

RCW 43.216.505 Definitions. (Effective until July 1, 2026.)

Unless the context clearly requires otherwise, the definitions in this section apply throughout RCW 43.216.500 through 43.216.559, 43.216.900, and 43.216.901.

(1) "Advisory committee" means the advisory committee under RCW 43.216.520.

(2) "Approved programs" means those state-supported education and special assistance programs which are recognized by the department as meeting the minimum program rules adopted by the department to qualify under RCW 43.216.500 through 43.216.550, 43.216.900, and 43.216.901 and are designated as eligible for funding by the department under RCW 43.216.530 and 43.216.540.

(3) "Comprehensive" means an assistance program that focuses on the needs of the child and includes education, health, and family support services.

(4) "Eligible child" means a three to five-year old child who is not age-eligible for kindergarten, is not a participant in a federal or state program providing comprehensive services, and who:

(a) Has a family income at or below one hundred ten percent of the federal poverty level, as published annually by the federal department of health and human services;

(b) Is eligible for special education due to disability under RCW 28A.155.020; or

(c) Meets criteria under rules adopted by the department if the number of such children equals not more than ten percent of the total enrollment in the early childhood program. Preference for enrollment in this group shall be given to children from families with the lowest income, children in foster care, or to eligible children from families with multiple needs.

(5) "Family support services" means providing opportunities for parents to:

(a) Actively participate in their child's early childhood program;

(b) Increase their knowledge of child development and parenting skills;

(c) Further their education and training;

(d) Increase their ability to use needed services in the community;

(e) Increase their self-reliance.

(6) "Homeless" means a child without a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence as described in the federal McKinney-Vento homeless assistance act (Title 42 U.S.C., chapter 119, subchapter VI, part B) as it existed on January 1, 2021. [2021 c 67 s 1; 2019 c 408 s 2; 2017 3rd sp.s. c 6 s 210; 2014 c 160 s 4; 2014 c 160 s 3; 2013 2nd sp.s. c 16 s 4. Prior: 2010 c 231 s 7; 2006 c 265 s 210; 1999 c 350 s 1; 1994 c 166 s 2; 1990 c 33 s 213; 1988 c 174 s 2; 1985 c 418 s 2. Formerly RCW 43.215.405, 28A.215.110, 28A.34A.020.]

Findings—Intent—2019 c 408: See note following RCW 43.216.512.

Effective date—2017 3rd sp.s. c 6 ss 102, 104-115, 201-227, 301-337, 401-419, 501-513, 801-803, and 805-822: See note following RCW 43.216.025.

Effective date—2014 c 160 s 4: "Section 4 of this act takes effect June 30, 2018." [2014 c 160 s 5.]

Findings—Intent—2013 2nd sp.s. c 16: "The legislature finds that high quality early learning opportunities are an important factor in lifelong success. The legislature is committed to expanding high quality evidence-based early learning opportunities in order to improve educational outcomes. The legislature further finds that moving toward effective and research-based practices are critical in achieving educational and societal outcomes from early learning investments. The legislature intends to continue improvements in early learning through ongoing evaluation, application of emerging research, and enhanced quality assurance. It is the intent of the legislature that additional investments in early learning will be based on current information regarding the most efficient, research-based, and cost-effective investments." [2013 2nd sp.s. c 16 s 1.]

Effective date—1994 c 166: See note following RCW 43.216.500.

Findings—1994 c 166; 1988 c 174: "The legislature finds that the early childhood education and assistance program provides for the educational, social, health, nutritional, and cultural development of children at risk of failure when they reach school age. The long-term benefits to society in the form of greater educational attainment, employment, and projected lifetime earnings as well as the savings to be realized, from lower crime rates, welfare support, and reduced teenage pregnancy, have been demonstrated through lifelong research of at-risk children and early childhood programs.

The legislature intends to encourage development of community partnerships for children at risk by authorizing a program of voluntary grants and contributions from business and community organizations to increase opportunities for children to participate in early childhood education." [1994 c 166 s 3; 1988 c 174 s 1.]

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(3) "Comprehensive" means an assistance program that focuses on the needs of the child and includes education, health, and family support services.

(4) "Eligible child" means a three to five-year old child who is not age-eligible for kindergarten, is not a participant in a federal or state program providing comprehensive services, and who:

(a) Has a family with financial need;

(b) Is experiencing homelessness;

(c) Has participated in early head start or a successor federal program providing comprehensive services for children from birth through two years of age, the early support for infants and toddlers program or received class C developmental services, the birth to three

early childhood education and assistance program, or the early childhood intervention and prevention services program;

(d) Is eligible for special education due to disability under RCW 28A.155.020;

(e) Is Indian as defined in rule by the department after consultation and agreement with Washington state's federally recognized tribes pursuant to RCW 43.216.5052 and is at or below 100 percent of the state median income adjusted for family size; or

(f) Meets criteria under rules adopted by the department if the number of such children equals not more than ten percent of the total enrollment in the early childhood program. Preference for enrollment in this group shall be given to children from families with the lowest income, children in foster care, or to eligible children from families with multiple needs.

(5) "Experiencing homelessness" means a child without a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence as described in the federal McKinney-Vento homeless assistance act (Title 42 U.S.C., chapter 119, subchapter VI, part B) as it existed on January 1, 2021.

(6) "Family support services" means providing opportunities for parents to:

(a) Actively participate in their child's early childhood program;

(b) Increase their knowledge of child development and parenting skills;

(c) Further their education and training;

(d) Increase their ability to use needed services in the community;

(e) Increase their self-reliance; and

(f) Connect with culturally competent, disability positive therapists and supports where appropriate.

(7) "Family with financial need" means families with incomes at or below 36 percent of the state median income adjusted for family size until the 2030-31 school year. Beginning in the 2030-31 school year, "family with financial need" means families with incomes at or below 50 percent of the state median income adjusted for family size. [2021 c 199 s 204; 2021 c 67 s 1; 2019 c 408 s 2; 2017 3rd sp.s. c 6 s 210; 2014 c 160 s 4; 2014 c 160 s 3; 2013 2nd sp.s. c 16 s 4. Prior: 2010 c 231 s 7; 2006 c 265 s 210; 1999 c 350 s 1; 1994 c 166 s 2; 1990 c 33 s 213; 1988 c 174 s 2; 1985 c 418 s 2. Formerly RCW 43.215.405, 28A.215.110, 28A.34A.020.]

Reviser's note: The definitions in this section have been alphabetized pursuant to RCW 1.08.015(2)(k).

Effective date—2021 c 199 ss 204-206 and 403: "Sections 204 through 206 and 403 of this act take effect July 1, 2026." [2021 c 199 s 604.]

Findings—Intent—2021 c 199 ss 204-208: See note following RCW 43.216.513.

Short title—Findings—Intent—Conflict with federal requirements—2021 c 199: See notes following RCW 43.216.770.

Findings—Intent—2019 c 408: See note following RCW 43.216.512.

Effective date—2017 3rd sp.s. c 6 ss 102, 104-115, 201-227, 301-337, 401-419, 501-513, 801-803, and 805-822: See note following RCW 43.216.025.

Effective date—2014 c 160 s 4: "Section 4 of this act takes effect June 30, 2018." [2014 c 160 s 5.]

Findings—Intent—2013 2nd sp.s. c 16: "The legislature finds that high quality early learning opportunities are an important factor in lifelong success. The legislature is committed to expanding high quality evidence-based early learning opportunities in order to improve educational outcomes. The legislature further finds that moving toward effective and research-based practices are critical in achieving educational and societal outcomes from early learning investments. The legislature intends to continue improvements in early learning through ongoing evaluation, application of emerging research, and enhanced quality assurance. It is the intent of the legislature that additional investments in early learning will be based on current information regarding the most efficient, research-based, and cost-effective investments." [2013 2nd sp.s. c 16 s 1.]

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The legislature intends to encourage development of community partnerships for children at risk by authorizing a program of voluntary grants and contributions from business and community organizations to increase opportunities for children to participate in early childhood education." [1994 c 166 s 3; 1988 c 174 s 1.]

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(3) "Comprehensive" means an assistance program that focuses on the needs of the child and includes education, health, and family support services.

(4) "Eligible child" means a three to five-year old child who is not age-eligible for kindergarten, is not a participant in a federal or state program providing comprehensive services, and who:

(a) Has a family with an income at or below 50 percent of the state median income adjusted for family size;

(b) Is experiencing homelessness;

(c) Has participated in early head start or a successor federal program providing comprehensive services for children from birth through two years of age, the early support for infants and toddlers program or received class C developmental services, the birth to three early childhood education and assistance program, or the early childhood intervention and prevention services program;

(d) Is eligible for special education due to disability under RCW 28A.155.020;

(e) Is a member of an assistance unit that is eligible for or is receiving basic food benefits under the federal supplemental nutrition assistance program or the state food assistance program;

(f) Is Indian as defined in rule by the department after consultation and agreement with Washington state's federally recognized tribes pursuant to RCW 43.216.5052 and is at or below 100 percent of the state median income adjusted for family size; or

(g) Meets criteria under rules adopted by the department if the number of such children equals not more than ten percent of the total enrollment in the early childhood program. Preference for enrollment in this group shall be given to children from families with the lowest income, children in foster care, or to eligible children from families with multiple needs.

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(c) Further their education and training;

(d) Increase their ability to use needed services in the community;

(e) Increase their self-reliance; and

(f) Connect with culturally competent, disability positive therapists and supports where appropriate. [2024 c 225 s 2. Prior: 2021 c 199 s 204; 2021 c 67 s 1; 2019 c 408 s 2; 2017 3rd sp.s. c 6 s 210; 2014 c 160 s 4; 2014 c 160 s 3; 2013 2nd sp.s. c 16 s 4; prior: 2010 c 231 s 7; 2006 c 265 s 210; 1999 c 350 s 1; 1994 c 166 s 2; 1990 c 33 s 213; 1988 c 174 s 2; 1985 c 418 s 2. Formerly RCW 43.215.405, 28A.215.110, 28A.34A.020.]

Effective dates—2024 c 225 ss 2, 4, and 6: "Section 2 of this act takes effect August 1, 2030.

Sections 4 and 6 of this act take effect July 1, 2026." [2024 c 225 s 7.]

Effective date—2021 c 199 ss 204-206 and 403: "Sections 204 through 206 and 403 of this act take effect July 1, 2026." [2021 c 199 s 604.]

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