

Subject Basic sliding fee child care assistance program

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Summary

This bill makes permanent the temporary changes the 2021 legislature made to how families are prioritized on the basic sliding fee (BSF) child care assistance program waiting list.

Background: The BSF program is a child care assistance program that receives a capped appropriation. Because of the capped appropriation, not everyone who is eligible for BSF assistance receives it. When BSF funding is insufficient, families are placed on a waiting list. (In contrast, the Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP) child care assistance program is fully funded, which means everyone who is eligible for it receives it.)

The 2021 legislature made temporary changes to how families are prioritized on the BSF waiting list. The changes included shifting transition year extension families—those that have left MFIP and are receiving MFIP child care assistance until they can be moved from the BSF waiting list to BSF child care assistance—from the second priority group under current law to the last priority group and establishing a new priority group for eligible families who are not in any other priority groups. The temporary changes went into effect July 1, 2021, and are to remain in effect until May 31, 2024.