Social Services shall submit an annual report to the Legislature summarizing the program's spending, services, and results.

(c) Reports shall protect the private information of participating families.

SECTION 7.

The sum of five million dollars ($5,000,000) is appropriated from the General Fund to the Department of Social Services to operate this program.

Funding may be used for grants, staff, outreach, community partnerships, and program oversight.

SECTION 8.

The Department of Social Services may create guidelines for applications, grant selection, spending, and reporting to carry out this act.

SECTION 9.

This program shall add to existing childcare services and shall not replace current programs, reduce their funding, or change their eligibility requirements.

SECTION 10.

The Department of Social Services shall review whether the program helps families find childcare and connect with available services. The department shall also identify problems, such as childcare shortages and waitlists, and include its findings in the annual report.