CHAPTER 23--H.F.No. 1983

An act relating to human services; modifying intervener services for persons who are deafblind; amending Minnesota Statutes 2018, sections 256C.23, by adding a subdivision; 256C.261.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MINNESOTA:

Section 1. Minnesota Statutes 2018, section 256C.23, is amended by adding a subdivision to read:

Subd. 7. **Family and community intervener.** "Family and community intervener" means a paraprofessional, specifically trained in deafblindness, who works one-on-one with a child who is deafblind to provide critical connections to people and the environment.

Sec. 2. Minnesota Statutes 2018, section 256C.261, is amended to read:

256C.261 SERVICES FOR PERSONS WHO ARE DEAFBLIND.

(a) The commissioner of human services shall use at least 35 percent of the deafblind services biennial base level grant funding for services and other supports for a child who is deafblind and the child's family. The commissioner shall use at least 25 percent of the deafblind services biennial base level grant funding for services and other supports for an adult who is deafblind.

The commissioner shall award grants for the purposes of:

(1) providing services and supports to persons who are deafblind; and

(2) developing and providing training to counties and the network of senior citizen service providers. The purpose of the training grants is to teach counties how to use existing programs that capture federal financial participation to meet the needs of eligible persons who are deafblind and to build capacity of senior service programs to meet the needs of seniors with a dual sensory hearing and vision loss.

(b) The commissioner may make grants:

(1) for services and training provided by organizations; and

(2) to develop and administer consumer-directed services.

(c) Consumer-directed services shall be provided in whole by grant-funded providers. The Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Services Division's regional service centers shall not provide any aspect of a grant-funded consumer-directed services program.

(d) Any entity that is able to satisfy the grant criteria is eligible to receive a grant under paragraph (a).

(e) Deafblind service providers may, but are not required to, provide intervenor services as part of the service package provided with grant funds under this section. Intervener services include services provided by a family and community intervener as described in paragraph (f).

(f) The family and community intervener, as defined in section 256C.23, subdivision 7, provides services to open channels of communication between the child and others; facilitate the development or use of receptive and expressive communication skills by the child; and develop and maintain a trusting, interactive

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relationship that promotes social and emotional well-being. The family and community intervener also provides access to information and the environment, and facilitates opportunities for learning and development. A family and community intervener must have specific training in deafblindness, building language and communication skills, and intervention strategies.

Presented to the governor May 13, 2019

Signed by the governor May 15, 2019, 2:53 p.m.

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