

**Vermont Acts of the 2009-2010 Legislative Session
HB 789, Act 156
An act making appropriations for the support of
government.**

CS PORTIONS:

It is hereby enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Vermont:

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Sec. E.319.1 15 V.S.A. §658(f) is amended to read:

(f)(1) The court shall order either or both parents owing a duty of support to provide a cash contribution or medical coverage for a child, provided that medical coverage is available to the parent at a reasonable cost. Medical coverage is presumed to be available to a parent at a reasonable cost only if the amount payable for the individual's contribution to the insurance or health benefit plan premium cost of adding the child to an existing insurance or health benefit plan or the difference between providing coverage to the individual alone and family coverage under an existing insurance or health benefit plan is five percent or less of the parent's gross income. The court, in its discretion, retains the right to order a parent to obtain medical coverage even if the cost exceeds five percent of the parent's gross income if the cost is deemed reasonable under all the circumstances after considering the factors pursuant to section 659 of this title.

(2) If private health insurance or an employer-sponsored health benefit plan is not available at a reasonable cost, the court may order one or both parents owing a duty of support to contribute a cash contribution of up to five percent of gross income toward the cost of health care coverage of a child under public or private health insurance or a health benefit plan. The court also may order a cash contribution if a child receives coverage or health benefits under Medicaid, a Medicaid waiver program, Dr. Dynasaur, or is uninsured. A cash contribution under this section shall be considered child support for tax purposes. When calculating the contribution of a parent whose child receives coverage under Medicaid, a Medicaid waiver program, or Dr. Dynasaur, the court shall not order a contribution greater than the premium amount charged by the agency of human services for the child's coverage.

(3) The court, in its discretion, may order a parent to provide a cash contribution or coverage under a public or private insurance or health benefit plan even if the cost exceeds five percent of the parent's gross income, if the cost is deemed reasonable under the totality of the circumstances after considering the factors pursuant to section 659 of this title.

Sec. E.319.2 15 V.S.A. §653 is amended to read:

§ 653. DEFINITIONS

As used in this subchapter:

(1) "Available income" means gross income, less

(A) the amount of spousal support or preexisting child support obligations actually paid;

(B) the actual cost to a parent of providing adequate health insurance coverage or a cash contribution as provided for in section 658 of this title for the children who are the subject of the order;

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Sec. E.319.3 OFFICE OF CHILD SUPPORT;
POSITIONS

(a) Using reinvestment funds authorized in No. 68 of the Acts of 2010, the office of child support may fill two existing full-time classified positions to increase collections of medical support and cash contributions, including from families with incomes between 185 and 300 percent of the federal poverty level.

(b) The office shall develop measures to evaluate the success of these positions carrying out the purpose in subsection (a) of this section. This evaluation shall be submitted with the fiscal year 2012 budget materials to the house and senate committees on appropriations.

Sec. E.321 Department for children and families –
general assistance (Sec. B.321, #3440060000)

(a) Commencing July 1, 2010, the commissioner for children and families may amend the maximum amount for death benefits paid at public expense through the general assistance program to \$1,100 per burial.

(b) If the department for children and families receives additional funds through the recoupment of Supplemental Security Income (SSI) funds for participants in the general assistance program, the commissioner shall use up to \$500,000 of these recouped funds to fund homelessness assistance provided through general assistance under Sec. E.321.2 of this act.

(c) The department for children and families may not reduce or eliminate the personal needs (PNI) amount provided to individuals eligible for and receiving ongoing general assistance without legislative approval.

Sec. G.100 EFFECTIVE DATES

(d) Secs. E.319.1 (OCS medical support) and E.319.2 (OCS definitions) of this act shall apply to child support

cases filed on or after July 1, 2010.

Sec. I.18 15 V.S.A. §658(b) is amended to read:

(b) A request for support may be made by either parent, a guardian, or the department for children and families or the office department of Vermont health access, if a party in interest. A court may also raise the issue of support on its own motion.

Information Technology Leaders, Inc. (VITL) and other entities in order to update the health information technology plan pursuant to this section, including applicable standards, protocols, and pilot programs, and may enter into a contract or grant agreement with VITL or other entities to update some or all of the plan. Upon approval by the secretary, the updated plan shall be distributed to the commission on health care reform; the commissioner of information and innovation; the commissioner of banking, insurance, securities, and health care administration; the director commissioner of the office of Vermont health access; the secretary of human services; the commissioner of health; the commissioner of mental health; the commissioner of disabilities, aging, and independent living; the senate committee on health and welfare; the house committee on health care; affected parties; and interested stakeholders.