

HOUSE BILL 295

54TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - SECOND SESSION, 2020

INTRODUCED BY

Rebecca Dow

AN ACT

RELATING TO CHILDREN; REQUIRING THE EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION
AND CARE DEPARTMENT TO ALLOW FOR WAIVER OF COPAYMENTS FOR CHILD
CARE ASSISTANCE CONTRACTS FOR CLIENTS WITH CHILDREN THREE
THROUGH FIVE YEARS OF AGE.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO:

SECTION 1. Section 9-29-8 NMSA 1978 (being Laws 2019,
Chapter 48, Section 8) is amended to read:

"9-29-8. DEPARTMENT--DUTIES.--The department shall:

A. develop priorities for department programs and
the use of department resources based on state policy, national
best-practice standards, evidence-based interventions and
practices and local considerations and priorities;

B. coordinate and align an early childhood
education and care system to:

.216816.1

underscoring material = new
~~[bracketed material] = delete~~

underscored material = new
[bracketed material] = delete

1 (1) include child care, pre-kindergarten,
2 early pre-kindergarten, home visitation, early head start, head
3 start, early childhood special education and early intervention
4 and family support; and

5 (2) provide New Mexico families with
6 consistent access to appropriate care and education services;

7 C. administer the child care assistance, child care
8 licensing and registered child care home programs and allow for
9 waiver of copayments for child care assistance contracts for
10 clients with children three through five years of age;

11 D. develop standards for the department-sponsored
12 delivery of early childhood programs;

13 E. cooperate with other state agencies that affect
14 children to develop common contracting procedures and service
15 definitions and a uniform system of access to early childhood
16 programs;

17 F. develop reimbursement criteria for child care
18 centers and home providers licensed by the department;

19 G. conduct biennial assessments of child care or
20 early learning service gaps and needs and establish plans to
21 address those service gaps and needs;

22 H. conduct pre-employment fingerprint-based
23 national criminal background checks on all department
24 employees, including those whose employment by the department
25 arises as a result of the transfer provisions of [~~Section 34~~ of

.216816.1

underscored material = new
[bracketed material] = delete

1 ~~this 2019 act]~~ Laws 2019, Chapter 48, Section 34, and on staff
2 members and volunteers of department-contracted providers whose
3 jobs involve direct contact with children participating in
4 programs delivered by the department or those providers;

5 I. provide a system of seamless transition from
6 prenatal to early childhood programs to kindergarten;

7 J. provide consumer education and accessibility to
8 early childhood care and education programs;

9 K. advance quality early childhood education and
10 care programs to support the development of children to prepare
11 them for success in school;

12 L. ensure effective collaboration with state and
13 local child welfare programs and early childhood health and
14 behavioral health programs;

15 M. develop and manage effective data systems to
16 support the necessary functions of a coordinated program;

17 N. develop an aligned system of workforce
18 development for early childhood professionals; and

19 O. promote culturally and linguistically
20 appropriate programming and provide equal education and care
21 opportunities to non-English speaking families."

22 **SECTION 2. EFFECTIVE DATE.**--The effective date of the
23 provisions of this act is July 1, 2020.