

**MINUTES OF THE
WORKFORCE SERVICES INTERIM COMMITTEE**

May 17, 2000 - 9:00 a.m. - Room 414 State Capitol

Members Present:

Sen. Robert M. Muhlestein, CoChair
Rep. Michael R. Styler, Chair
Sen. D. Edgar Allen
Sen. Lorin V. Jones
Rep. Sheryl L. Allen
Rep. Jackie Biskupski
Rep. Ben C. Ferry
Rep. Lloyd W. Frandsen
Rep. Brent H. Goodfellow
Rep. Neil A. Hansen
Rep. Rebecca Lockhart
Rep. Gordon E. Snow
Rep. David L. Zolman

Members Excused:

Rep. Ron Biglow

Members Absent:

Sen. Gene Davis
Sen. Parley G. Hellewell
Rep. Jeff Alexander

Staff Present:

Arthur L. Hunsaker,
Research Analyst
Keith M. Woodwell,
Associate General Counsel
Audrey Wendel,
Legislative Secretary

Note: Names of others present and copies of information distributed at the meeting are on file in the Office of Legislative Research and General Counsel.

1. Call to Order and Approval of April 19, 2000 Minutes - Chair Muhlestein called the meeting to order at 9:10 a.m.

MOTION: Rep. Hansen moved to approve the April 19, 2000 minutes. The motion passed unanimously with Rep. Biskupski absent for the vote.

2. Families, Agencies and Communities Together for Children and Youth at Risk (FACT) - Terry Johnson, FACT Coordinator, briefly summarized extensive data and reports on the FACT initiative. Sen. Muhlestein asked about the time spent by committee staff preparing data compared to the time spent directly serving people. Ms. Johnson said they try to gather most of their data during meetings with the people they serve. She said that approximately 1% of staff time is spent collecting data. Committee discussion followed.

3. Update: Child Care Development Fund (H.B. 1, Supplemental Appropriations Act, Item 34) - Bob Gross, Department of Workforce Services, said the department is examining child care services provided to families on assistance. He said that the department is reviewing the issue and conducting cost-benefit analyses of several different options, after which they will meet with the Governor's Office of Planning and Budget regarding their findings. The department agreed to bring the matter to the next interim committee meeting for discussion.

Marie Christman, Service Delivery Support Director, Department of Workforce Services,

discussed the two payment options for providing child care funds. The two-party check method will go into effect October 1, 2000. The point of sale device currently being used by some child care providers will require additional programming to make it compatible with the two-party check method, so the two-party check method will temporarily be the sole option after October. She explained that the point of sale is a direct debit that goes directly to the provider, and does not provide cash to the parent.

Rep. Frandsen asked who provides the point of sale devices and how much they cost. Mr. Jan Browning, Finance Department, Department of Workforce Services, said the devices cost about \$400 each and would be paid for by providers or by the state. Ms. Christman said that the department is still discussing who should pay for the devices. Mr. Gross said that they would come back to the next interim meeting and give a better estimate of the total cost. Mr. Gross said that of the 300 providers currently licensed, 70 have point of sale devices.

Rep. Ferry asked if a web site could be developed to allow people to take care of these transactions via the Internet. Mr. Gross said the department expects to eventually provide that service.

Sen. Jones asked if these alternatives resolved the litigation against the department regarding the Payment to Parents Program. Mr. Gross said the litigation was resolved when the judge ruled in the department's favor on summary judgement last year.

Karen Silver, Salt Lake Community Action Program, expressed her concern with the lack of privacy in the two-party check process and pointed out that these processes would require rulemaking which may push back the October time frame.

4. Lifetime Benefit Limits - Mr. Hunsaker presented information on what other states are doing in terms of lifetime Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) cash benefit limits.

Ms. Christman distributed two handouts titled, "Utah Department of Workforce Services Time Limits in the Family Employment Program (FEP) Briefing Paper," and "Percentage Receiving Services after FEP Case Closed," from which she gave her presentation.

Rep. Goodfellow asked what is happening to those who are now cut off from cash assistance. Ms. Christman indicated that it was too early to determine what effect the lifetime benefits limit was having on the affected families.

Ms. Christman then referred to the second handout which detailed the levels of various services accessed by those who are past the lifetime limit for TANF but are still receiving other services. She explained that the Social Research Institute at the University of Utah is currently doing another study in which they will follow each person who has been off TANF assistance for

one year. She added that the Social Research Institute's final report on Family Employment Program (FEP) participants will be ready in time for the July interim meeting, and the Center for Public Policy Administration will be ready to report on the impact of welfare reform on the nonprofit sector in the August interim meeting.

Sen. Jones asked if there was any way to prevent people from going to another state and receiving TANF benefits after reaching their time limit in Utah. Ms. Christman said there is not a national database to electronically monitor this, but that states often call Utah if they have questions about a recipient.

Gina Cornia, Utah Issues, suggested that an exemption from the 20% extension should be permitted for those people who put forth a good faith effort to secure employment but are still unemployed.

Roz McGee, Utah Children, encouraged the committee and the department to continue studies of individuals and families no longer receiving assistance. She asked when the contract will be finalized for the additional research and how much money will be allocated to conduct that study. Mr. Gross said that the ability of the department to continue these studies is directly related to TANF funds, but that they intend to continue working with the Social Research Institute. He also suggested that someone from the Social Research Institute attend the June meeting to provide further information to the committee members.

Karen Silver, Salt Lake Community Action Program, referred to the first page of the graph and asked about individuals still receiving disability medical benefits. She suggested that those who still receive disability extension benefits should be evaluated to be sure they are still eligible. She also noted that the time has expired for those individuals receiving Qualified Medicare Benefits. Ms. Christman said that the report indicates that anyone in that household may be receiving those supportive services, and that they cannot assume that every elderly person in a family receiving assistance is in need of services. She expressed the department's confidence in their assessment and the accuracy of their figures.

Rep. Frandsen asked how much of the department's success is due to policy, and how much is due to economic success. He suggested the department consider how to obtain this kind of information.

5. Committee Business -

In the absence of a quorum, Chair Muhlestein ruled the meeting adjourned at 11:05.

