

CHAPTER 419

AN ACT creating the Apprentice Assistance and Support Services Pilot Program, amending P.L.1992, c.43, and supplementing Title 34 of the Revised Statutes.

BE IT ENACTED by the Senate and General Assembly of the State of New Jersey:

C.34:15D-6.2 Apprentice Assistance and Support Services Pilot Program.

1. a. There is established in the Department of Labor and Workforce Development a five-year Apprentice Assistance and Support Services Pilot Program. The purpose of the program shall be to address two significant barriers to individuals participating in apprenticeships, lack of affordable and reliable transportation and lack of affordable, high-quality childcare, by providing stipends to eligible individuals participating in apprenticeships. To be eligible for the program, an individual is required to participate in an apprenticeship program accredited and approved by the United States Department of Labor.

b. The assistance provided by the pilot program shall consist of two components:

(1) Transportation assistance: If an individual travels five miles or more to a job site for work or to a classroom for apprenticeship training, the individual is eligible to receive mileage reimbursement at 50 percent of the current federal rate, or reimbursement of documented expenditures on public transportation, up to \$500 per individual per year.

(2) Child Care Stipend: An individual who, after the effective date of this act, enters into a qualified apprenticeship in accordance with subsection a. of this section shall be eligible for a child care stipend funded by the Apprentice Assistance and Support Services Pilot Program and provided through the Department of Labor and Workforce Development if the individual's income and assets exceed the maximum allowable income and asset criteria under the Child Care Subsidy Program administered by the Department of Human Services. Nothing in P.L.2019, c.419 (C.34:15D-6.2 et al.) shall preclude an individual who receives a child care subsidy from the Department of Human Services from receiving a child care stipend under P.L.2019, c.419 (C.34:15D-6.2 et al.) if the subsidy received from the Department of Human Services is insufficient to cover the actual cost of child care incurred by the individual. Individuals receiving a child care stipend shall utilize a licensed child care provider, registered family care provider, or a home or summer camp that is approved by the State. The stipend provided shall be as follows, but in no event, shall exceed \$10,000 per individual per year:

(a) up to \$10,000 for child care paid during the first year following the individual's date of apprentice registration and dispatch;

(b) up to \$7,500 for child care paid during the second year following the individual's date of apprentice registration and dispatch; and

(c) up to \$5,000 for child care paid during the third year following the individual's date of apprentice registration and dispatch.

c. To receive transportation assistance in accordance with paragraph (1) of subsection b. of this section, an individual shall apply to the Department of Labor and Workforce Development for reimbursement for travel expenses related to the individual's apprenticeship. As part of the individual's application, the individual is required to provide documentation that the apprenticeship in which the individual is participating is accredited and approved by the United States Department of Labor.

d. To receive a child care stipend in accordance with paragraph (2) of subsection b. of this section, an individual shall apply to the Department of Labor and Workforce Development for child care costs incurred as a result of the individual's commitment to the apprenticeship. As part of the individual's application, the individual is required to provide

documentation that the apprenticeship in which the individual is participating is accredited and approved by the United States Department of Labor. An individual shall also provide documentation of the costs of child care, which shall include documentation that the child care is utilized during the days and times in which the individual is participating in the apprenticeship. The funding shall be allocated by the Department of Labor and Workforce Development in accordance with section 9 of P.L.1992, c.43 (C.34:15D-9).

e. In determinations of which eligible apprentices are to receive assistance under the Apprentice Assistance and Support Services Pilot Program, the Department of Labor and Workforce Development shall give first priority to apprentices who:

- (1) belong to a group that, based on their race, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, disability, or age, is underrepresented in the career field of the apprenticeship;
- (2) were eligible to receive benefits under the Work First New Jersey program or the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program within twelve months preceding the beginning of the apprenticeship but no longer qualify to receive those benefits ;
- (3) are displaced workers;
- (4) were previously incarcerated ; or
- (5) are veterans.

f. No later than January 1, 2023, the Commissioner of Labor and Workforce Development shall submit to the Governor, and to the Legislature, pursuant to section 2 of P.L.1991, c.164 (C.52:14-19.1), a report that evaluates the results of the pilot program and its effectiveness in assisting program participants in entering the workforce or in obtaining better employment. The report shall include a recommendation regarding whether to renew the Apprentice Assistance and Support Services Pilot Program, and if renewal is recommended, if the program should be expanded or otherwise enhanced.

2. Section 9 of P.L.1992, c.43 (C.34:15D-9) is amended to read as follows:

C.34:15D-9 Workforce Development Partnership Fund.

9. a. A restricted, nonlapsing, revolving Workforce Development Partnership Fund, to be managed and invested by the State Treasurer, is hereby established to: provide employment and training services to qualified displaced, disadvantaged and employed workers by means of training grants or customized training services; provide for the other costs indicated in subsection a. of section 4 of P.L.1992, c.43 (C.34:15D-4); provide for the New Jersey Innovation and Research Fellowship Program as provided for in section 3 of P.L.2015, c.235 (C.34:15D-26); provide for the Talent Network Program as provided for in section 2 of P.L.2019, c.125 (C.34:15D-29); and facilitate the provision of education and training to youth by means of grants provided by the Youth Transitions to Work Partnership pursuant to the provisions of P.L.1993, c.268 (C.34:15E-1 et al.). All appropriations to the fund, all interest accumulated on balances in the fund and all cash received for the fund from any other source shall be used solely for the purposes specifically delineated by this act.

b. During any fiscal year beginning after June 30, 2001, of the total revenues dedicated to the program during any one fiscal year: 25% shall be deposited in an account of the Workforce Development Partnership Fund reserved to provide employment and training services for qualified displaced workers, and through fiscal year 2023, not less than 10% of the revenues deposited in that account shall be reserved to provide employment and training services to qualified displaced workers in the pursuit of industry-valued credentials under the pilot program established pursuant to P.L.2019, c.252 (C.34:15D-30 et al.); and during any fiscal year beginning after June 30, 2019, 0.5% shall be deposited in an account of the

Workforce Development Partnership Fund reserved for an appropriated to the Department of Labor and Workforce Development for the Apprenticeship Start-Up Grant Program created pursuant to section 3 of P.L.2019, c.417 (C.34:15D-6.1); 6% shall be deposited in an account of the Workforce Development Partnership Fund reserved to provide employment and training services for qualified disadvantaged workers, and through fiscal year 2023, not less than 10% of the revenues deposited in that account shall be reserved to provide employment and training services to qualified disadvantaged workers in the pursuit of industry-valued credentials under the pilot program established pursuant to P.L.2019, c.252 (C.34:15D-30 et al.); 37% shall be deposited in an account of the Workforce Development Partnership Fund reserved for and appropriated to the Office of Customized Training; 5% shall be deposited in an account of the Workforce Development Partnership Fund reserved for the Youth Transitions to Work Partnership created pursuant to P.L.1993, c.268 (C.34:15E-1 et seq.); 3% shall be deposited in an account of the Workforce Development Partnership Fund reserved for occupational safety and health training; 5% shall be deposited in an account of the Workforce Development Partnership Fund reserved for and appropriated to the Talent Network Program established pursuant to section 2 of P.L.2019, c.125 (C.34:15D-29); 3% shall be deposited in an account of the Workforce Development Partnership Fund reserved for the New Jersey Innovation and Research Fellowship Program established pursuant to section 3 of P.L.2015, c.235 (C.34:15D-26); 10% shall be deposited in an account of the Workforce Development Partnership Fund reserved for administrative costs as defined in section 3 of P.L.1992, c.43 (C.34:15D-3); 0.5% shall be deposited in an account of the Workforce Development Partnership Fund reserved for the State Employment and Training Commission to design criteria and conduct an annual evaluation of the program; and 5% shall be deposited in an account of the Workforce Development Partnership Fund to be used, at the discretion of the commissioner, for any of the purposes indicated in subsection a. of section 4 of P.L.1992, c.43 (C.34:15D-4).

c. Beginning January 1, 1995, through June 30, 2002, the balance in the fund as of the previous December 31, as determined in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles, shall not exceed 1.5 times the amount of contributions deposited for the calendar year then ended. If the balance exceeds this amount, the excess shall be deposited into the unemployment compensation fund within seven business days of the date that the determination is made.

d. Beginning July 1, 2002, and for any subsequent fiscal year, if the unexpended cash balance in any of the accounts indicated in subsection b. of this section, except for the account reserved for the Talent Network Program, less any amount awarded in grants but not yet disbursed from the account, is determined to exceed 20% of the amount of contributions collected for deposit in the account pursuant to this subsection during the fiscal year then ended, the excess shall be regarded as an unemployment compensation contribution and deposited into the unemployment compensation fund within seven business days of the date that the determination is made. If the unexpended cash balance in the account reserved for the Talent Network Program, less any amount awarded in grants but not yet disbursed from the account, is determined to exceed 20% of the amount of contributions collected for deposit in the account pursuant to this subsection during the fiscal year then ended, the excess shall be deposited into the Workforce Development Partnership Fund account reserved for the Office of Customized Training.

e. \$250,000 shall be allocated to the Apprentice Assistance and Support Services Pilot Program established pursuant to section 1 of P.L.2019, c.419 (C.34:15D-6.2) from the \$29,690,000 which was appropriated pursuant to the annual appropriations act for State fiscal

year 2019 from the Workforce Development Partnership Fund for the purpose of funding Work First New Jersey Work Activities and Work First New Jersey-Training Related Expenses, and, \$1,100,000 shall be allocated to the pilot program in each of fiscal years 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, and 2024 from the amounts appropriated pursuant to the annual appropriations act in those fiscal years from the Workforce Development Partnership Fund for the purpose of funding Work First New Jersey Work Activities and Work First New Jersey-Training Related Expenses. Of the funds allocated to the pilot program pursuant to this subsection, 90% shall be dedicated to the Child Care Stipend program and 10% to transportation reimbursement.

3. This act shall take effect immediately, and shall expire on July 1, 2025.

Approved January 21, 2020.