



# House of Representatives

General Assembly

**File No. 642**

February Session, 2026

Substitute House Bill No. 5447

*House of Representatives, April 15, 2026*

The Committee on Appropriations reported through REP. WALKER of the 93rd Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the House, that the substitute bill ought to pass.

***AN ACT IMPLEMENTING RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE TRANSFORMING CHILDREN'S BEHAVIORAL HEALTH POLICY AND PLANNING COMMITTEE AND CONCERNING TEMPORARY FAMILY ASSISTANCE BENEFITS.***

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective from passage*) (a) The executive director of  
2 the Commission on Women, Children, Seniors, Equity and Opportunity  
3 shall convene two working groups. Each working group shall include  
4 one or more members of the Transforming Children's Behavioral Health  
5 Policy and Planning Committee and such other members as selected by  
6 the executive director.

7 (b) Not later than July 1, 2026, the executive director shall convene a  
8 working group concerning the treatment of eating disorders. The  
9 working group shall, in consultation with the Commissioners of Public  
10 Health and Mental Health and Addiction Services, compile information  
11 to be made available to the public concerning (1) providers of eating  
12 disorder treatment services in the state, including, but not limited to,

13 facilities that provide such treatment, (2) details concerning the types of  
14 services each such provider offers and the ages of persons typically  
15 served by such providers, and (3) other resources available in the state  
16 for persons with eating disorders. The working group shall also consult  
17 with the Commissioner of Public Health to (A) develop, within available  
18 appropriations, one or more questions on the subject of eating disorder  
19 behaviors to be included on the Connecticut School Health Survey  
20 questionnaire, and (B) establish best practice guidelines for facilities in  
21 providing treatment for eating disorders.

22 (c) Not later than July 1, 2026, the executive director shall convene a  
23 working group to develop a state-wide food education roadmap and a  
24 model school nutrition curriculum that includes, but is not limited to,  
25 developmentally appropriate evidence-based education programs on  
26 disordered eating behaviors, nutrition, culinary skills, growing food,  
27 food safety and food systems.

28 (d) Not later than January 1, 2028, and annually thereafter, the  
29 executive director shall report, in accordance with the provisions of  
30 section 11-4a of the general statutes, to the chairpersons of the  
31 Transforming Children's Behavioral Health Policy and Planning  
32 Committee and the joint standing committees of the General Assembly  
33 having cognizance of matters relating to children, public health,  
34 education and human services concerning the results of the working  
35 groups' studies.

36 Sec. 2. Section 2-137 of the 2026 supplement to the general statutes is  
37 amended by adding subsection (o) as follows (*Effective October 1, 2026*):

38 (NEW) (o) The committee shall annually review the progress of the  
39 working groups concerning eating disorders and food education and  
40 nutrition, established pursuant to section 1 of this act.

41 Sec. 3. (*Effective from passage*) (a) The Commissioner of Children and  
42 Families shall, in collaboration with the Commissioners of  
43 Developmental Services and Mental Health and Addiction Services,  
44 study the feasibility of establishing an inpatient facility to provide

45 children and young adults between the ages of fourteen and twenty-  
46 one, inclusive, who have intellectual or developmental disabilities with  
47 psychiatric treatment services. Such study shall include: (1) The  
48 appropriate size of the facility and number of persons to be served at  
49 one time; (2) the best treatment practices for the population; (3) the  
50 operational costs of establishing such a facility and the feasibility of  
51 operating the facility within available agency appropriations; (4)  
52 appropriate sites, which may include state-owned property, on which  
53 the facility may be built; and (5) billing options for payment of inpatient  
54 psychiatric services for the population served, including Medicaid  
55 billing options. Not later than January 1, 2027, the Commissioner of  
56 Children and Families shall report, in accordance with the provisions of  
57 section 11-4a of the general statutes, to the joint standing committees of  
58 the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to children,  
59 human services, public health and appropriations and the budgets of  
60 state agencies on the results of the study.

61 (b) Not later than February 1, 2027, the Commissioner of Children  
62 and Families shall request information from one or more providers of  
63 mental health services in the state concerning the establishment of an  
64 inpatient facility in the state, as described in subsection (a) of this  
65 section. The request for information shall contain provisions inquiring  
66 about the ability of such provider to: (1) Establish such facility; and (2)  
67 implement best practices for psychiatric treatment services to meet the  
68 needs of the population described in subsection (a) of this section. On or  
69 before July 1, 2027, the Commissioner of Children and Families shall  
70 submit, in accordance with section 11-4a of the general statutes, a  
71 summary of the responses to the request for information, along with any  
72 recommendations, to the Governor and the joint standing committees of  
73 the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to children,  
74 human services, public health and appropriations and the budgets of  
75 state agencies.

76 Sec. 4. Subsection (g) of section 17b-112 of the 2026 supplement to the  
77 general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu  
78 thereof (*Effective from passage*):

79 (g) On and after July 1, 2026, the monthly cash benefit for a family  
80 shall be not less than fifty-five per cent of the monthly federal poverty  
81 level for such family. Notwithstanding section 17b-104, commencing on  
82 July 1, 2023, the Commissioner of Social Services shall provide an annual  
83 cost-of-living adjustment in temporary family assistance benefits equal  
84 to the most recent percentage increase in the consumer price index for  
85 urban consumers whenever funds appropriated for temporary family  
86 assistance lapse at the close of any fiscal year and such adjustment has  
87 not otherwise been included in the budget for the assistance program,  
88 provided the increase would not create a budget deficiency in  
89 succeeding years. The commissioner shall provide a prorated benefit  
90 increase from such available lapsed funds in any fiscal year when such  
91 funds are not sufficient to cover a cost-of-living adjustment in  
92 accordance with this subsection.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	<i>from passage</i>	New section
Sec. 2	<i>October 1, 2026</i>	2-137(o)
Sec. 3	<i>from passage</i>	New section
Sec. 4	<i>from passage</i>	17b-112(g)

**Statement of Legislative Commissioners:**

In Section 2, "food insecurity and the benefits of providing a holistic diet" was changed to "food education and nutrition" for consistency with the provisions of Section 1.

**APP**      *Joint Favorable Subst.*

The following Fiscal Impact Statement and Bill Analysis are prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose. In general, fiscal impacts are based upon a variety of informational sources, including the analyst's professional knowledge. Whenever applicable, agency data is consulted as part of the analysis, however final products do not necessarily reflect an assessment from any specific department.

**OFA Fiscal Note**

**State Impact:**

Agency Affected	Fund-Effect	FY 27 \$	FY 28 \$
Social Services, Dept.	GF - Cost	at least \$20 million	at least \$20 million

Note: GF=General Fund

**Municipal Impact:** None

**Explanation**

**Section 4** of the bill results in a cost to the Department of Social Services (DSS) of at least \$20 million due to increasing the monthly benefit for Temporary Family Assistance recipients from 73% of the standard of need to 55% of the federal poverty level (FPL). The standard of need is 55% FPL (\$993 per month for a family of two). The current monthly benefit amount at 73% of the standard of need is \$725 for a family of two. Consequently, the bill increases the benefit amount (which varies by household size) by approximately 37%. The estimated cost assumes level program enrollment based on caseload trends.

**Sections 1 and 2**, which require the Commission on Women, Children, Seniors, Equity and Opportunity (CWCSEO) to establish working groups concerning the treatment of eating disorders and development of a state-wide food education roadmap and a model school nutrition curriculum, have no fiscal impact as CWCSEO has the expertise necessary to meet the provisions of the bill.

**Section 3** requires DCF (in collaboration with DSS and DMHAS) to study the feasibility of establishing a psychiatric treatment inpatient facility to provide services to certain youth who have intellectual or developmental disabilities. DCF must also request information from one

or more providers of mental health services in the state concerning the establishment of the inpatient facility. The agency has the necessary expertise to fulfill the section's requirements.

***The Out Years***

The annualized ongoing fiscal impact identified above would continue into the future subject to inflation.

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**OFA Bill Analysis**

**HB 5447**

***AN ACT IMPLEMENTING RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE TRANSFORMING CHILDREN'S BEHAVIORAL HEALTH POLICY AND PLANNING COMMITTEE AND CONCERNING TEMPORARY FAMILY ASSISTANCE BENEFITS.***

**SUMMARY:**

The bill requires (1) the establishment of working groups concerning the treatment of eating disorders and development of a state-wide food education roadmap and a model school nutrition curriculum (2) a study on the feasibility of establishing an inpatient facility to provide psychiatric treatment services to children and young adults who have intellectual or developmental disabilities, and (3) an increase in benefits under the Temporary Family Assistance (TFA) program.

EFFECTIVE DATE: from passage

**§§ 1 & 2 — Commission on Women, Children, Seniors, Equity and Opportunity (CWCSEO) Working Groups**

The bill requires the executive director of the Commission on Women, Children, Seniors, Equity and Opportunity (CWCSEO) to establish a working group concerning the treatment of eating disorders and a working group to develop a state-wide food education roadmap and a model school nutrition curriculum. Each group shall include at least one member from the Transforming Children's Behavioral Health and Policy and Planning Committee (TCBHPPC), and the remaining members are selected by the CWCSEO executive director.

The executive director will report the results of the working group studies to the TCBHPPC, Children, Public Health, Education, and

Human Services Committees not later than January 1, 2028. The TCBHPPC is required to annually review the progress of the working group.

### ***Working Group Regarding the Treatment of Eating Disorders***

This working group will consult with the Department of Public Health (DPH) and Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services to compile information to be made available to the public for:

1. Providers of eating disorder treatment services in the state, including facilities that provide this treatment;
2. Details about the types of services these providers offer and the ages of people served by the providers; and
3. Any other resources available in the state for persons with eating disorders.

The working group will also consult with DPH to:

1. Within available appropriations, develop at least one question on the subject of eating disorder behaviors to be included in the Connecticut School Health Survey questionnaire; and
2. Establish best practice guidelines for facilities providing treatment for eating disorders.

### ***Working Group to Develop a State-Wide Food Education***

#### ***Roadmap***

This working group is required to develop a state-wide education roadmap and a model school nutrition curriculum that includes:

1. Developmentally appropriate evidence-based education programs on disordered eating behaviors, nutrition, culinary skills, growing food, food safety and food systems.

### **§ 3 — Department of Children and Families' Feasibility Study**

The bill requires the Commissioner of the Department of Children

and Families (DCF), in collaboration with the Departments of Developmental Disabilities and Mental Health and Addiction Services, to study the feasibility of establishing an inpatient facility to provide psychiatric treatment services to children and young adults, between the ages of 14 and 21, who have intellectual or developmental disabilities. DCF must report the results of the study to the Children’s, Human Services, Public Health and Appropriations committees by January 1, 2027.

By February 1, 2027, DCF must request information from one or more providers of mental health services in the state concerning their ability to establish such a facility and implement best practices for psychiatric treatment services to meet the needs of the population. By July 1, 2027, DCF must submit a summary of the responses to the request for information, along with any recommendations, to the Governor and Children’s, Human Services, Public Health and Appropriations committees.

**§ 4 — TFA Monthly Cash Benefit**

The bill requires that the monthly cash benefit for families receiving Temporary Family Assistance be not less than 55% of the monthly federal poverty level (FPL), on and after July 1, 2026. Currently, the TFA Payment Standard (monthly benefit amount) is set at 73% of the Standard of Need. The Standard of Need is set at 55% FPL (*\$993 for a family of two, monthly*).

**COMMITTEE ACTION**

Appropriations Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 44 Nay 8 (04/01/2026)