
OLR Bill Analysis

sSB 943

AN ACT REQUIRING EMPLOYERS TO PROVIDE CERTAIN INFORMATION TO DOMESTIC WORKERS AT THE TIME OF HIRE AND ESTABLISHING AN EDUCATION AND TRAINING GRANT PROGRAM FOR DOMESTIC WORKERS.

SUMMARY

This bill broadens the categories of written information that employers must provide to certain domestic workers when they are hired to include things such as their job duties and whether the employer will charge fees for room and board.

It also requires the labor commissioner to establish a domestic workers education and training grant program to provide grants to qualified organizations to, among other things, educate domestic workers about various labor laws.

“Domestic workers” under the bill are employees who are paid or told they will be paid to perform work of a domestic nature in or about a private dwelling. This includes housekeeping; home management; child care; laundering; meal preparation; home companion services; caretaking of sick, convalescing, or elderly individuals; and other household services for the dwelling’s occupants or their guests. They do not include irregular or intermittent babysitters or personal care attendants providing personal care assistance to consumers in state-funded programs, including the:

1. acquired brain injury Medicaid waiver program,
2. personal care assistance Medicaid waiver program,
3. Connecticut Home Care Program for the Elderly,
4. pilot program to provide home care services to disabled persons, and

5. Department of Developmental Services' individual and family support waiver program and comprehensive waiver program.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2021

EMPLOYER NOTICE REQUIREMENT

Existing law requires employers to advise their employees, when they are hired and in writing, about their pay rate, hours of employment, and pay schedule (CGS § 31-71f). The bill requires employers to additionally provide domestic workers, when they are hired, with written information about (1) their job duties and responsibilities; (2) the availability of sick leave, rest days, vacation, personal days, and holidays, whether paid or unpaid, and the rate at which those days accrue; and (3) whether the employer may charge any fees or costs for board and lodging and, if so, their amount.

Existing law also requires employers to make available to all employees, either in writing or through a posted notice, any employment practices and policies, or changes to them, on the following topics: wages, vacation pay, sick leave, health and welfare benefits, and comparable matters.

GRANT PROGRAM

The bill requires the labor commissioner to establish a domestic workers education and training grant program to provide grants to qualified organizations to provide:

1. education and training for domestic workers and employers about the laws on minimum wage, overtime, sick leave, record-keeping, wage adjudication, retaliation, and the bill's notice requirement;
2. online resources for domestic workers and their employers on state laws and regulations related to domestic workers; and
3. technical and legal assistance to domestic workers and employers through legal service providers.

Under the bill, a “qualified organization” eligible for the grants must be either (1) a nonprofit organization that has at least five years of experience working with domestic workers or (2) an organization that works with a nonprofit organization that has at least five years of experience advocating for domestic workers or other low-wage workers. A nonprofit organization is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization.

The bill allows the commissioner to enter into an agreement, under the state’s laws for state consultants and personal service agreements, with a third-party person, firm, or corporation to administer the grant program. It also requires the commissioner to create guidelines needed to administer the grants, in consultation with the third-party it contracts with, if applicable.

BACKGROUND

Legislative History

The Senate referred the bill (File 403) to the Appropriations Committee, which reported a substitute that removes a provision that would have appropriated \$210,000 to the Department of Labor for the grant program for FY 22.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Labor and Public Employees Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 9 Nay 4 (03/23/2021)

Appropriations Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 31 Nay 16 (05/03/2021)