

30:5B-31.1 & 30:5B-31.2
LEGISLATIVE HISTORY CHECKLIST

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LAWS OF: 2025 **CHAPTER:** 148

NJSA: 30:5B-31.1 & 30:5B-31.2, Expands eligibility requirements of State's child care assistance program to include full-time graduate and post-graduate students.

BILL NO: A4544 (Substituted for S3429 (1R))

SPONSOR(S) Schnall, Alexander and others

DATE INTRODUCED: 6/13/2024

COMMITTEE: **ASSEMBLY:** Children, Families & Food Security
Appropriations

SENATE: Health, Human Services & Senior Citizens
Budget & Appropriations

AMENDED DURING PASSAGE: Yes

DATE OF PASSAGE: **ASSEMBLY:** 06/30/2025

SENATE: 06/02/2025

DATE OF APPROVAL: 10/1/2025

FOLLOWING ARE ATTACHED IF AVAILABLE:

FINAL TEXT OF BILL (A4544 Sca (1R) enacted)

ADVANCE LAW Yes

PAMPHLET LAW Yes

A4544

INTRODUCED BILL: (Includes sponsor(s) statement) Yes

REPRINT(S): Yes SHH 12/9/24 1R

TECHNICAL REVIEW OF BILL: No

COMMITTEE STATEMENT: **ASSEMBLY:** Yes Children, Families & Food Security
Appropriations

SENATE: Yes Health, Human Services & Senior Citizens
Budget & Appropriations

(Audio archived recordings of the committee meetings, corresponding to the date of the committee statement, *may possibly* be found at www.njleg.state.nj.us)

FLOOR AMENDMENT STATEMENT:	No	
LEGISLATIVE FISCAL ESTIMATE:	Yes	10/31/2024 12/19/2024

S3429 (1R)

INTRODUCED BILL: (Includes sponsor(s) statement)	Yes	
REPRINT(S):	Yes	SHH 12/9/24 1R
TECHNICAL REVIEW OF BILL:	No	
COMMITTEE STATEMENT:	ASSEMBLY:	No
	SENATE:	Yes Health, Human Services & Senior Citizens

(Audio archived recordings of the committee meetings, corresponding to the date of the committee statement, ***may possibly*** be found at www.njleg.state.nj.us)

FLOOR AMENDMENT STATEMENT:	No	
LEGISLATIVE FISCAL ESTIMATE:	Yes	12/19/2024
VETO MESSAGE:	No	
GOVERNOR'S PRESS RELEASE ON SIGNING:	Yes	
LEGISLATOR STATEMENT:	No	

FOLLOWING WERE PRINTED:

To check for circulating copies, contact New Jersey State Government Publications at the State Library (609) 278-2640 ext.103 or <mailto:refdesk@njstatelib.org>

REPORTS:	No
HEARINGS:	No
NEWSPAPER ARTICLES:	No

CL/MMcB

P.L. 2025, CHAPTER 148, *approved October 1, 2025*
Assembly, No. 4544 (*First Reprint*)

1 AN ACT concerning the State's child care assistance program and
2 supplementing chapter 5B of Title 30 of the Revised Statutes.

3
4 **BE IT ENACTED** by the Senate and General Assembly of the State
5 of New Jersey:

6
7 1. a. Notwithstanding any law, rule, or regulation to the
8 contrary, ¹, and subject to the availability of funds appropriated in the
9 annual appropriations act for the purposes on this section.¹ the
10 Division of Family Development in the Department of Human
11 Services shall expand the work, school, and training eligibility
12 requirements of the State's child care assistance program to include
13 that an applicant who is a full-time graduate ¹**[and]** student or a full-
14 time¹ post-graduate student shall be eligible to participate in the
15 program, provided that the applicant meets all other eligible criteria
16 regarding income, assets, and residency.

17 b. As used in this section:

18 "Full-time graduate ¹**[and post-graduate]**¹ student" means an
19 individual ¹**[that]** who¹ has been accepted to pursue a course of
20 graduate ¹**[or post-graduate]**¹ study at a public or private institution
21 of higher education and ¹**[are]** is¹ enrolled as ¹a¹ graduate ¹**[or**
22 **post-graduate students]** student¹ in good standing at that institution.

23 ¹"Full-time post-graduate student" means an individual who has
24 been accepted to pursue a course of post-graduate study at a public
25 or private institution of higher education and is enrolled as a post-
26 graduate student in good standing at that institution.¹

27

28 2. The Department of Human Services shall apply for such State
29 plan amendments or waivers as may be necessary to secure federal
30 financial participation for State expenditures under the Child Care
31 and Development Block Grant.

32

33 3. The Department of Human Services shall promulgate rules
34 and regulations, pursuant to the "Administrative Procedure Act,"
35 P.L.1968, c.410 (C.52:14B-1 et seq.) as may be necessary to
36 effectuate the purposes of this act.

EXPLANATION – Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets **[thus]** in the above bill is
not enacted and is intended to be omitted in the law.

Matter underlined thus is new matter.

Matter enclosed in superscript numerals has been adopted as follows:

¹Senate SHH committee amendments adopted December 9, 2024.

1 4. This act shall take effect immediately.

2

3

4

5

6 Expands eligibility requirements of State’s child care assistance
7 program to include full-time graduate and post-graduate students.

CHAPTER 148

AN ACT concerning the State's child care assistance program and supplementing chapter 5B of Title 30 of the Revised Statutes.

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

C.30:5B-31.1 Child care assistance program, work, school, training eligibility requirements expanded, definitions.

1. a. Notwithstanding any law, rule, or regulation to the contrary, and subject to the availability of funds appropriated in the annual appropriations act for the purposes on this section, the Division of Family Development in the Department of Human Services shall expand the work, school, and training eligibility requirements of the State's child care assistance program to include that an applicant who is a full-time graduate student or a full-time post-graduate student shall be eligible to participate in the program, provided that the applicant meets all other eligible criteria regarding income, assets, and residency.

b. As used in this section:

"Full-time graduate student" means an individual who has been accepted to pursue a course of graduate study at a public or private institution of higher education and is enrolled as a graduate student in good standing at that institution.

"Full-time post-graduate student" means an individual who has been accepted to pursue a course of post-graduate study at a public or private institution of higher education and is enrolled as a post-graduate student in good standing at that institution.

C.30:5B-31.2 State plan amendments, waivers application.

2. The Department of Human Services shall apply for such State plan amendments or waivers as may be necessary to secure federal financial participation for State expenditures under the Child Care and Development Block Grant.

3. The Department of Human Services shall promulgate rules and regulations, pursuant to the "Administrative Procedure Act," P.L.1968, c.410 (C.52:14B-1 et seq.) as may be necessary to effectuate the purposes of this act.

4. This act shall take effect immediately.

Approved October 1, 2025.

ASSEMBLY, No. 4544

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

221st LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED JUNE 13, 2024

Sponsored by:

Assemblyman ALEXANDER "AVI" SCHNALL

District 30 (Monmouth and Ocean)

Assemblywoman VERLINA REYNOLDS-JACKSON

District 15 (Hunterdon and Mercer)

Assemblywoman ELIANA PINTOR MARIN

District 29 (Essex and Hudson)

Co-Sponsored by:

**Assemblymen Karabinchak, Moen, Assemblywoman Speight,
Assemblymen Sampson, Rodriguez, Assemblywomen Lampitt, Peterpaul
and Donlon**

SYNOPSIS

Expands eligibility requirements of State's child care assistance program to include full-time graduate and post-graduate students.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 10/28/2024)

1 AN ACT concerning the State's child care assistance program and
2 supplementing chapter 5B of Title 30 of the Revised Statutes.

3
4 BE IT ENACTED by the Senate and General Assembly of the State
5 of New Jersey:

6
7 1. a. Notwithstanding any law, rule, or regulation to the
8 contrary, the Division of Family Development in the Department of
9 Human Services shall expand the work, school, and training
10 eligibility requirements of the State's child care assistance program
11 to include that an applicant who is a full-time graduate and post-
12 graduate student shall be eligible to participate in the program,
13 provided that the applicant meets all other eligible criteria regarding
14 income, assets, and residency.

15 b. As used in this section:

16 "Full-time graduate and post-graduate student" means an
17 individual that has been accepted to pursue a course of graduate or
18 post-graduate study at a public or private institution of higher
19 education and are enrolled as graduate or post-graduate students in
20 good standing at that institution.

21
22 2. The Department of Human Services shall apply for such State
23 plan amendments or waivers as may be necessary to secure federal
24 financial participation for State expenditures under the Child Care
25 and Development Block Grant.

26
27 3. The Department of Human Services shall promulgate rules
28 and regulations, pursuant to the "Administrative Procedure Act,"
29 P.L.1968, c.410 (C.52:14B-1 et seq.) as may be necessary to
30 effectuate the purposes of this act.

31
32 4. This act shall take effect immediately.

33

34

35

STATEMENT

36

37 This bill requires the Division of Family Development (the
38 division) in the Department of Human Services to expand the work,
39 school, and training eligibility requirements of the State's child care
40 assistance program to include that an applicant who is a full-time
41 graduate and post-graduate student is eligible to participate in the
42 program, if the applicant meets all other eligible criteria regarding
43 income, assets, and residency.

44 As used in the bill, "full-time graduate and post-graduate
45 student" means an individual that has been accepted to pursue a
46 course of graduate or post-graduate study at a public or private
47 institution of higher education and are enrolled full-time as graduate
48 or post-graduate students in good standing at that institution.

1 The bill also requires the Department of Human Services to
2 apply for State plan amendments or waivers necessary to secure
3 federal financial participation for State expenditures under the Child
4 Care and Development Block Grant.

5 Currently, the eligibility requirements of the State's child care
6 assistance program include full-time students, enrolled at a college
7 or university as part of a two-year associate's or four-year
8 baccalaureate degree program, with the goal to achieve a degree or
9 credentials to gain employment, who qualify for financial assistance
10 under the program.

11 This bill requires the division to expand the eligibility
12 requirements of the State's child care assistance program to also
13 include full-time graduate and post-graduate students who are
14 enrolled and are in good standing at public or private institutions of
15 higher education and qualify for financial assistance under the
16 program.

[First Reprint]

ASSEMBLY, No. 4544

STATE OF NEW JERSEY
221st LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED JUNE 13, 2024

Sponsored by:

Assemblyman ALEXANDER "AVI" SCHNALL

District 30 (Monmouth and Ocean)

Assemblywoman VERLINA REYNOLDS-JACKSON

District 15 (Hunterdon and Mercer)

Assemblywoman ELIANA PINTOR MARIN

District 29 (Essex and Hudson)

Senator M. TERESA RUIZ

District 29 (Essex and Hudson)

Senator RAJ MUKHERJI

District 32 (Hudson)

Co-Sponsored by:

**Assemblymen Karabinchak, Moen, Assemblywoman Speight,
Assemblymen Sampson, Rodriguez, Assemblywomen Lampitt, Peterpaul,
Donlon, Senators Singer, Turner, McKnight, Vitale, Wimberly, Burgess,
Assemblywoman Ramirez, Assemblyman Freiman, Assemblywomen
Drulis, Lopez, Swain and Assemblyman Tully**

SYNOPSIS

Expands eligibility requirements of State's child care assistance program to include full-time graduate and post-graduate students.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As reported by the Senate Health, Human Services and Senior Citizens Committee on December 9, 2024, with amendments.

(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 6/30/2025)

1 AN ACT concerning the State's child care assistance program and
2 supplementing chapter 5B of Title 30 of the Revised Statutes.

3

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

6

7 1. a. Notwithstanding any law, rule, or regulation to the
8 contrary, ¹, and subject to the availability of funds appropriated in the
9 annual appropriations act for the purposes on this section,¹ the
10 Division of Family Development in the Department of Human
11 Services shall expand the work, school, and training eligibility
12 requirements of the State's child care assistance program to include
13 that an applicant who is a full-time graduate ¹**[and]** student or a full-
14 time¹ post-graduate student shall be eligible to participate in the
15 program, provided that the applicant meets all other eligible criteria
16 regarding income, assets, and residency.

17 b. As used in this section:

18 "Full-time graduate ¹**[and post-graduate]**¹ student" means an
19 individual ¹**[that]** who¹ has been accepted to pursue a course of
20 graduate ¹**[or post-graduate]**¹ study at a public or private institution
21 of higher education and ¹**[are]** is¹ enrolled as ¹a¹ graduate ¹**[or**
22 **post-graduate students]** student¹ in good standing at that institution.

23 ¹"Full-time post-graduate student" means an individual who has
24 been accepted to pursue a course of post-graduate study at a public
25 or private institution of higher education and is enrolled as a post-
26 graduate student in good standing at that institution.¹

27

28 2. The Department of Human Services shall apply for such State
29 plan amendments or waivers as may be necessary to secure federal
30 financial participation for State expenditures under the Child Care
31 and Development Block Grant.

32

33 3. The Department of Human Services shall promulgate rules
34 and regulations, pursuant to the "Administrative Procedure Act,"
35 P.L.1968, c.410 (C.52:14B-1 et seq.) as may be necessary to
36 effectuate the purposes of this act.

37

38 4. This act shall take effect immediately.

EXPLANATION – Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets **[thus]** in the above bill is not enacted and is intended to be omitted in the law.

Matter underlined thus is new matter.

Matter enclosed in superscript numerals has been adopted as follows:

¹Senate SHH committee amendments adopted December 9, 2024.

ASSEMBLY CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND FOOD SECURITY
COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

ASSEMBLY, No. 4544

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: SEPTEMBER 23, 2024

The Assembly Children, Families and Food Security Committee reports favorably Assembly Bill No. 4544.

This bill requires the Division of Family Development (the division) in the Department of Human Services to expand the work, school, and training eligibility requirements of the State's child care assistance program to include that an applicant who is a full-time graduate and post-graduate student is eligible to participate in the program, if the applicant meets all other eligible criteria regarding income, assets, and residency.

As used in the bill, "full-time graduate and post-graduate student" means an individual that has been accepted to pursue a course of graduate or post-graduate study at a public or private institution of higher education and are enrolled full-time as graduate or post-graduate students in good standing at that institution.

The bill also requires the Department of Human Services to apply for State plan amendments or waivers necessary to secure federal financial participation for State expenditures under the Child Care and Development Block Grant.

Currently, the eligibility requirements of the State's child care assistance program include full-time students, enrolled at a college or university as part of a two-year associate's or four-year baccalaureate degree program, with the goal to achieve a degree or credentials to gain employment, who qualify for financial assistance under the program.

This bill requires the division to expand the eligibility requirements of the State's child care assistance program to also include full-time graduate and post-graduate students who are enrolled and are in good standing at public or private institutions of higher education and qualify for financial assistance under the program.

ASSEMBLY APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

ASSEMBLY, No. 4544

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: OCTOBER 24, 2024

The Assembly Appropriations Committee reports favorably Assembly Bill No. 4544.

This bill requires the Division of Family Development (division) in the Department of Human Services to expand the work, school, and training eligibility requirements of the State's child care assistance program to provide that an applicant who is a full-time graduate and post-graduate student would be eligible to participate in the program, if the applicant meets all other eligible criteria regarding income, assets, and residency.

As used in the bill, "full-time graduate and post-graduate student" means an individual that has been accepted to pursue a course of graduate or post-graduate study at a public or private institution of higher education and are enrolled full-time as graduate or post-graduate students in good standing at that institution.

The bill also requires the Department of Human Services to apply for State plan amendments or waivers necessary to secure federal financial participation for State expenditures under the Child Care and Development Block Grant.

Currently, the eligibility requirements of the State's child care assistance program include full-time students, enrolled at a college or university as part of a two-year associate's or four-year baccalaureate degree program, with the goal to achieve a degree or credentials to gain employment, who qualify for financial assistance under the program.

This bill requires the division to expand the eligibility requirements of the State's child care assistance program to also include full-time graduate and post-graduate students who are enrolled and are in good standing at public or private institutions of higher education and qualify for financial assistance under the program.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The Office of Legislative Services (OLS) concludes that the bill's provisions would result in an indeterminate increase in State expenditures due to growth in the number of families who would qualify for benefits under the child care assistance program. In FY 2025, the estimated average annual cost per child under the program is approximately \$11,576.

SENATE HEALTH, HUMAN SERVICES AND SENIOR CITIZENS COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO **ASSEMBLY, No. 4544**

with committee amendments

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: DECEMBER 9, 2024

The Senate Health, Human Services and Senior Citizens Committee reports favorably and with committee amendments Assembly Bill No. 4544.

This bill requires the Division of Family Development (division) in the Department of Human Services, subject to the availability of funds appropriated in the annual appropriations act for the purposes on the bill, to expand the work, school, and training eligibility requirements of the State's child care assistance program to provide that an applicant who is a full-time graduate student or a full-time post-graduate student would be eligible to participate in the program, if the applicant meets all other eligible criteria regarding income, assets, and residency.

Under the bill's definitions, a student who has been accepted to pursue a course of graduate or post-graduate study at a public or private institution of higher education and is enrolled full-time as a graduate or post-graduate student in good standing at that institution would be considered to meet the program's work, school, and training eligibility requirements.

The bill also requires the Department of Human Services to apply for State plan amendments or waivers necessary to secure federal financial participation for State expenditures under the Child Care and Development Block Grant.

As amended and reported by the committee, Assembly Bill No. 4544 is identical to Senate Bill No. 3429, which was also amended and reported by the committee on this date.

COMMITTEE AMENDMENTS:

The committee amendments provide that the provisions of the bill are subject to the availability of funds appropriated in the annual appropriations act for the purposes on the bill.

The committee amendments clarify that the bill is expanding eligibility under the child care subsidy program to include an applicant who is otherwise eligible for the program and who is a full-time

graduate student or a full-time post-graduate students, rather than a full-time graduate student and a full-time post-graduate student.

The committee amendments provide separate definitions for the terms “full-time graduate student” and “full-time post-graduate student,” rather than a single definition as provided in the introduced bill. The definitions of these separated terms are substantially identical to the definition provided in the introduced bill.

The committee amendments make technical changes regarding grammar and style.

SENATE BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

[First Reprint]

ASSEMBLY, No. 4544

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: MARCH 17, 2025

The Senate Budget and Appropriations Committee reports favorably Assembly Bill No. 4544 (1R).

As reported, this bill requires the Division of Family Development (division) in the Department of Human Services, subject to the availability of funds appropriated in the annual appropriations act for the purposes of the bill, to expand the work, school, and training eligibility requirements of the State's child care assistance program to provide that an applicant who is a full-time graduate student or a full-time post-graduate student would be eligible to participate in the program, if the applicant meets all other eligible criteria regarding income, assets, and residency.

Under the bill's definitions, a student who has been accepted to pursue a course of graduate or post-graduate study at a public or private institution of higher education and is enrolled full-time as a graduate or post-graduate student in good standing at that institution would be considered to meet the program's work, school, and training eligibility requirements.

The bill also requires the Department of Human Services to apply for State plan amendments or waivers necessary to secure federal financial participation for State expenditures under the Child Care and Development Block Grant.

As reported by the committee, Assembly Bill No. 4544 (1R) is identical to Senate Bill No. 3429 (1R), which was also reported by the committee on this date.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The Office of Legislative Services concludes that the bill's provisions would result in an indeterminate increase to State expenditures due to growth in the number of families who would qualify for benefits under the child care assistance program. In FY 2025, the estimated average annual cost per child under the program is approximately \$11,576.

LEGISLATIVE FISCAL ESTIMATE

ASSEMBLY, No. 4544

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

221st LEGISLATURE

DATED: OCTOBER 31, 2024

SUMMARY

Synopsis: Expands eligibility requirements of State's child care assistance program to include full-time graduate and post-graduate students.

Type of Impact: Annual State expenditure increase.

Agencies Affected: Department of Human Services.

Office of Legislative Services Estimate

Fiscal Impact	<u>Annual</u>
State Expenditure Increase	Indeterminate

- The Office of Legislative Services (OLS) concludes that the bill’s provisions would result in an indeterminate increase to State expenditures due to growth in the number of families who would qualify for benefits under the child care assistance program. In FY 2025, the estimated average annual cost per child under the program is approximately \$11,576.

BILL DESCRIPTION

This bill requires the Division of Family Development in the Department of Human Services to expand the work, school, and training eligibility requirements of the State’s child care assistance program to include that an applicant who is a full-time graduate and post-graduate student is eligible to participate in the program, if the applicant meets all other eligible criteria regarding income, assets, and residency.

Currently, the eligibility requirements of the child care assistance program include full-time students, enrolled at a college or university as part of a two-year associate’s or four-year baccalaureate degree program, with the goal to achieve a degree or credentials to gain employment, who qualify for financial assistance under the program.

FISCAL ANALYSIS

EXECUTIVE BRANCH

None received.

OFFICE OF LEGISLATIVE SERVICES

The OLS concludes that the bill’s provisions would result in an indeterminate increase in State expenditures due to growth in the number of families who would qualify for benefits under the child care assistance program. The child care assistance program is administered by the Division of Family Development in the Department Human Services and provides low-and moderate-income parents who are working, attending undergraduate schooling, or participating in a training program with subsidies for child care, including preschool instruction, after-school programs for children up to age 13, and care for children and teens with special needs. This bill would allow parents who are full-time graduate or post-graduate students to be eligible for subsidies under the program. In FY 2025, the estimated average annual cost per child under the program is approximately \$11,576.

The OLS estimates that there are 12,827 full-time graduate and post-graduate students who are raising children in the State. Of these students, it is unknown how many would be otherwise eligible for child care assistance benefits and would also be in need of child care. Of the existing eligibility factors, the OLS assumes that income would be the most significant determinate of a full-time graduate or post-graduate student’s participation in the program. Currently, at initial eligibility, a family of four can earn no more than \$62,400 a year to be eligible for the child care assistance program. Moreover, it is not known the number of children in need of child care per eligible graduate or post-graduate student.

For reference, assuming 13 percent of all full-time graduate and post-graduate students in the State with children, or 1,667, would be otherwise eligible for the child care assistance program, would elect to apply for benefits, and had, on average, 1.5 children with child care needs, the cost under the bill would be approximately \$29 million. As the child care assistance program receives federal support in the form of block grants, this estimate assumes that the increase in costs under the bill would be incurred solely by the State.

Section: Human Services
Analyst: Sara Schmidt
Lead Research Analyst
Approved: Thomas Koenig
Legislative Budget and Finance Officer

This legislative fiscal estimate has been produced by the Office of Legislative Services due to the failure of the Executive Branch to respond to our request for a fiscal note.

This fiscal estimate has been prepared pursuant to P.L.1980, c.67 (C.52:13B-6 et seq.).

LEGISLATIVE FISCAL ESTIMATE

[First Reprint]

ASSEMBLY, No. 4544

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

221st LEGISLATURE

DATED: DECEMBER 19, 2024

SUMMARY

Synopsis: Expands eligibility requirements of State's child care assistance program to include full-time graduate and post-graduate students.

Type of Impact: Annual State expenditure increase.

Agencies Affected: Department of Human Services.

Office of Legislative Services Estimate

Fiscal Impact	<u>Annual</u>
State Expenditure Increase	Indeterminate

- The Office of Legislative Services (OLS) concludes that the bill’s provisions would result in an indeterminate increase to State expenditures due to growth in the number of families who would qualify for benefits under the child care assistance program. In FY 2025, the estimated average annual cost per child under the program is approximately \$11,576.

BILL DESCRIPTION

This bill requires the Division of Family Development in the Department of Human Services, subject to the availability of funds appropriated in the annual appropriations act for the purposes of the bill, to expand the work, school, and training eligibility requirements of the State’s child care assistance program to include that an applicant who is a full-time graduate student or a full-time post-graduate student is eligible to participate in the program, if the applicant meets all other eligible criteria regarding income, assets, and residency.

Currently, the eligibility requirements of the child care assistance program include full-time students, enrolled at a college or university as part of a two-year associate’s or four-year baccalaureate degree program, with the goal to achieve a degree or credentials to gain employment, who qualify for financial assistance under the program.

FISCAL ANALYSIS

EXECUTIVE BRANCH

None received.

OFFICE OF LEGISLATIVE SERVICES

The OLS concludes that the bill's provisions would result in an indeterminate increase in State expenditures due to growth in the number of families who would qualify for benefits under the child care assistance program. The child care assistance program is administered by the Division of Family Development in the Department Human Services and provides low-and moderate-income parents who are working, attending undergraduate schooling, or participating in a training program with subsidies for child care, including preschool instruction, after-school programs for children up to age 13, and care for children and teens with special needs. Subject to the necessary appropriations included in the annual appropriations act, which this estimate assumes will occur, this bill would allow parents who are full-time graduate or post-graduate students to be eligible for subsidies under the program. In FY 2025, the estimated average annual cost per child under the program is approximately \$11,576.

The OLS estimates that there are 12,827 full-time graduate and post-graduate students who are raising children in the State. Of these students, it is unknown how many would be otherwise eligible for child care assistance benefits and would also be in need of child care. Of the existing eligibility factors, the OLS assumes that income would be the most significant determinate of a full-time graduate or post-graduate student's participation in the program. Currently, at initial eligibility, a family of four can earn no more than \$62,400 a year to be eligible for the child care assistance program. Moreover, it is not known the number of children in need of child care per eligible graduate or post-graduate student.

For reference, assuming 13 percent of all full-time graduate and post-graduate students in the State with children, or 1,667, would be otherwise eligible for the child care assistance program, would elect to apply for benefits, and had, on average, 1.5 children with child care needs, the cost under the bill would be approximately \$29 million. As the child care assistance program receives federal support in the form of block grants, this estimate assumes that the increase in costs under the bill would be incurred solely by the State.

Section: *Human Services*
Analyst: *Sarah Schmidt*
 Lead Research Analyst
Approved: *Thomas Koenig*
 Legislative Budget and Finance Officer

This legislative fiscal estimate has been produced by the Office of Legislative Services due to the failure of the Executive Branch to respond to our request for a fiscal note.

This fiscal estimate has been prepared pursuant to P.L.1980, c.67 (C.52:13B-6 et seq.).

SENATE, No. 3429

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

221st LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED JUNE 10, 2024

Sponsored by:

Senator M. TERESA RUIZ

District 29 (Essex and Hudson)

Senator RAJ MUKHERJI

District 32 (Hudson)

Co-Sponsored by:

Senators Singer and Turner

SYNOPSIS

Expands eligibility requirements of State's child care assistance program to include full-time graduate and post-graduate students.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 12/5/2024)

1 **AN ACT** concerning the State's child care assistance program and
2 supplementing chapter 5B of Title 30 of the Revised Statutes.

3
4 **BE IT ENACTED** *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State*
5 *of New Jersey:*

6
7 1. a. Notwithstanding any law, rule, or regulation to the
8 contrary, the Division of Family Development in the Department of
9 Human Services shall expand the work, school, and training
10 eligibility requirements of the State's child care assistance program
11 to include that an applicant who is a full-time graduate and post-
12 graduate student shall be eligible to participate in the program,
13 provided that the applicant meets all other eligible criteria regarding
14 income, assets, and residency.

15 b. As used in this section:

16 "Full-time graduate and post-graduate student" means an
17 individual that has been accepted to pursue a course of graduate or
18 post-graduate study at a public or private institution of higher
19 education and are enrolled as graduate or post-graduate students in
20 good standing at that institution.

21
22 2. The Department of Human Services shall apply for such State
23 plan amendments or waivers as may be necessary to secure federal
24 financial participation for State expenditures under the Child Care
25 and Development Block Grant.

26
27 3. The Department of Human Services shall promulgate rules
28 and regulations, pursuant to the "Administrative Procedure Act,"
29 P.L.1968, c.410 (C.52:14B-1 et seq.) as may be necessary to
30 effectuate the purposes of this act.

31
32 4. This act shall take effect immediately.

33

34

35

STATEMENT

36

37 This bill requires the Division of Family Development (the
38 division) in the Department of Human Services to expand the work,
39 school, and training eligibility requirements of the State's child care
40 assistance program to include that an applicant who is a full-time
41 graduate and post-graduate student is eligible to participate in the
42 program, if the applicant meets all other eligible criteria regarding
43 income, assets, and residency.

44 As used in the bill, "full-time graduate and post-graduate
45 student" means an individual that has been accepted to pursue a
46 course of graduate or post-graduate study at a public or private
47 institution of higher education and are enrolled full-time as graduate
48 or post-graduate students in good standing at that institution.

1 The bill also requires the Department of Human Services to
2 apply for State plan amendments or waivers necessary to secure
3 federal financial participation for State expenditures under the Child
4 Care and Development Block Grant.

5 Currently, the eligibility requirements of the State's child care
6 assistance program include full-time students, enrolled at a college
7 or university as part of a two-year associate's or four-year
8 baccalaureate degree program, with the goal to achieve a degree or
9 credentials to gain employment, who qualify for financial assistance
10 under the program.

11 This bill requires the division to expand the eligibility
12 requirements of the State's child care assistance program to also
13 include full-time graduate and post-graduate students who are
14 enrolled and are in good standing at public or private institutions of
15 higher education and qualify for financial assistance under the
16 program.

[First Reprint]

SENATE, No. 3429

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

221st LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED JUNE 10, 2024

Sponsored by:

Senator M. TERESA RUIZ

District 29 (Essex and Hudson)

Senator RAJ MUKHERJI

District 32 (Hudson)

Co-Sponsored by:

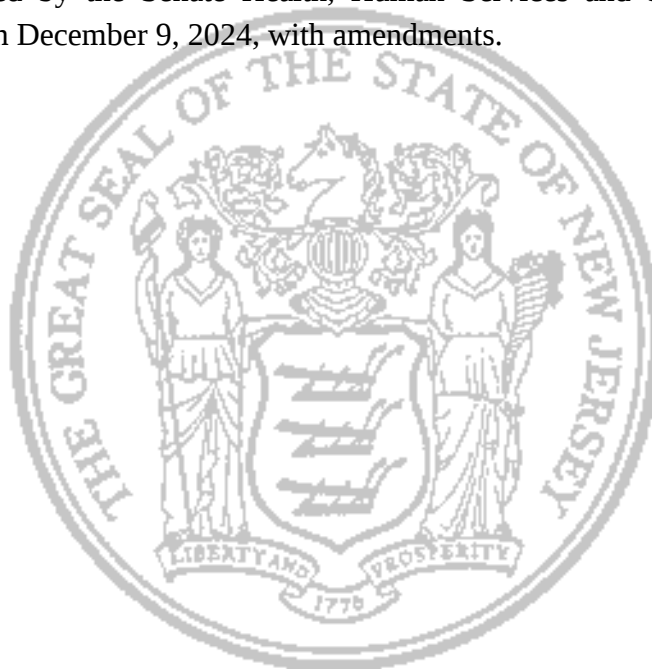
Senators Singer, Turner, McKnight, Vitale, Wimberly and Burgess

SYNOPSIS

Expands eligibility requirements of State's child care assistance program to include full-time graduate and post-graduate students.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As reported by the Senate Health, Human Services and Senior Citizens Committee on December 9, 2024, with amendments.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 3/17/2025)

1 AN ACT concerning the State's child care assistance program and
2 supplementing chapter 5B of Title 30 of the Revised Statutes.

3
4 **BE IT ENACTED** *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State*
5 *of New Jersey:*

6
7 1. a. Notwithstanding any law, rule, or regulation to the
8 contrary, ¹, and subject to the availability of funds appropriated in
9 the annual appropriation act for the purposes on this section,¹ the
10 Division of Family Development in the Department of Human
11 Services shall expand the work, school, and training eligibility
12 requirements of the State's child care assistance program to include
13 that an applicant who is a full-time graduate ¹**[and]** student or a
14 full-time¹ post-graduate student shall be eligible to participate in the
15 program, provided that the applicant meets all other eligible criteria
16 regarding income, assets, and residency.

17 b. As used in this section:

18 "Full-time graduate ¹**[and post-graduate]**¹ student" means an
19 individual ¹**[that]** who¹ has been accepted to pursue a course of
20 graduate ¹**[or post-graduate]**¹ study at a public or private institution
21 of higher education and ¹**[are]** is¹ enrolled as ¹a¹ graduate ¹**[or**
22 **post-graduate students]** student¹ in good standing at that institution.

23 ¹"Full-time post-graduate student" means an individual who has
24 been accepted to pursue a course of post-graduate study at a public
25 or private institution of higher education and is enrolled as a post-
26 graduate student in good standing at that institution.¹

27
28 2. The Department of Human Services shall apply for such State
29 plan amendments or waivers as may be necessary to secure federal
30 financial participation for State expenditures under the Child Care
31 and Development Block Grant.

32
33 3. The Department of Human Services shall promulgate rules
34 and regulations, pursuant to the "Administrative Procedure Act,"
35 P.L.1968, c.410 (C.52:14B-1 et seq.) as may be necessary to
36 effectuate the purposes of this act.

37
38 4. This act shall take effect immediately.

EXPLANATION – Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets **[thus]** in the above bill is
not enacted and is intended to be omitted in the law.

Matter underlined thus is new matter.

Matter enclosed in superscript numerals has been adopted as follows:

¹Senate SHH committee amendments adopted December 9, 2024.

SENATE HEALTH, HUMAN SERVICES AND SENIOR CITIZENS COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO **SENATE, No. 3429**

with committee amendments

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: DECEMBER 9, 2024

The Senate Health, Human Services and Senior Citizens Committee reports favorably and with committee amendments Senate Bill No. 3429.

This bill requires the Division of Family Development (division) in the Department of Human Services, subject to the availability of funds appropriated in the annual appropriations act for the purposes on the bill, to expand the work, school, and training eligibility requirements of the State's child care assistance program to provide that an applicant who is a full-time graduate student or a full-time post-graduate student would be eligible to participate in the program, if the applicant meets all other eligible criteria regarding income, assets, and residency.

Under the bill's definitions, a student who has been accepted to pursue a course of graduate or post-graduate study at a public or private institution of higher education and is enrolled full-time as a graduate or post-graduate student in good standing at that institution would be considered to meet the program's work, school, and training eligibility requirements.

The bill also requires the Department of Human Services to apply for State plan amendments or waivers necessary to secure federal financial participation for State expenditures under the Child Care and Development Block Grant.

As amended and reported by the committee, Senate Bill No. 3429 is identical to Assembly Bill No. 4544, which was also amended and reported by the committee on this date.

COMMITTEE AMENDMENTS:

The committee amendments provide that the provisions of the bill are subject to the availability of funds appropriated in the annual appropriations act for the purposes on the bill.

The committee amendments clarify that the bill is expanding eligibility under the child care subsidy program to include an applicant who is otherwise eligible for the program and who is a full-time

graduate student or a full-time post-graduate students, rather than a full-time graduate student and a full-time post-graduate student.

The committee amendments provide separate definitions for the terms “full-time graduate student” and “full-time post-graduate student,” rather than a single definition as provided in the introduced bill. The definitions of these separated terms are substantially identical to the definition provided in the introduced bill.

The committee amendments make technical changes regarding grammar and style.

LEGISLATIVE FISCAL ESTIMATE

[First Reprint]

SENATE, No. 3429

STATE OF NEW JERSEY
221st LEGISLATURE

DATED: DECEMBER 19, 2024

SUMMARY

- Synopsis:** Expands eligibility requirements of State's child care assistance program to include full-time graduate and post-graduate students.
- Type of Impact:** Annual State expenditure increase.
- Agencies Affected:** Department of Human Services.

Office of Legislative Services Estimate

Fiscal Impact	<u>Annual</u>
State Expenditure Increase	Indeterminate

- The Office of Legislative Services (OLS) concludes that the bill’s provisions would result in an indeterminate increase to State expenditures due to growth in the number of families who would qualify for benefits under the child care assistance program. In FY 2025, the estimated average annual cost per child under the program is approximately \$11,576.

BILL DESCRIPTION

This bill requires the Division of Family Development in the Department of Human Services, subject to the availability of funds appropriated in the annual appropriations act for the purposes of the bill, to expand the work, school, and training eligibility requirements of the State’s child care assistance program to include that an applicant who is a full-time graduate student or a full-time post-graduate student is eligible to participate in the program, if the applicant meets all other eligible criteria regarding income, assets, and residency.

Currently, the eligibility requirements of the child care assistance program include full-time students, enrolled at a college or university as part of a two-year associate’s or four-year baccalaureate degree program, with the goal to achieve a degree or credentials to gain employment, who qualify for financial assistance under the program.

FISCAL ANALYSIS

EXECUTIVE BRANCH

None received.

OFFICE OF LEGISLATIVE SERVICES

The OLS concludes that the bill's provisions would result in an indeterminate increase in State expenditures due to growth in the number of families who would qualify for benefits under the child care assistance program. The child care assistance program is administered by the Division of Family Development in the Department Human Services and provides low-and moderate-income parents who are working, attending undergraduate schooling, or participating in a training program with subsidies for child care, including preschool instruction, after-school programs for children up to age 13, and care for children and teens with special needs. Subject to the necessary appropriations included in the annual appropriations act, which this estimate assumes will occur, this bill would allow parents who are full-time graduate or post-graduate students to be eligible for subsidies under the program. In FY 2025, the estimated average annual cost per child under the program is approximately \$11,576.

The OLS estimates that there are 12,827 full-time graduate and post-graduate students who are raising children in the State. Of these students, it is unknown how many would be otherwise eligible for child care assistance benefits and would also be in need of child care. Of the existing eligibility factors, the OLS assumes that income would be the most significant determinate of a full-time graduate or post-graduate student's participation in the program. Currently, at initial eligibility, a family of four can earn no more than \$62,400 a year to be eligible for the child care assistance program. Moreover, it is not known the number of children in need of child care per eligible graduate or post-graduate student.

For reference, assuming 13 percent of all full-time graduate and post-graduate students in the State with children, or 1,667, would be otherwise eligible for the child care assistance program, would elect to apply for benefits, and had, on average, 1.5 children with child care needs, the cost under the bill would be approximately \$29 million. As the child care assistance program receives federal support in the form of block grants, this estimate assumes that the increase in costs under the bill would be incurred solely by the State.

Section: Human Services
Analyst: Sara Schmidt
Lead Research Analyst
Approved: Thomas Koenig
Legislative Budget and Finance Officer

This legislative fiscal estimate has been produced by the Office of Legislative Services due to the failure of the Executive Branch to respond to our request for a fiscal note.

This fiscal estimate has been prepared pursuant to P.L.1980, c.67 (C.52:13B-6 et seq.).

Governor Phil Murphy

Governor Murphy Takes Action on Legislation

Posted on - 10/1/2025

TRENTON – Today, Governor Murphy signed the following bills into law:

A-1675/S-2078 (Lampitt, Bagolie, Stanley/Gopal, Greenstein) – Extends membership in TPAF to 10 years after discontinuance of service and to 15 years for those who were laid off or had 10 or more years of continuous service upon voluntary termination

A-4544/S-3429 (Schnall, Reynolds-Jackson, Pintor Marin/Ruiz, Mukherji) – Expands eligibility requirements of State's child care assistance program to include full-time graduate and post-graduate students

[Copy of Statement](#)

(<https://d31hzhkh6di2h5.cloudfront.net/20251001/2c/6b/ce/9b/5f7d41d35f215a7d83535d8d/A4544.pdf>).

A-4954/S-3797 (Kennedy, Karabinchak/McKeon) – Requires members of historic preservation commissions to complete historic preservation planning course

A-4969/S-3816 (Peterpaul, Donlon, Coughlin/Gopal, Turner) – Ensures boards of elections have discretion to make initial determination of validity of cast ballots; requires Secretary of State to establish uniform guidelines for assessing validity of ballots

Governor Phil Murphy

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