

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
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S.B. 770
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Natural Resources & Economic Development
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AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Currently, the self-sufficiency fund grant program limits training to individuals who are recipients of financial assistance under Chapter 31, Human Resources Code. Requirements under this code have proven restrictive in providing training to individuals who meet unemployment and low wage requirements but are not direct recipients of assistance under this code. Removal of this reference would allow the program to expand its reach, resulting in a higher-skilled and job-ready population, averting the need for public assistance.

S.B. 770 updates Labor Code, Chapter 309, to remove references contained in the statute that limit the reach of the program that could benefit individuals at risk of becoming dependent upon public assistance, in alignment with federal guidance.

As proposed, S.B. 770 amends current law relating to eligibility for job-training programs provided under the self-sufficiency fund.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

Rulemaking authority previously granted to the Texas Workforce Commission is modified in SECTION 3 (Section 309.004, Labor Code) of this bill.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Section 309.002(a), Labor Code, as follows:

(a) Provides that, subject to the availability of funds, the self-sufficiency fund is created as an account in the general revenue fund for use by public community and technical colleges, community-based organizations, and state extension agencies to develop job-training programs in which individuals who are identified by the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) as being low-income or at risk of becoming dependent on public assistance benefits are provided job training by certain entities. Deletes existing text providing that the self-sufficiency fund is created to develop customized job training programs for certain recipients of financial assistance under Chapter 31 (Financial Assistance and Service Programs), Human Resources Code. Makes a nonsubstantive change.

SECTION 2. Amends Section 309.003(b), Labor Code, as follows:

(b) Requires an entity that receives money from the fund for a job-training program to work in conjunction with employers to place participants who successfully complete the program in positions of employment in which the participants will earn wages sufficient to enable the participants to become independent of or avoid becoming dependent on benefits under the financial assistance program established under Chapter 31, Human Resources Code, and if applicable, benefits provided under the supplemental nutrition assistance program established under Chapter 33 (Nutritional Assistance Programs), Human Resources Code. Deletes existing text referring to graduates of the program and to assistance provided under the food stamp program administered by the Texas Department of Human Services. Makes nonsubstantive changes.

SECTION 3. Amends Section 309.004, Labor Code, as follows:

Sec. 309.004. RULEMAKING AUTHORITY. Requires TWC to adopt rules to implement Chapter 309 (Self-Sufficiency Fund), including rules to:

(1) identify individuals who are low-income or at risk of becoming dependent on public assistance benefits; and

(2) determine which individuals identified under Subdivision (1), rather than which recipients of financial assistance under Chapter 31, Human Resources Code, are eligible to participate in job-training programs developed with money from the fund.

Makes nonsubstantive changes.

SECTION 4. Requires a state agency, if necessary for implementation of a provision of this Act, to request a waiver or authorization from a federal agency, and authorizes delay of implementation until such a waiver or authorization is granted.

SECTION 5. Effective date: September 1, 2021.