SENATE BILL NO. 1189

October 01, 2026, Introduced by Senator RUNESTAD and referred to Committee on Civil Rights, Judiciary, and Public Safety.

A bill to amend 1939 PA 280, entitled

"The social welfare act,"

by amending sections 57e and 57g (MCL 400.57e and 400.57g), as amended by 2024 PA 138.

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF MICHIGAN ENACT:

Sec. 57e. (1) Each family receiving family independence program assistance shall execute a family self-sufficiency plan outlining the responsibilities of members of the family independence program assistance group, the contractual nature of

family independence program assistance, and the focus on the goal of attaining self-sufficiency. The family self-sufficiency plan must be developed by the department and the adult family members of the family independence program assistance group with the details of PATH program participation to be included in the family self-sufficiency plan being developed by the department, the Michigan economic development corporation or a successor entity, and the adult family members of the family independence program assistance group. Except as described in section 57b, the department shall complete a thorough assessment to facilitate development of the family self-sufficiency plan, including consideration of referral to a life skills program, and determination as to whether the family independence program assistance group's adult members are eligible to participate in the PATH program or are exempt from PATH program participation under section 57f. The family self-sufficiency plan must identify compliance goals that are to be met by members of the family independence program assistance group and goals and responsibilities of the members of the family independence program assistance group, the department, and the PATH program. The family self-sufficiency plan must reflect the individual needs and abilities of the particular family, and include at least all of the following:

(a) The obligation of each adult and each child ~~aged~~ 16 **years of age** or older who is not attending elementary or secondary school full-time to participate in the PATH program unless exempt under section 57f.

(b) The obligation of each minor parent who has not completed secondary school to attend school.

(c) Except as provided in section 57f(3) and (4), the

obligation of each adult to engage in employment, PATH program activities, education or training, community service activities, or self-improvement activities, as determined appropriate by the department.

(d) The obligation to cooperate in the establishment of paternity and to assign child and spousal support to the department as required by federal law and to cooperate in the procurement of child support, if applicable. **The department shall provide notice to the recipient of the penalty for knowingly identifying an incorrect individual as the father of the child or for failing to inform the department that there may be more than 1 individual who could be the father.**

(e) The obligation of a recipient who fails to comply with compliance goals due to substance abuse to participate in substance abuse treatment and submit to any periodic drug testing required by the treatment program.

(f) If the recipient is determined to be eligible to participate in the PATH program, the obligation that the requirements of the family self-sufficiency plan must, at a minimum, meet federal guidelines for work participation. Exceptions may be granted if it is determined that the recipient or a family member in the recipient's household has a disability that needs reasonable accommodation as required by section 504 of title V of the rehabilitation act of 1973, 29 USC 794, subtitle A of title II of the Americans with disabilities act of 1990, 42 USC 12131 to 12134, or another identified barrier that interferes with the recipient's ability to participate in required activities. Reasonable accommodation must be made to adjust the number of required hours or the types of activities required to take the

identified limitations into account.

(g) The obligation that the recipient must enroll in a GED preparation program, a high school completion program, or a literacy training program, if the department determines the resources are available and the assessment and plan demonstrate that these issues present a barrier to the recipient meeting the requirements in his or her family self-sufficiency plan. This basic educational skills training must be combined with other occupational skills training, ~~whenever~~ **if** possible, to ensure that it can be counted toward federal work participation requirements.

(h) Notification to the recipient of the 60-month lifetime cumulative total for collecting family independence program assistance.

(i) A prohibition on using family independence program assistance to purchase lottery tickets, alcohol, or tobacco, for gambling, or for illegal activities or any other nonessential items.

(j) Information regarding sanctions that must be imposed under section 57g for noncompliance.

(k) Any other obligation the department determines is necessary to enable the family to achieve independence.

(2) The department shall monitor each family's compliance with the family self-sufficiency plan.

(3) A recipient executing a family self-sufficiency plan under this section shall not identify or provide information or a document that identifies an individual as the biological parent of a child to the department if the recipient knows that the individual is not the biological parent of the child.

(4) A recipient who violates subsection (3) is guilty of a

misdemeanor punishable by imprisonment for not more than 1 year or a fine of not more than $1,000.00, or both. A criminal penalty provided for under this section may be imposed in addition to any penalty that may be imposed for any other criminal offense arising from the same conduct.

Sec. 57g. (1) Except as provided in subsection (5), if a recipient does not meet the recipient's individual family self-sufficiency plan requirements and is therefore noncompliant, the department shall impose the penalties described under this section. The department shall implement a schedule of penalties for instances of noncompliance as described in this subsection. The penalties imposed under this subsection are as follows:

(a) For the first instance of noncompliance, the family is ineligible to receive family independence program assistance for not less than 3 calendar months.

(b) For the second instance of noncompliance, the family is ineligible to receive family independence program assistance for not less than 6 calendar months.

(c) For the third instance of noncompliance, the family is permanently ineligible to receive family independence program assistance.

(2) For the purposes of subsections (1) to (4), "noncompliance" means 1 or more of the following:

(a) A recipient quits a job.

(b) A recipient is fired for misconduct or absenteeism.

(c) A recipient voluntarily reduces employment hours or earnings.

(d) A recipient refuses a bona fide offer of employment or additional hours up to 40 hours per week.

(e) A recipient does not participate in PATH program activities.

(f) A recipient is noncompliant with the recipient's family self-sufficiency plan.

(g) A recipient states orally or in writing the recipient's intent not to comply with family independence program or PATH program requirements.

(h) A recipient refuses employment support services if the refusal prevents participation in an employment or self-sufficiency related activity.

(3) For any instance of noncompliance, the recipient shall receive notice of the noncompliance. The recipient has not less than a 12-day negative action period before the penalties prescribed in this section are imposed. If the recipient demonstrates good cause for the noncompliance during this period and if the family independence specialist caseworker and the PATH program caseworker agree that good cause exists for the recipient's noncompliance, a penalty must not be imposed. For the purpose of this subsection, good cause is 1 or more of the following:

(a) The recipient suffers from a temporary debilitating illness or injury or an immediate family member has a debilitating illness or injury and the recipient is needed in the home to care for the family member.

(b) The recipient lacks child care as described in section 607(e)(2) of the personal responsibility and work opportunity reconciliation act of 1996, 42 USC 607.

(c) Either employment or training commuting time is more than 2 hours per day or is more than 3 hours per day when there are unique and compelling circumstances, such as a salary at least

twice the applicable minimum wage or the job is the only available job placement within a 3-hour commute per day, not including the time necessary to transport a child to child care facilities.

(d) Transportation is not available to the recipient at a reasonable cost.

(e) The employment or participation involves illegal activities.

(f) The recipient is physically or mentally unfit to perform the job, as documented by medical evidence or by reliable information from other sources.

(g) The recipient is illegally discriminated against on the basis of age, race, disability, gender, color, national origin, or religious beliefs.

(h) Credible information or evidence establishes 1 or more unplanned or unexpected events or factors that reasonably could be expected to prevent, or significantly interfere with, the recipient's compliance with employment and training requirements.

(i) The recipient quit employment to obtain comparable employment.

(4) For all instances of noncompliance resulting in termination of family independence program assistance for any period of time described in subsection (1), the period of time the recipient is ineligible to receive family independence program assistance applies toward the recipient's 60-month cumulative lifetime total.

(5) ~~Family~~ **Before January 1, 2027, family independence program assistance benefits must be terminated if a recipient fails, without good cause, to comply with applicable child support requirements, including efforts to establish paternity and assign**

or obtain child support. Beginning January 1, 2027, family independence program assistance benefits must be denied or terminated if a recipient fails, without good cause, to comply with applicable child support requirements including efforts to establish paternity, and assign or obtain child support. The family independence program assistance group is ineligible for family independence program assistance for not less than 1 calendar month. After family independence program assistance has been terminated for not less than 1 calendar month, family independence program assistance may be restored if the noncompliant recipient complies with child support requirements including the action to establish paternity and obtain child support. As used in this subsection, "good cause" includes an instance in which efforts to establish paternity or assign or obtain child support would harm the child or in which there is danger of physical or emotional harm to the child or the recipient.

(6) A recipient shall not identify or provide information or a document that identifies an individual as the biological parent of a child to the department if the recipient knows that the individual is not the biological parent of the child. A recipient who violates this subsection is guilty of a misdemeanor punishable by imprisonment for not more than 1 year or a fine of not more than $1,000.00, or both. A criminal penalty provided for under this section may be imposed in addition to any penalty that may be imposed for any other criminal offense arising from the same conduct.

Enacting section 1. This amendatory act takes effect 90 days after the date it is enacted into law.

Enacting section 2. This amendatory act does not take effect

unless Senate Bill No. 1188 of the 103rd Legislature is enacted into law.