

David T. Imamura
Legislator, 12th District



MEMORANDUM OF LEGISLATION

DATE: February 2, 2024

TITLE: Free Daycare for Childcare Workers

SPONSOR: Legislator David Imamura

PURPOSE OR GENERAL IDEA OF BILL: For the provision of free childcare services for childcare workers who reside within the county. Providing free childcare to childcare workers will attract more people to the field, which has a significant worker shortage.

INTENT: To provide free childcare to any county resident who is employed as a childcare worker in Westchester County.

JUSTIFICATION: The childcare industry is having a difficult time finding and retaining quality workers. Simultaneously, childcare costs are a substantial burden to parents who are employed as childcare providers. The position is a difficult one, as these workers love their jobs but, due to their wages, find themselves unable to afford the services they help provide. To address this issue, an incentive to alleviate the costs of childcare for childcare works must be offered. This can be achieved by offering free childcare to childcare workers who reside in the county.

During the pandemic the state of Kentucky saw a sharp decline in the number of children accessing childcare subsidies. After analyzing the issues, Kentucky officials and childcare providers concluded that staffing shortages were contributing to a myriad of issues. Higher salaries offered by less demanding jobs in other fields, along with rising childcare costs, caused a significant number of childcare workers to quit their jobs. To address this worker shortage, Kentucky began offering free childcare to childcare workers in 2022. This benefit has been paid for using Kentucky's childcare subsidy program, a program that is substantially similar to the one offered by Westchester County. Notably, a number of childcare subsidies in Kentucky remained unused prior to the incentive being offered. Currently, a significant number of childcare subsidies in Westchester County remain unused.

Since offering the incentive, Kentucky saw a large increase in the number of childcare subsidies being used. The state has identified at least 3,600 new subsidiary beneficiaries because of their entry into the childcare workforce.

PRESENT LAW: None.

FISCAL IMACT: To be determined.

cc: Marcello Figueroa, Legislative Director
Dylan Tragani, Chief of Staff

Tel: (914) 995-2821 • Fax: (914) 995-3884 • E-mail: Imamura@westchesterlegislators.com