



WISCONSIN LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL ACT MEMO

2015 Wisconsin Act 331
[2015 Assembly Bill 351]

**Noncustodial Parent Ordered to
Register for Children First Program**

BACKGROUND

Wisconsin's Children First program provides employment and training services to noncustodial parents who are unemployed or underemployed and are, therefore, unable to meet their child support obligations. The program is administered at the county level by county agencies, tribal agencies, and W-2 agencies that contract with the Department of Children and Families. A noncustodial parent completes the program after making child support payments in full and on time for three consecutive months or after participating in the program for 16 weeks, whichever comes first.

2015 WISCONSIN ACT 331

Admission into the Children First program must be court ordered. Under prior law, if a noncustodial parent did not reside in the county where the court action took place, a court was permitted to order the noncustodial parent to participate in the Children First program only if the noncustodial parent's county of residence operated a Children First program and agreed to enroll the parent.

Wisconsin Act 331 permits a court to order a noncustodial parent to participate in the Children First program if the parent resides in a county, **or resides within a reasonable driving distance from a county**, that operates a Children First program and agrees to enroll the parent. The court must determine whether a particular driving distance is reasonable.

Effective date: April 1, 2016

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RES:mcm;ksm

This memo provides a brief description of the Act. For more detailed information, consult the text of the law and related legislative documents at the Legislature's Web site at: <http://www.legis.wisconsin.gov>.