

Committee on Criminal Justice

CS/SB 678 — Forensic Investigative Genetic Genealogy Grant Program

by Criminal Justice Committee and Senator Bradley

The bill creates the Forensic Investigative Genetic Genealogy Grant Program within the Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE). The purpose of the program is to award grants to statewide and local law enforcement agencies and medical examiner's offices to support local agencies in the processing of DNA samples.

The FDLE must annually award to law enforcement agencies and medical examiner's offices funds specially appropriated for the grant program to cover expenses related to using forensic investigative genetic genealogy methods to generate investigative leads for criminal investigations of violent crimes and aid in identifying unidentified human remains.

The term "forensic investigative genetic genealogy" means the combined application of laboratory testing, genetic genealogy, and law enforcement investigative methods to develop investigative leads in unsolved violent crimes and provide investigative leads as to the identity of unidentified human remains. Such methods must be in accordance with department rule and compatible with multiple genealogical databases that are available for law enforcement use. Grant funding is intended for developing genealogy DNA profiles consisting of 100,000 or more markers.

Grants may be used in accordance with FDLE rule to:

- Analyze DNA samples collected under applicable legal authority using forensic genetic genealogy methods for solving violent crimes.
- Analyze unidentified human remains.

Grant recipients must provide a report to the FDLE executive director no later than one year after receiving the funding. The report must include:

- The amount of annual funding received;
- The number and type of cases pursued using forensic genetic genealogy methods;
- The type of forensic investigative genetic genealogy methods used, including the name of the laboratory to which such testing is outsourced, if any, and the identity of the entity conducting any genetic genealogical research;
- The result of the testing, such as decedent identification, perpetrator identification, or no identification; and
- The amount of time it took to make an identification or to determine no identification could be made.

The FDLE may adopt rules to implement and administer the grant program, and to establish the process for the allocation of funds. For Fiscal Year 2024-2025, the sum of \$500,000 in nonrecurring funds is appropriated from the General Revenue Fund to the FDLE for the Forensic Investigative Genetic Genealogy Grant Program.

If approved by the Governor, or allowed to become law without the Governor's signature, these provisions take effect July 1, 2024.

Vote: Senate 40-0; House 113-0