

49A.

(A) (1) IT SHALL BE THE POLICY OF THE STATE OF MARYLAND TO INSTITUTE A SYSTEMATIC, LONG TERM PROGRAM AND PROCEDURE FOR UPGRADING GRANTS FOR AID TO FAMILIES WITH DEPENDENT CHILDREN SO THAT THESE GRANTS, TOGETHER WITH THE CASH VALUE OF FOOD STAMPS FOR WHICH RECIPIENTS ARE ELIGIBLE, IF ANY, SHALL EQUAL AN UPDATED STANDARD OF NEED, AS DEFINED HEREIN.

(2) THE OBJECTIVE OF THIS PROCEDURE SHALL BE TO ACHIEVE A PERCENTAGE OF NEED OF 100 PERCENT OF THE UPDATED STANDARD OF NEED BY NOT LATER THAN FISCAL YEAR 1992.

(B) (1) BY FEBRUARY NOVEMBER 1 OF EACH YEAR, THE SECRETARY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES SHALL PREPARE AND SUBMIT TO THE GOVERNOR AND THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND AN UPDATED STANDARD OF NEED FOR MARYLAND WELFARE GRANTS.

(2) THE STANDARD OF NEED FOR MARYLAND WELFARE GRANTS SHALL:

(I) SET FORTH THE MINIMUM STANDARD AMOUNTS REQUIRED FOR VARIOUS CATEGORIES OF AID;

(II) BE PREDICATED UPON AN ANALYSIS OF THE RELEVANT COMPONENTS OF THE MOST RECENT INFORMATION AVAILABLE FROM THE BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS CONSUMER PRICE INDEX, AS APPLIED TO THE 1979 REPORT OF THE GOVERNOR'S COMMISSION ON WELFARE GRANTS; AND

(III) BE APPLICABLE TO THE NEXT ENSUING FISCAL YEAR AFTER SUBMISSION.

(C) THE DEPARTMENT OF FISCAL SERVICES ANNUALLY SHALL REVIEW THE FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDED STANDARDS AND REPORT TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY AS TO THEIR REASONABLENESS, BASIS IN FACT, CONSISTENCY IN APPROACH AND SUCH OTHER MATTERS AS THE DIRECTOR OF THE DEPARTMENT MAY DEEM APPROPRIATE.

(D) (1) THE GOVERNOR SHALL RECOMMEND A PROGRAM OF CASH GRANT INCREASES WHICH MAY REASONABLY BE EXPECTED TO ACHIEVE THE OBJECTIVES OF THE PROGRAM WITHIN THE TIME FRAME ANTICIPATED.

(2) HOWEVER, FOR FISCAL YEAR 1983, AND FOR EACH YEAR THEREAFTER, THE GOVERNOR SHALL INCLUDE IN THE BUDGET BILL, SUBJECT TO AVAILABILITY, SUFFICIENT FUNDS TO INCREASE AID TO FAMILIES WITH DEPENDENT CHILDREN GRANT LEVELS BY NOT LESS THAN 10 PERCENT OVER THE PREVIOUS YEAR, UNLESS AND UNTIL THE PERCENTAGE OF NEED MET BY THE STATE REACHES 100 PERCENT.