



# House of Representatives

General Assembly

**File No. 467**

January Session, 2025

House Bill No. 7103

*House of Representatives, April 2, 2025*

The Committee on Human Services reported through REP. GILCHREST of the 18th Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the House, that the bill ought to pass.

## **AN ACT CONCERNING THE KATIE BECKETT WORKING GROUP RECOMMENDATIONS.**

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. Section 17b-283 of the general statutes is repealed and the  
2 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2025*):

3 The Commissioner of Social Services shall, within available  
4 appropriations, administer a Medicaid waiver program pursuant to  
5 Section 1915(c) of the Social Security Act to provide home and  
6 community-based services for persons who are institutionalized or at  
7 risk of institutionalization and who (1) are [twenty-one] eighteen years  
8 of age or younger; (2) have a physical disability and may also have a co-  
9 occurring developmental disability; and (3) meet the financial eligibility  
10 criteria established in the waiver.

11 Sec. 2. (NEW) (*Effective from passage*) For purposes of this section and  
12 sections 3 and 4 of this act, the "Katie Beckett Waiver Program" means  
13 the Medicaid waiver program established pursuant to section 17b-283

14 of the general statutes, as amended by this act. Not later than September  
15 1, 2025, the Commissioner of Social Services shall establish a Katie  
16 Beckett Waiver Program Internet web site that includes, but is not  
17 limited to:

18 (1) A portal that allows a person to (A) log in, (B) undergo an initial  
19 screening process to determine eligibility for the waiver program and  
20 receive information on whether the waiver program is the most  
21 appropriate program to meet such person's needs, and (C) receive  
22 periodic updates as to such person's rank on a waiting list for the waiver  
23 program, estimated time for such person to receive services under the  
24 waiver program and whether such person remains eligible for the  
25 program;

26 (2) Information on eligibility criteria for the waiver program,  
27 including any income or asset thresholds;

28 (3) A summary of services available under the program;

29 (4) A listing with contact information for family support groups and  
30 advocacy groups for children and young adults with severe debilitating  
31 diseases or conditions;

32 (5) Assistance available to determine private insurance coverage for  
33 services for such children and young adults, including, but not limited  
34 to, a link to the Internet web site of the Office of the Healthcare  
35 Advocate;

36 (6) A listing of other Medicaid waiver programs or Medicaid state  
37 plan services which offer services for such children and young adults,  
38 including eligibility criteria for such programs; and

39 (7) A listing of private organizations and state programs that may  
40 offer funding for home modification or adaptive equipment for persons  
41 with disabilities, including a link to the Internet web site of the  
42 Department of Aging and Disability Services for information on  
43 adaptive equipment purchases pursuant to section 17a-788 of the  
44 general statutes or assistive technology loans pursuant to section 17a-

45 795 of the general statutes.

46 Sec. 3. (NEW) (*Effective from passage*) (a) The Department of Social  
47 Services shall create a brochure with information and eligibility criteria  
48 for the Katie Beckett Waiver Program. Not later than September 1, 2025,  
49 the department shall distribute the brochure to medical providers,  
50 including, but not limited to, children's hospitals, geneticists, nurses and  
51 social workers.

52 (b) The Department of Social Services, at least annually, shall provide  
53 information on the Katie Beckett Waiver Program, including eligibility  
54 criteria, in the department's bulletin to Medicaid-enrolled providers.

55 Sec. 4. (NEW) (*Effective from passage*) (a) The Commissioner of Social  
56 Services shall develop a five-year plan to eliminate the waiting list for  
57 the Katie Beckett Waiver Program and add home modification coverage  
58 for waiver participants with disabilities through the program.

59 (b) Not later than October 1, 2025, the commissioner shall file a report,  
60 in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes,  
61 on the plan with the joint standing committees of the General Assembly  
62 having cognizance of matters relating to appropriations and the budgets  
63 of state agencies and human services. The report shall include  
64 recommendations concerning state appropriations needed to  
65 implement the plan.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:

Section 1	<i>July 1, 2025</i>	17b-283
Sec. 2	<i>from passage</i>	New section
Sec. 3	<i>from passage</i>	New section
Sec. 4	<i>from passage</i>	New section

**HS** Joint Favorable

*The following Fiscal Impact Statement and Bill Analysis are prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose. In general, fiscal impacts are based upon a variety of informational sources, including the analyst's professional knowledge. Whenever applicable, agency data is consulted as part of the analysis, however final products do not necessarily reflect an assessment from any specific department.*

## **OFA Fiscal Note**

### **State Impact:**

<b>Agency Affected</b>	<b>Fund-Effect</b>	<b>FY 26 \$</b>	<b>FY 27 \$</b>
Social Services, Dept.	GF - Cost	at least \$300,000	at least \$100,000
State Comptroller - Fringe Benefits <sup>1</sup>	GF - Cost	20,000	20,000
Resources of the General Fund	GF - Revenue Gain	125,000	25,000

Note: GF=General Fund

### **Municipal Impact:** None

### **Explanation**

The bill results in a cost to the Department of Social Services (DSS) of approximately \$300,000 in FY 26 and \$100,000 in FY 27 associated with developing a web portal as part of the Beckett Waiver Program Internet web site required by the bill, by 9/1/25.

Costs reflect anticipated technology expenses of \$250,000 in FY 26 and maintenance costs of approximately \$50,000 in FY 27 as well as staff costs of approximately \$50,000 each year (with associated fringe of \$20,000) to monitor and manage portal related requirements. The portal must enable individuals to participate in an initial screening process to determine eligibility for the waiver program, review information concerning the appropriateness of the waiver to meet the individual's needs, receive periodic updates about rank on a waiting list and estimated time to receive such services, and check eligibility status for

<sup>1</sup>The fringe benefit costs for most state employees are budgeted centrally in accounts administered by the Comptroller. The estimated active employee fringe benefit cost associated with most personnel changes is 40.71% of payroll in FY 26.

the program. The technology related costs are anticipated to be gross funded and eligible for federal reimbursement, resulting in a federal grants revenue gain of approximately \$125,000 in FY 26 and \$25,000 in FY 27.

The bill also changes the maximum age for individuals on the waiver from 21 to 18 years of age. As participants on the waiver are eligible for Medicaid services under HUSKY C after turning age 18, this creates a shift in program costs. To the extent the shift to HUSKY C creates an opening for individuals to be served on the waiver from the wait list earlier than they otherwise would have, DSS will incur related costs. For context, the average state cost per client is approximately \$25,500 annually.

### ***The Out Years***

The annualized ongoing fiscal impact identified above would continue into the future subject to utilization of services on the Katie Beckett waiver.

**OLR Bill Analysis****HB 7103*****AN ACT CONCERNING THE KATIE BECKETT WORKING GROUP RECOMMENDATIONS.*****SUMMARY**

This bill requires the Department of Social Services (DSS) to develop a five-year plan to eliminate the waiting list for the Katie Beckett Waiver Program and add home modification coverage as a service offered through the program. The Katie Beckett program is a Medicaid waiver that allows children with severe physical disabilities to be eligible for Medicaid home- and community-based care. According to DSS, 331 people are currently on the waitlist.

The bill lowers the maximum age for Katie Beckett participants from 21 to 18. (At age 18, people in this group become eligible for coverage under a different Medicaid program.)

The bill also establishes outreach and reporting requirements for the Katie Beckett program, including a website, a brochure, and a requirement that DSS provide information on the program, including eligibility criteria, at least annually to Medicaid-enrolled providers through the department's provider bulletin.

Lastly, the bill requires the DSS commissioner to report by October 1, 2025, to the Appropriations and Human Services committees on recommended state appropriations needed to implement the plan to eliminate the waitlist and add home modification coverage as a program service.

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** Upon passage, except the change to the maximum participant age is effective July 1, 2025.

**OUTREACH*****Website and Portal***

The bill requires the DSS commissioner to establish a Katie Beckett Waiver Program website by September 1, 2025, that includes a portal that allows a person to (1) login; (2) undergo an initial eligibility screening process to determine whether the waiver program is the most appropriate program to meet the person's needs; and (3) receive periodic updates on waitlist rank, estimated time to receive waiver services, and whether the person remains eligible for the program.

The bill requires the website to also include the following information:

1. eligibility criteria for the waiver program, including any income or asset limits;
2. a summary of services available under the program;
3. contact information for family support groups and advocacy groups for children and young adults with severe debilitating diseases or conditions;
4. help available to determine private insurance coverage for services for children and young adults with these conditions, including a link to the Office of the Healthcare Advocate's website;
5. a list of other Medicaid waiver programs or Medicaid state plan services for this population, including eligibility criteria for these programs; and
6. a list of private organizations and state programs that may offer funding for home modifications or adaptive equipment for people with disabilities, including a link to the Department of Aging and Disability Services's website for information on adaptive equipment purchases and assistive technology loans.

**Brochure**

The bill requires the DSS commissioner to create a brochure with information on and eligibility criteria for the Katie Beckett Waiver Program. Under the bill, she must distribute the brochure to medical providers by September 1, 2025, including children's hospitals, geneticists, nurses, and social workers.

**COMMITTEE ACTION**

Human Services Committee

Joint Favorable

Yea 22      Nay 0      (03/13/2025)