

CHILDREN AND FAMILIES -- ECONOMIC SUPPORT AND CHILD CARE

Legal Services for Low Income Families

Motion:

Move to provide \$500,000 annually under the federal temporary assistance for needy families (TANF) program for a grant to the Wisconsin Trust Account Foundation, Inc. (WTAF), for distribution by WTAF of annual awards of up to \$75,000 to programs that provide civil legal services to low income families which address civil legal needs related to domestic abuse, sexual abuse, and restraining orders and injunctions for individuals at risk under s. 813.123 of the Wisconsin Statutes. Specify that the grant funding may only be used to provide legal services in civil matters for which federal TANF block grant moneys may be used to individuals who are eligible to receive assistance under the TANF program and whose gross incomes are at or below 200% of the federal poverty level. Also, require that grant funding may not be used to provide legal services for litigation against the state.

Specify that gross income has the same definition as used for determining eligibility for Wisconsin Works employment positions, and specify that gross income does not include any payments or benefits made under any federal law that exempts such payments or benefits from being considered in determining eligibility for any federal means-tested program.

Require DCF to make a grant of \$500,000 to WTAF in 2015-16 and 2016-17 if: (a) WTAF submits a plan to DCF which details the proposed uses of the grant (which must comply with the requirements described in the paragraph above) and the DCF Secretary (or his or her designee) approves the WTAF plan; (b) WTAF enters into an agreement with DCF which specifies the conditions for the use of the grant proceeds, including the requirements described in the paragraph above and training, reporting, and auditing; and (c) WTAF agrees in writing to comply with the reporting requirements discussed below.

Require that DCF may not provide a grant in 2016-17 unless: (a) WTAF submits a report to DCF within three months of spending the full amount of the 2015-16 grant which details how the funds were used; and (b) based upon the report, DCF determines that the grant proceeds were used in accordance with the approved plan.

Require WTAF, if DCF awards the 2016-17 grant, to submit a report to DCF within six months of spending the full amount of the 2016-17 grant which details how the funds were used.

Require that DCF may not provide grant funds after June 30, 2017.

Posted By:
Wheeler Reports, Inc.

Note:

WTAF administers the state interest on lawyer trust account program and distributes grants to agencies that provide civil legal services to low income individuals. This motion would provide funding of \$500,000 FED annually to WTAF from the federal TANF block grant to support civil legal services to low income families which address civil legal needs related to domestic abuse, sexual abuse, and restraining orders for individuals at risk of abuse. Such funding could only be used consistent with the purposes of TANF for TANF-eligible individuals, and could not be used to fund litigation against the state.

[Change to Bill: \$1,000,000 FED]