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| Tab 1 | CS/SB 556 by ED, Berman; Identical to CS/H 00453 Requirements for a Standard High School Diploma | | | | | |
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| Tab 2 | SB 794 by Jones; Compare to CS/H 00565 Agency for Persons with Disabilities | | | | | |
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| Tab 3 | SB 1600 by Yarborough; Identical to H 01331 Child Welfare | | | | | |
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The Florida Senate
COMMITTEE MEETING EXPANDED AGENDA

CHILDREN, FAMILIES, AND ELDER AFFAIRS

Senator Grall, Chair
Senator Garcia, Vice Chair

MEETING DATE: Tuesday, February 10, 2026

TIME: 12:00 noon—2:30 p.m.

PLACE: 301 Senate Building

MEMBERS: Senator Grall, Chair; Senator Garcia, Vice Chair; Senators Harrell, Rouson, Sharief, and Simon

| TAB | BILL NO. and INTRODUCER | BILL DESCRIPTION and SENATE COMMITTEE ACTIONS | COMMITTEE ACTION |
|-----|---|--|----------------------------|
| 1 | CS/SB 556 Education Pre-K - 12 / Berman (Identical CS/H 453) | Requirements for a Standard High School Diploma; Providing that students can substitute marching band experience for physical education and performing fine arts credit requirements for a standard high school diploma; providing that students with disabilities may participate in the Special Olympics to meet the physical education requirement for a standard high school diploma, etc. ED 01/13/2026 Fav/CS CF 02/10/2026 Favorable RC | Favorable Yeas 6 Nays 0 |
| 2 | SB 794 Jones (Compare CS/H 565) | Agency for Persons with Disabilities; Requiring level 2 employment screening for all employees of residential facilities and adult day training programs; deleting a provision requiring an organization to implement a certain mentoring program to be qualified for purposes of providing support coordination services to iBudget clients, etc. CF 02/10/2026 Fav/CS AHS FP | Fav/CS Yeas 6 Nays 0 |
| 3 | SB 1600 Yarborough (Identical H 1331) | Child Welfare; Requiring certain organizations and agencies to provide employees with annual training approved by the Department of Children and Families relating to the protection of children from abuse and neglect; requiring the department to create a process to recognize and approve qualified accrediting organizations for a specified purpose; requiring the department to collect and analyze certain reports of abuse which are reported from or occurred at a child-serving organization; requiring the Office of Insurance Regulation to approve rating plans for employer's liability insurance which provide a premium discount to certain child-serving organizations, etc. CF 02/10/2026 Fav/CS AHS FP | Fav/CS Yeas 6 Nays 0 |

| TAB | OFFICE and APPOINTMENT (HOME CITY) | FOR TERM ENDING | COMMITTEE ACTION |
|---|------------------------------------|----------------------|------------------------------------|
| Senate Confirmation Hearing: A public hearing will be held for consideration of the below-named executive appointment to the office indicated. | | | |
| Secretary of Children and Families | | | |
| 4 | Hatch, Taylor N. () | Pleasure of Governor | Recommend Confirm Yeas 5 Nays 1 |

| TAB | BILL NO. and INTRODUCER | BILL DESCRIPTION and SENATE COMMITTEE ACTIONS | COMMITTEE ACTION |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------|--|------------------|
| Other Related Meeting Documents | | | |

By the Committee on Education Pre-K - 12; and Senator Berman

581-01915-26

2026556c1

A bill to be entitled

An act relating to requirements for a standard high school diploma; amending s. 1003.4282, F.S.; providing that students can substitute marching band experience for physical education and performing fine arts credit requirements for a standard high school diploma; providing that students with disabilities may participate in the Special Olympics to meet the physical education requirement for a standard high school diploma; providing an effective date.

Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

Section 1. Paragraph (f) of subsection (3) and paragraph (b) of subsection (8) of section 1003.4282, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

1003.4282 Requirements for a standard high school diploma.—

(3) STANDARD HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA; COURSE AND ASSESSMENT REQUIREMENTS.—

(f) *One credit in physical education.*—Physical education must include the integration of health. Participation in an interscholastic sport at the junior varsity or varsity level for two full seasons shall satisfy the one-credit requirement in physical education. A district school board may not require that the one credit in physical education be taken during the 9th grade year. Completion of 2 years of marching band shall satisfy the one-credit requirement in physical education and ~~or~~ the one-credit requirement in performing arts. This credit may not be used to satisfy the personal fitness requirement or the

581-01915-26

2026556c1

requirement for adaptive physical education under an individual education plan (IEP) or 504 plan. Completion of one semester with a grade of "C" or better in a marching band class, in a physical activity class that requires participation in marching band activities as an extracurricular activity, or in a dance class shall satisfy one-half credit in physical education or one-half credit in performing arts. This credit may not be used to satisfy the personal fitness requirement or the requirement for adaptive physical education under an IEP or 504 plan. Completion of 2 years in a Reserve Officer Training Corps (R.O.T.C.) class, a significant component of which is drills, shall satisfy the one-credit requirement in physical education and the one-credit requirement in performing arts. This credit may not be used to satisfy the personal fitness requirement or the requirement for adaptive physical education under an IEP or 504 plan.

(8) STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES.—Beginning with students entering grade 9 in the 2014-2015 school year, this subsection applies to a student with a disability.

(b) The following options, in addition to the other options specified in this section, may be used to satisfy the standard high school diploma requirements, as specified in the student's individual education plan:

1. For a student with a disability for whom the IEP team has determined that the Florida Alternate Assessment is the most appropriate measure of the student's skills:

a. A combination of course substitutions, assessments, industry certifications, other acceleration options, or occupational completion points appropriate to the student's

581-01915-26

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59 unique skills and abilities that meet the criteria established
60 by State Board of Education rule.

61 b. A portfolio of quantifiable evidence that documents a
62 student's mastery of academic standards through rigorous metrics
63 established by State Board of Education rule. A portfolio may
64 include, but is not limited to, documentation of work
65 experience, internships, community service, and postsecondary
66 credit.

67 2. A student with a disability may participate in the
68 Special Olympics as a course substitution for the physical
69 education requirement under paragraph (3)(f). A student who
70 chooses this option must participate in the Special Olympics for
71 one school year, as determined by the student's IEP team.

72 3. For a student with a disability for whom the IEP team
73 has determined that mastery of academic and employment
74 competencies is the most appropriate way for a student to
75 demonstrate his or her skills:

76 a. Documented completion of the minimum high school
77 graduation requirements, including the number of course credits
78 prescribed by rules of the State Board of Education.

79 b. Documented achievement of all annual goals and short-
80 term objectives for academic and employment competencies,
81 industry certifications, and occupational completion points
82 specified in the student's transition plan. The documentation
83 must be verified by the IEP team.

84 c. Documented successful employment for the number of hours
85 per week specified in the student's transition plan, for the
86 equivalent of 1 semester, and payment of a minimum wage in
87 compliance with the requirements of the federal Fair Labor

581-01915-26

2026556c1

Standards Act.

d. Documented mastery of the academic and employment competencies, industry certifications, and occupational completion points specified in the student's transition plan. The documentation must be verified by the IEP team, the employer, and the teacher. The transition plan must be developed and signed by the student, parent, teacher, and employer before placement in employment and must identify the following:

(I) The expected academic and employment competencies, industry certifications, and occupational completion points;

(II) The criteria for determining and certifying mastery of the competencies;

(III) The work schedule and the minimum number of hours to be worked per week; and

(IV) A description of the supervision to be provided by the school district.

~~4.3.~~ Any change to the high school graduation option specified in the student's IEP must be approved by the parent and is subject to verification for appropriateness by an independent reviewer selected by the parent as provided in s. 1003.572.

The State Board of Education shall adopt rules under ss. 120.536(1) and 120.54 to implement this subsection, including rules that establish the minimum requirements for students described in this subsection to earn a standard high school diploma. The State Board of Education shall adopt emergency rules pursuant to ss. 120.536(1) and 120.54.

Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2026.

APPEARANCE RECORD2/10/26

Meeting Date

Children and families

Committee

Deliver both copies of this form to
Senate professional staff conducting the meetingSB 556

Bill Number or Topic

Amendment Barcode (if applicable)

Name Joshua GodfreyPhone 850-321-4226Address 2442 Dundee Dr.

Email _____

Street

Tallahassee

City

State

32308

Zip

Speaking: ☒ For ☐ Against ☐ Information**OR**Waive Speaking: ☐ In Support ☐ Against**PLEASE CHECK ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:**☒ I am appearing without
compensation or sponsorship.☐ I am a registered lobbyist,
representing:☐ I am not a lobbyist, but received
something of value for my appearance
(travel, meals, lodging, etc.),
sponsored by:

While it is a tradition to encourage public testimony, time may not permit all persons wishing to speak to be heard at this hearing. Those who do speak may be asked to limit their remarks so that as many persons as possible can be heard. If you have questions about registering to lobby please see Fla. Stat. §11.045 and Joint Rule 1. [2020-2022 Joint Rules.pdf \(flsenate.gov\)](#)

This form is part of the public record for this meeting.

S-001 (08/10/2021)

The Florida Senate
APPEARANCE RECORD

SB556

2/10/26
Meeting Date
Children and Families
Committee

Deliver both copies of this form to
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Bill Number or Topic

Amendment Barcode (if applicable)

Name Damien McNeil

Phone 850-904-6238

Address 36 Poplar Ave.
Street

Email damienmcneil@yahoo.com

Shalimar, FL
City State

32579
Zip

Speaking: ☒ For ☐ Against ☐ Information **OR** Waive Speaking: ☐ In Support ☐ Against

PLEASE CHECK ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:

☒ I am appearing without
compensation or sponsorship.

☐ I am a registered lobbyist,
representing:

☐ I am not a lobbyist, but received
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(travel, meals, lodging, etc.),
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S-001 (08/10/2021)

The Florida Senate

APPEARANCE RECORD

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Senate professional staff conducting the meeting

02/10/21

Meeting Date

SB 556

Bill Number or Topic

Committee

Amendment Barcode (if applicable)

Name

Joy-Ann REECE

Phone

954 292 6181

Address

2245 SW 80 TER

Email

JAREECE28@HOTMAIL.COM

Street

MICAMAR

City

FL

State

33025

Zip

Speaking:



For



Against



Information

OR

Waive Speaking:



In Support



Against

PLEASE CHECK ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:



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compensation or sponsorship.



I am a registered lobbyist,
representing:



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something of value for my appearance
(travel, meals, lodging, etc.),
sponsored by:

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S-001 (08/10/2021)

The Florida Senate

APPEARANCE RECORD

Deliver both copies of this form to
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10 Feb 26

Meeting Date

Children, Family, Elder

Committee

SB 556

Bill Number or Topic

Amendment Barcode (if applicable)

Name

Nicole Grabne

Phone

940-867-7534

Address

8506 Laguna Cir.

Email

ngrabne04@gmail.com

Street

Micco

City

FL

State

32976

Zip

Speaking: ☐ For ☐ Against ☐ Information

OR

Waive Speaking: ☒ In Support ☐ Against

PLEASE CHECK ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:

☒ I am appearing without
compensation or sponsorship.

☐ I am a registered lobbyist,
representing:

☐ I am not a lobbyist, but received
something of value for my appearance
(travel, meals, lodging, etc.),
sponsored by:

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S-001 (08/10/2021)

The Florida Senate

APPEARANCE RECORD

SB 556

Bill Number or Topic

Amendment Barcode (if applicable)

Deliver both copies of this form to
Senate professional staff conducting the meeting

Meeting Date

Committee

Name

Phone

Address

Email

Street

City

State

Zip

Speaking: ☐ For ☐ Against ☐ Information **OR** Waive Speaking: ☒ In Support ☐ Against

PLEASE CHECK ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:

☒ I am appearing without compensation or sponsorship.

☐ I am a registered lobbyist, representing:

☐ I am not a lobbyist, but received something of value for my appearance (travel, meals, lodging, etc.), sponsored by:

While it is a tradition to encourage public testimony, time may not permit all persons wishing to speak to be heard at this hearing. Those who do speak may be asked to limit their remarks so that as many persons as possible can be heard. If you have questions about registering to lobby please see Fla. Stat. §11.045 and Joint Rule 1. [2020-2022 Joint Rules.pdf \(flsenate.gov\)](#)

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S-001 (08/10/2021)

The Florida Senate

APPEARANCE RECORD

Deliver both copies of this form to
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02/10/24
Meeting Date

SB 556
Bill Number or Topic

Children, Families & Elder Affairs
Committee

Amendment Barcode (if applicable)

Name Liz Delegal Phone 850-273-1043

Address 215 S. Monroe St. Suite 710 Email liz@2floridapromise.org
Street

Tallahassee FL 32301
City State Zip

Speaking: ☐ For ☐ Against ☐ Information **OR** Waive Speaking: ☒ In Support ☐ Against

PLEASE CHECK ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:

☐ I am appearing without
compensation or sponsorship.

☒ I am a registered lobbyist,
representing:

The Foundation for
Florida's Future

☐ I am not a lobbyist, but received
something of value for my appearance
(travel, meals, lodging, etc.),
sponsored by:

While it is a tradition to encourage public testimony, time may not permit all persons wishing to speak to be heard at this hearing. Those who do speak may be asked to limit their remarks so that as many persons as possible can be heard. If you have questions about registering to lobby please see Fla. Stat. §11.045 and Joint Rule 1. [2020-2022JointRules.pdf \(flsenate.gov\)](#)

This form is part of the public record for this meeting.

S-001 (08/10/2021)

The Florida Senate

APPEARANCE RECORD

Deliver both copies of this form to
Senate professional staff conducting the meeting

~~1000~~ 556

Bill Number or Topic

Amendment Barcode (if applicable)

2/10/2026
Meeting Date
Children Family
Committee Affairs
Committee

Name Orange County Public Schools Phone 407 2405 2050

Address 445 W Amelia St Email marquise.mcmillan@
Street OCPS.net
Orlando FL 32801
City State Zip

Speaking: ☐ For ☐ Against ☐ Information **OR** Waive Speaking: ☒ In Support ☐ Against

PLEASE CHECK ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:

☐ I am appearing without
compensation or sponsorship.

☒ I am a registered lobbyist,
representing:

OCPS

☐ I am not a lobbyist, but received
something of value for my appearance
(travel, meals, lodging, etc.),
sponsored by:

While it is a tradition to encourage public testimony, time may not permit all persons wishing to speak to be heard at this hearing. Those who do speak may be asked to limit their remarks so that as many persons as possible can be heard. If you have questions about registering to lobby please see Fla. Stat. §11.045 and Joint Rule 1. [2020-2022JointRules.pdf \(flsenate.gov\)](#)

This form is part of the public record for this meeting.

S-001 (08/10/2021)

The Florida Senate
BILL ANALYSIS AND FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

(This document is based on the provisions contained in the legislation as of the latest date listed below.)

Prepared By: The Professional Staff of the Committee on Children, Families, and Elder Affairs

BILL: CS/SB 556

INTRODUCER: Education Pre-K - 12 Committee and Senator Berman

SUBJECT: Requirements for a Standard High School Diploma

DATE: February 9, 2026

REVISED: _____

| | ANALYST | STAFF DIRECTOR | REFERENCE | ACTION |
|----|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------|-----------------------------|
| 1. | <u>Sabitsch</u> | <u>Bouck</u> | <u>ED</u> | <u>Fav/CS</u> |
| 2. | <u>Kennedy</u> | <u>Tuszynski</u> | <u>CF</u> | <u>Favorable</u> |
| 3. | <u> </u> | <u> </u> | <u>RC</u> | <u> </u> |

Please see Section IX. for Additional Information:

COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE - Substantial Changes

Summary:

CS/SB 556 allows a student with a disability to meet the required one credit of physical education for a standard high school diploma by participating in the Special Olympics.

Additionally, the bill allows completion of two years of marching band to substitute for both physical education and fine or performing arts towards a standard high school diploma.

The bill takes effect on July 1, 2026.

I. Present Situation:

Florida Graduation Requirements

Florida's graduation requirements for receiving a standard high school diploma are outlined in statute.¹ Florida students entering grade nine may choose from one of five options to earn a standard diploma. The five options are:²

- 24-credit program.
- 18-credit program, Academically Challenging Curriculum to Enhance Learning or ACCEL.
- A Career and Technical Education (CTE) Pathway.

¹ Sections 1003.4282, and 1002.3105, F.S.

² Florida Department of Education, Student Support Services, *Graduation Requirements*, <https://www.fldoe.org/schools/k-12-public-schools/sss/graduation-requirements/> (last visited Jan. 10, 2026).

- An International Baccalaureate (IB) curriculum.
- An Advanced International Certificate of Education (AICE) curriculum.

To be awarded a standard high school diploma under the 24-credit program requires students entering the ninth grade in 2023-2024 or later must earn the following credits:³

- Four credits in English Language Arts (ELA).
- Four credits in mathematics.
- Three credits in science.
- Three credits in social studies.
- One credit in fine or performing arts, speech and debate, or career and technical education.
- One credit in physical education, which includes the integration of health.⁴
- Seven and one-half credits in electives.
- One-half credit in personal financial literacy.

Students may choose to substitute the required one credit in physical education through participation in an interscholastic sport at the junior varsity or varsity level for two full seasons. Participation in two years of marching band may satisfy one credit of physical education or one credit in fine or performing arts. Students may also satisfy one-half of the credit for physical education by completing one semester and earning a “C” or better in a marching band class, a physical activity class that requires participation in marching band activities, or a dance class.⁵ Students may also substitute the required one credit in physical education through completion of two years of Reserve Officer Training Corps (R.O.T.C) class.

In each circumstance where students may choose a substitute for the one credit in physical education, Florida law does not allow the substitution to be used to satisfy the personal fitness requirement or the requirement for adaptive physical education under an individual education plan (IEP) or 504 plan.⁶

Special Olympics

The mission of the Special Olympics is to provide year-round sports training and athletic competition in a variety of Olympic-type sports for children and adults with intellectual disabilities, giving them continuing opportunities to develop physical fitness, demonstrate courage, experience joy and participate in a sharing of gifts, skills and friendship with their families, other Special Olympics athletes and the community.⁷

The origins of the Special Olympics can be traced to the first Camp Shriver that was founded by Eunice Kennedy Shriver in the early 1960’s on her Maryland farm. Her vision was that through sports, the lives of people with intellectual disabilities would be transformed and public perceptions would be changed forever.⁸

³ Section 1003.4282(3), F.S.

⁴ Section 1003.4282(3)(f), F.S.

⁵ *Id.*

⁶ *Id.*

⁷ Special Olympics, *About Page*, <https://www.specialolympics.org/about/mission> (last visited Jan. 6, 2026).

⁸ Special Olympics, *Camp Shriver – The Beginning of a Movement*, <https://www.specialolympics.org/about/history/camp-shriver> (last visited Jan. 7, 2026).

The establishment of these camps gathered momentum that led to the first International Special Olympics Summer Games held at Soldier Field in Chicago as a joint venture between the Kennedy Foundation and the Chicago Park District. About 1,000 athletes with intellectual disabilities from the United States and Canada competed in the first Special Olympics International Summer Games in Chicago. The event was so successful that Eunice Kennedy Shriver soon pledged that more games would be held in 1970 and every two years thereafter in a "Biennial International Special Olympics."⁹

Today the Special Olympics has grown to be a worldwide organization with 256 national and state programs in 207 countries and jurisdictions. In 2024, there were 4,660,299 participants that included 3.8 million athletes with intellectual disabilities that were joined by over 800,000 unified partners (individuals without an intellectual disability who may or may not have another type of disability).¹⁰

Through the Special Olympics there are more than 30 Olympic-style individual and team sports that provide meaningful training and competition opportunities for persons with intellectual disabilities. Sports offered are varied and include such diverse activities as:¹¹

- Alpine Skiing;
- Basketball;
- Bowling;
- Competitive Cheer;
- Cycling;
- Equestrian;
- Figure Skating;
- Judo;
- Kayaking; and
- Powerlifting.

The Special Olympics also supports Unified Sports, which joins people with and without intellectual disabilities on the same team. It was inspired by a simple principle: training together and playing together is a quick path to friendship and understanding. Young people with disabilities do not often get a chance to play on their school sports teams. U.S. states are adopting the Unified Sports approach that Special Olympics pioneered. Special Olympics Unified Champion Schools® programming is in more than 10,800 schools in 50 U.S. states, the District of Columbia, and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico.¹²

⁹ Special Olympics, *The Beginning of a Worldwide Movement*, <https://www.specialolympics.org/about/history/camp-shriver> (last visited Jan. 7, 2026).

¹⁰ Special Olympics, *Global Reach Report* (2024), available at: <https://www.specialolympics.org/about/reports>.

¹¹ Special Olympics, *Sports*, <https://www.specialolympics.org/what-we-do/sports/sports-offered> (last visited January 7, 2026).

¹² Special Olympics, *Unified Sports*, <https://www.specialolympics.org/what-we-do/sports/unified-sports> (last visited Jan. 7, 2026).

Special Olympics in Florida

The Special Olympics in Florida consists of 69,453 registered athletes and unified partners (2023) supported by 15,521 coaches and 45,225 volunteers. There are 23 different individual and team sports offered.¹³

Currently, there are 303 public high schools participating in the Special Olympics United Champion Schools and Developmental Sports Program that include 4,664 athletes and 1,144 unified partners. Additionally, there are 1,330 high school level programs taking place in Florida communities outside of public schools that include 4,664 athletes and 1,144 unified partners.¹⁴

II. Effect of Proposed Changes:

CS/SB 556 amends s. 1003.4282, F.S., to allow students with disabilities who participate in the Special Olympics to substitute that participation for the required one credit of physical education to earn a standard high school diploma.

The provision requires one year of participation in the Special Olympics as determined by the student's Individual Education Plan (IEP) team.

The bill allows the completion of two years of marching band to satisfy the one-credit requirement in physical education and the one-credit requirement in fine or performing arts to earn a standard high school diploma, rather than just one credit in either physical education or fine or performing arts.

The bill takes effect July 1, 2026.

III. Constitutional Issues:**A. Municipality/County Mandates Restrictions:**

None.

B. Public Records/Open Meetings Issues:

None.

C. Trust Funds Restrictions:

None.

D. State Tax or Fee Increases:

None.

¹³ Special Olympics, *Florida Fact Sheet*, available at: <https://media.specialolympics.org/resources/leading-a-program/program-profiles/SONA/Florida-FactSheet-2024.pdf>.

¹⁴ Email, Special Olympics Florida (January 6, 2026).

E. Other Constitutional Issues:

None identified.

IV. Fiscal Impact Statement:

A. Tax/Fee Issues:

None.

B. Private Sector Impact:

None.

C. Government Sector Impact:

This bill does not have a fiscal impact on state revenues or expenditures.

V. Technical Deficiencies:

None.

VI. Related Issues:

None.

VII. Statutes Affected:

This bill substantially amends s. 1003.4282 of the Florida Statutes.

VIII. Additional Information:

A. Committee Substitute – Statement of Substantial Changes:

(Summarizing differences between the Committee Substitute and the prior version of the bill.)

CS by Education Pre-K – 12 Committee on January 13, 2026:

The committee substitute modifies s. 1003.4282, F.S., to allow a student to substitute completion of two years of marching band for the one-credit requirement in physical education and the one-credit requirement in fine or performing arts to earn a standard high school diploma instead of just one of the two requirements.

B. Amendments:

None.

By Senator Jones

34-01010-26

2026794__

1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to the Agency for Persons with
3 Disabilities; amending s. 393.0655, F.S.; requiring
4 level 2 employment screening for all employees of
5 residential facilities and adult day training
6 programs; providing background screening requirements
7 for such employees; amending s. 393.0663, F.S.;
8 deleting a provision requiring an organization to
9 implement a certain mentoring program to be qualified
10 for purposes of providing support coordination
11 services to iBudget clients; amending s. 393.0673,
12 F.S.; revising administrative fine requirements;
13 providing an effective date.
14

15 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:
16

17 Section 1. Subsection (1) of section 393.0655, Florida
18 Statutes, is amended to read:

19 393.0655 Screening of direct service providers.—

20 (1) MINIMUM STANDARDS.—The agency shall require level 2
21 employment screening pursuant to chapter 435 for direct service
22 providers who are unrelated to their clients, including support
23 coordinators, and all employees ~~managers and supervisors~~ of
24 residential facilities or adult day training programs licensed
25 under this chapter and any other persons, including volunteers,
26 who provide care or services, who have access to a client's
27 living areas, or who have access to a client's funds or personal
28 property. Background screening for all employees must include
29 employment history checks as provided in s. 435.03(1) and local

34-01010-26

2026794__

30 criminal records checks through local law enforcement agencies.

31 (a) A volunteer who assists on an intermittent basis for
32 less than 10 hours per month does not have to be screened if a
33 person who meets the screening requirement of this section is
34 always present and has the volunteer within his or her line of
35 sight.

36 (b) Licensed physicians, nurses, or other professionals
37 licensed and regulated by the Department of Health are not
38 subject to background screening pursuant to this section if they
39 are providing a service that is within their scope of licensed
40 practice.

41 (c) A person selected by the family or the individual with
42 developmental disabilities and paid by the family or the
43 individual to provide supports or services is not required to
44 have a background screening under this section.

45 (d) Persons 12 years of age or older, including family
46 members, residing with a direct services provider who provides
47 services to clients in his or her own place of residence are
48 subject to background screening; however, such persons who are
49 12 to 18 years of age shall be screened for delinquency records
50 only.

51 Section 2. Paragraph (b) of subsection (2) of section
52 393.0663, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

53 393.0663 Support coordination; legislative intent;
54 qualified organizations; agency duties; due process;
55 rulemaking.—

56 (2) QUALIFIED ORGANIZATIONS.—

57 (b) The agency shall use qualified organizations for the
58 purpose of providing all support coordination services to

34-01010-26

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iBudget clients in this state. In order to be qualified, an organization must:

1. Employ four or more support coordinators;
2. Maintain a professional code of ethics and a disciplinary process that apply to all support coordinators within the organization;
3. Comply with the agency's cost containment initiatives;
4. Require support coordinators to ensure that client budgets are linked to levels of need;
5. Require support coordinators to perform all duties and meet all standards related to support coordination as provided in the Developmental Disabilities Individual Budgeting Waiver Services Coverage and Limitations Handbook;
6. Prohibit dual employment of a support coordinator if the dual employment adversely impacts the support coordinator's availability to clients;
7. Educate clients and families regarding identifying and preventing abuse, neglect, and exploitation;
8. Instruct clients and families on mandatory reporting requirements for abuse, neglect, and exploitation;
9. Submit within established timeframes all required documentation for requests for significant additional needs;
10. Require support coordinators to successfully complete training and professional development approved by the agency;
- 83 and
11. Require support coordinators to pass a competency-based assessment established by the agency; ~~and~~
- 86 ~~12. Implement a mentoring program approved by the agency~~
- 87 ~~for support coordinators who have worked as a support~~

34-01010-26

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~~coordinator for less than 12 months.~~

Section 3. Subsection (5) of section 393.0673, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

393.0673 Denial, suspension, or revocation of license; moratorium on admissions; administrative fines; procedures.—

(5) The agency, ~~as a part of any final order issued by it under this chapter,~~ may impose such fine as it deems proper, except that such fine may not exceed \$1,000 for each violation. Each day a violation of this chapter occurs constitutes a separate violation and is subject to a separate fine, but in no event may the aggregate amount of any fine exceed \$10,000. Fines paid by any facility licensee under this subsection shall be deposited in the Health Care Trust Fund and expended as provided in s. 400.063.

Section 4. This act shall take effect July 1, 2026.

The Florida Senate

APPEARANCE RECORD

Deliver both copies of this form to
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2/10/2024

Meeting Date

SB0794

Bill Number or Topic

Children Families & Elder

Committee

Amendment Barcode (if applicable)

Name

Melissa Moradas

Phone

941 804 3134

Address

7430 Century Oaks

Email

mmoradas@jpmibc.com

Street

Snaruta

State

FL

Zip

34241

City

Speaking: ☐ For ☐ Against ☐ Information

OR

Waive Speaking: ☒ In Support ☐ Against

PLEASE CHECK ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:

☒ I am appearing without
compensation or sponsorship.

☐ I am a registered lobbyist,
representing:

☐ I am not a lobbyist, but received
something of value for my appearance
(travel, meals, lodging, etc.),
sponsored by:

While it is a tradition to encourage public testimony, time may not permit all persons wishing to speak to be heard at this hearing. Those who do speak may be asked to limit their remarks so that as many persons as possible can be heard. If you have questions about registering to lobby please see Fla. Stat. §11.045 and Joint Rule 1. [2020-2022 Joint Rules.pdf \(flsenate.gov\)](#)

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S-001 (08/10/2021)

The Florida Senate

APPEARANCE RECORD

SB0794

8/10/2024

Meeting Date

Chr. Union Families? Elder

Committee

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Bill Number or Topic

Amendment Barcode (if applicable)

Name

Sean Moreau

Phone

941-400-2881

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Street

Sarasota

City

FL

State

34243

Zip

Email

smoreau@jandrewson.com

Speaking:

☐

For

☐

Against

☐

Information

OR

Waive Speaking:

☒

In Support

☐

Against

PLEASE CHECK ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:

☒

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compensation or sponsorship.

☐

I am a registered lobbyist,
representing:

☐

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S-001 (08/10/2021)

The Florida Senate

APPEARANCE RECORD

2/10/2026
Meeting Date

Children families & elder
Committee

Deliver both copies of this form to
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SB0794
Bill Number or Topic

Amendment Barcode (if applicable)

Name Kayla Farwell

Phone 727-643-0912

Address 2644 49th St. S
Street

Email Kfarwell@jfmwsc.com

Gulfport FL 33707
City State Zip

Speaking: ☐ For ☐ Against ☐ Information

OR

Waive Speaking: ☒ In Support ☐ Against

PLEASE CHECK ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:

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S-001 (08/10/2021)

The Florida Senate

APPEARANCE RECORD

SB 0794

2/10/26

Meeting Date

Children Families + E7063

Committee

Deliver both copies of this form to
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Bill Number or Topic

Amendment Barcode (if applicable)

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Serge Font

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Street

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33610

City

State

Zip

Speaking:

☐

For

☐

Against

☐

Information

OR

Waive Speaking:

☒

In Support

☐

Against

PLEASE CHECK ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:

☒

I am appearing without
compensation or sponsorship.

☐

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representing:

☐

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something of value for my appearance
(travel, meals, lodging, etc.),
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S-001 (08/10/2021)

The Florida Senate

APPEARANCE RECORD

Deliver both copies of this form to
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2/10/2022
Meeting Date

Children families & peers
Committee

SB0794
Bill Number or Topic

Name Dani Kline

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Address 7930 Century Oak Dr.
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City State Zip

Email dkline@jandmnwsc.com

Speaking: ☐ For ☐ Against ☐ Information

OR

Waive Speaking: ☒ In Support ☐ Against

PLEASE CHECK ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:

☒ I am appearing without
compensation or sponsorship.

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representing:

☐ I am not a lobbyist, but received
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(travel, meals, lodging, etc.),
sponsored by:

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S-001 (08/10/2021)

The Florida Senate

APPEARANCE RECORD

2/10/26

Meeting Date

794

Bill Number or Topic

Children, Families, & Elder Affairs

Committee

Deliver both copies of this form to
Senate professional staff conducting the meeting

Amendment Barcode (if applicable)

Name

Amanda Hayes

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386 972 0165

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E. Palatka

City

FL

State

32131

Zip

Speaking: ☐ For ☐ Against ☐ Information

OR

Waive Speaking: ☒ In Support ☐ Against

PLEASE CHECK ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:



I am appearing without
compensation or sponsorship.



I am a registered lobbyist,
representing:



I am not a lobbyist, but received
something of value for my appearance
(travel, meals, lodging, etc.),
sponsored by:

While it is a tradition to encourage public testimony, time may not permit all persons wishing to speak to be heard at this hearing. Those who do speak may be asked to limit their remarks so that as many persons as possible can be heard. If you have questions about registering to lobby please see Fla. Stat. §11.045 and Joint Rule 1. [2020-2022JointRules.pdf \(flsenate.gov\)](#)

This form is part of the public record for this meeting.

S-001 (08/10/2021)



660070

LEGISLATIVE ACTION

| Senate | . | House |
|------------|---|-------|
| Comm: RCS | . | |
| 02/11/2026 | . | |
| | . | |
| | . | |
| | . | |

The Committee on Children, Families, and Elder Affairs (Jones) recommended the following:

Senate Amendment (with title amendment)

Delete lines 51 - 102
and insert:

Section 2. (1)(a) For purposes of enhancing the quality, capacity, and consistency of waiver support coordination services, the Agency for Persons with Disabilities shall contract with a state university to develop and administer surveys regarding waiver support coordination services. The university shall administer surveys to owners and operators of



660070

all qualified organizations in this state; support coordinators currently employed by a qualified organization; and iBudget clients and their parents, caregivers, or legal guardians.

1. The surveys must, at a minimum, solicit data and input regarding:

a. The quality, consistency, and accessibility of services provided by support coordinators.

b. Attributes and behaviors that define high-quality support coordination.

c. Best practices and areas for improvement.

d. Quantitative and qualitative metrics suitable for assessing support coordinator performance.

e. Any other factors deemed pertinent by the university or the agency to improve service delivery.

2. Surveys of qualified organizations must also specifically address:

a. Professional and educational prerequisites established by the organization for employment as a support coordinator.

b. Methods used to assess core competencies.

c. The efficacy of the mentoring program required under s. 393.0663(2)(b), Florida Statutes.

d. Operational and systemic challenges with recruitment and retention of qualified support coordinators.

3. Surveys of individual waiver support coordinators must also specifically address:

a. Individual caseload ratios, capacity, and geographic service areas.

b. The efficacy of the mentoring program required under s. 393.0663(2)(b), Florida Statutes.



660070

c. Operational and systemic challenges to delivery of effective support coordination.

4. Surveys of iBudget clients and their parents, caregivers, or legal guardians must also specifically address satisfaction with support coordination services.

(b) By October 1, 2026, the state university must submit a final report to the agency, including a compilation and analysis of the survey results.

(2) The agency shall solicit input on enhancing support coordinator quality, capacity and consistency from the whole community of waiver program stakeholders, and shall conduct at least one publicly noticed hearing for this purpose in each service region.

(3) The agency shall conduct or contract for a gap analysis to assess the geographic distribution and caseload capacity of waiver support coordinators across this state.

(4) Using the information gathered under this section, the agency shall identify specific core competencies for waiver support coordinators, identify specific performance metrics to assess those core competencies, and make recommendations on how to standardize their assessment. By February 15, 2027, the agency shall submit a report to the Governor, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives on its findings and recommendations, and include the full report submitted by the state university under paragraph (1).

Section 3. This act shall take effect upon becoming a law.

===== T I T L E A M E N D M E N T =====
And the title is amended as follows:



660070

69 Delete lines 7 - 12
70 and insert:
71 for such employees; requiring the agency to contract
72 with a state university to develop and administer
73 certain surveys; providing requirements for such
74 surveys; requiring the state university to submit a
75 certain report to the agency by a specified date;
76 requiring the agency to conduct public hearings on
77 specified information; conduct or contract for a gap
78 analysis for specified purposes; identify core
79 competencies and performance metrics and make
80 recommendations for standardizing assessments; and
81 submit a certain report to the Governor and the
82 Legislature by a specified date;

The Florida Senate
BILL ANALYSIS AND FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

(This document is based on the provisions contained in the legislation as of the latest date listed below.)

Prepared By: The Professional Staff of the Committee on Children, Families, and Elder Affairs

BILL: CS/SB 794

INTRODUCER: Children, Families, and Elder Affairs Committee and Senator Jones

SUBJECT: Agency for Persons with Disabilities

DATE: February 11, 2025

REVISED: _____

| | ANALYST | STAFF DIRECTOR | REFERENCE | ACTION |
|----|---------|----------------|-----------|---------------|
| 1. | Fiore | Tuszynski | CF | Fav/CS |
| 2. | | | AHS | |
| 3. | | | FP | |

Please see Section IX. for Additional Information:

COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE - Substantial Changes

I. Summary:

CS/SB 794 strengthens protections for individuals with developmental disabilities by enhancing workforce screening and improving the quality, consistency, and accountability of support coordination services statewide. Specifically, the bill:

- Expands Level 2 background screening requirements to include all employees, not just managers and supervisor, of residential facilities and adult day training programs licensed under Chapter 393, Florida Statutes (F.S.);
- Requires the Agency for Persons with Disabilities (APD) to contract with a state university to develop and administer surveys of owners and operators of qualified organizations that provide care coordination services;
- Requires the APD to solicit input on enhancing waiver support coordinator services from relevant stakeholders and conduct at least one public hearing for this purpose in each service region of the state;
- Requires the APD to conduct or contract for a gap analysis to assess the caseload capacity of support coordinators; and
- Requires the APD to submit a report to the Governor and Legislature.

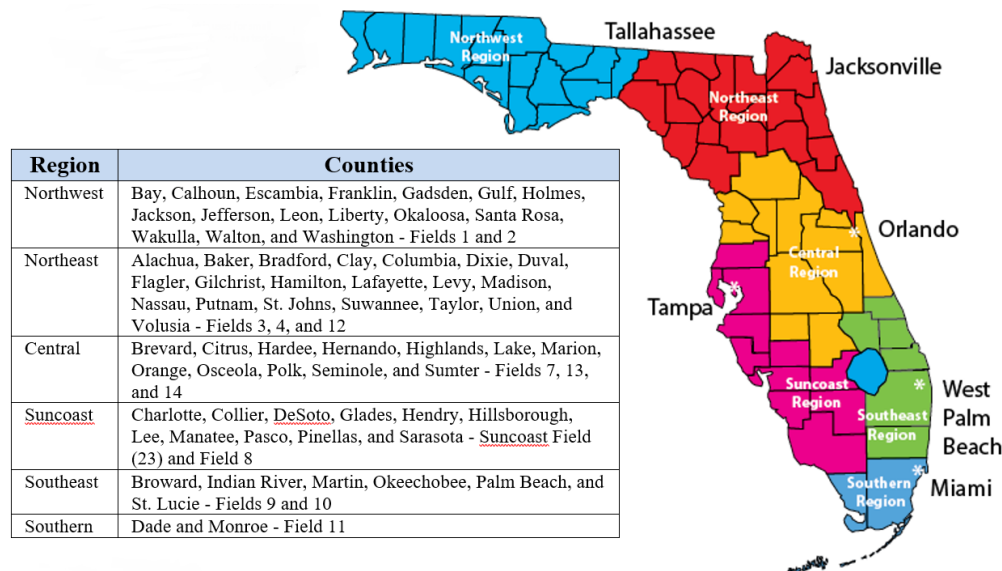
The bill will likely have a significant negative fiscal impact on the private and public sector.

The bill takes effect upon becoming law.

II. Present Situation:

Agency for Persons with Disabilities

The APD is the state agency responsible for providing services to persons with developmental disabilities throughout Florida.¹ Legislative intent stipulates that the greatest priority shall be to provide community-based services and programs for individuals with developmental disabilities that enable individuals to achieve their greatest potential for independent living while reducing the number of individuals in unnecessary institutional placements.² In furtherance of this directive, the APD administers several programs, including residential services, adult day training programs, and the Developmental Disabilities Individual Budgeting (iBudget) Home and Community-Based Services Waiver. In addition to central headquarters in Tallahassee, the APD operates a total of six regional offices and 14 field offices throughout the state, as detailed below.³



Residential Facilities and Adult Day Training

A residential facility is a facility that provides room and board and personal care for people who have developmental disabilities.⁴ APD licenses several types of residential facilities, including:

- **Foster care facilities** which provide a family living environment including supervision and care necessary to meet the physical, emotional, and social needs of its residents;⁵
- **Group homes** which provide a family living environment including supervision and care necessary to meet the physical, emotional, and social needs of its residents;⁶ and

¹ Chapter 393, F.S.; *see also* Agency for Persons with Disabilities, *Who We Are, Who We Serve*, <https://apd.myflorida.com/about/howweare.htm> (last visited on 02/05/2026).

² Section 393.062, F.S.

³ Agency for Persons with Disabilities, *Local Offices*, available at: <https://apd.myflorida.com/region/> (last visited on 02/05/2026).

⁴ Section 393.063(33), F.S.

⁵ Section 393.063(18), F.S.

⁶ Section 393.063(19), F.S.

- **Residential habilitation centers** which are community residential facilities that provide habilitation services that assist the recipient to acquire, maintain, or improve skills related to activities of daily living.⁷

Adult day training services support iBudget clients in meaningful and valued routines of the community, such as volunteering, job exploration, accessing community resources, and self-advocacy. Adult day training programs take place in a nonresidential setting, separate from the home or facility where a client resides.⁸ Services can include meaningful day activities and training in the activities of daily living, adaptive skills, and employment. The training, activities, and routine established by the trainer must be meaningful to the recipient and provide an appropriate level of variation and interest. These services generally are offered for individuals age 22 and above, when a recipient is out of the public-school system.⁹

Background Screening of Direct Service Providers

Chapter 393, F.S., establishes minimum standards for the background screening of direct service providers who are unrelated to their clients. Specifically, it requires Level 2 employment screening, as defined in Chapter 435, F.S., for direct service providers, including support coordinators, and *managers and supervisors* of licensed residential facilities or adult day training programs and any other persons, including volunteers, who provide care or services, who have access to clients' living areas or personal property.¹⁰ Other employees of residential facilities or adult day training programs are not expressly identified in statute as subject to screening.

The background screening under Chapter 393, F.S., entails the following:

- Employment history checks as provided in s. 435.03(1);
- Fingerprint-based state and national criminal history checks;
- Searches of sexual offender and predator registries; and
- Review of disqualifying offenses listed in s. 435.04, F.S.¹¹

In addition to the disqualifying offenses listed in s. 435.04, F.S., Chapter 393 specifies the following violations of law as disqualifying.¹²

- Any authorizing statutes, if the offense was a felony.¹³
- Chapter 393, if the offense was a felony.
- Section 409.920, relating to Medicaid provider fraud.
- Section 409.9201, relating to Medicaid fraud.

⁷ Section 393.063(35), F.S.; and Agency for Persons with Disabilities, *Residential Services*, <https://apd.myflorida.com/providers/residential.htm> (last visited on 02/10/2026).

⁸ Section 393.063(1), F.S.

⁹ Agency for Health Care Administration, *Florida Medicaid Developmental Disabilities Individual Budgeting Waiver Services Coverage and Limitations Handbook* (May 2023), at pg. 2-20, available at <https://www.apd.myflorida.com/ibudget/docs/iBudget%20Handbook%20with%20ADT%20Redesign%20Final.pdf> (last visited on 02/10/2026).

¹⁰ Section 393.0655(1), F.S.

¹¹ *Id.*

¹² Section 393.0655(5), F.S.

¹³ The term "authorizing statutes" refers to the statutory provisions that authorize and regulate the licensure or operation of the facility, program, or service that is subject to the background screening. Accordingly, any felony offense prohibited under statutes authorizing the regulated activity, constitutes a disqualifying offense for purposes of background screening.

- Section 817.034, relating to fraudulent acts through mail, wire, radio, electromagnetic, photoelectronic, or photooptical systems.
- Section 817.234, relating to false and fraudulent insurance claims.
- Section 817.505, relating to patient brokering.
- Section 817.568, relating to criminal use of personal identification information.
- Section 817.60, relating to obtaining a credit card through fraudulent means.
- Section 817.61, relating to fraudulent use of credit cards, if the offense was a felony.
- Section 831.01, relating to forgery.
- Section 831.02, relating to uttering forged instruments.
- Section 831.07, relating to forging bank bills, checks, drafts, or promissory notes.
- Section 831.09, relating to uttering forged bank bills, checks, drafts, or promissory notes.

The following individuals are exempt from these screening requirements.

- Volunteers assisting less than 10 hours per month under continuous supervision of someone who has been screened;¹⁴
- Licensed health care professionals regulated by the Department of Health acting within the scope of their licenses;¹⁵
- Individuals selected and paid directly by a client or the client's family;¹⁶ and
- Persons 12 years of age or older, including family members, residing with a direct services provider who provides services to clients in his or her own place of residence (subject only to delinquency records screening).¹⁷

As of January 2026, there are currently 5,880 providers who administer services to the APD's clients. Of these, 70,636 employees have completed background screening.¹⁸

The Department of Children and Families is the agency that facilitates and conducts employment screening for programs relating to children and vulnerable adults.¹⁹ For individuals who are disqualified from employment due to their criminal history, Chapter 435, F.S., includes an exemption process. An exemption allows that individual to be employed in a profession or workplace where background screening is statutorily required despite the disqualifying offense in that person's past if that person meets certain criteria. The individual must demonstrate by clear and convincing evidence that they have been rehabilitated, will not present a danger, and should not be disqualified from employment.²⁰ The agency head may grant the exemption from disqualification if all court ordered fees, fines, liens, applications, costs of prosecution, trusts, or restitution have been paid, and either:²¹

¹⁴ Section 393.0655(1)(a), F.S.

¹⁵ Section 393.0655(1)(b), F.S.

¹⁶ Section 393.0655(1)(c), F.S.

¹⁷ Section 393.0655(1)(d), F.S.

¹⁸ Agency for Persons with Disabilities, 2026 Agency Legislative Bill Analysis SB 794, on file with the Committee on Children, Families, and Elder Affairs.

¹⁹ Section 435.02(2), F.S.; and *see generally* Florida Department of Children and Families, *Background Screening*, available at <https://myflfamilies.com/services/background-screening> (last visited on 02/10/2026).

²⁰ Section 435.07, F.S.

²¹ *Id.*

- Two years have elapsed since the individual has completed or been lawfully released from confinement supervision, or nonmonetary condition imposed by a court for a disqualifying felony; or
- The individual has completed or been lawfully released from confinement, supervision, or nonmonetary condition imposed by a court for a misdemeanor or an offense that was a felony at the time of commission but is now a misdemeanor.

Receiving an exemption allows that individual to work despite the disqualifying crime in that person's past. However, an individual who is considered a sexual predator,²² career offender,²³ or a registered sexual offender²⁴ is not eligible for exemption.²⁵

The Care Provider Background Screening Clearinghouse (Clearinghouse) is a single statewide screening program, administered by the Agency for Health Care Administration, in consultation with the Florida Department of Law Enforcement, which allows for results of criminal history checks of persons acting as covered care providers to be shared among specified agencies.²⁶ The Clearinghouse allows for constant review of new criminal history information through the federal Rap Back Service,²⁷ which continually matches fingerprints retained in the Clearinghouse against fingerprints received for new arrests that occur after the individual was originally screened.²⁸ Once a person's screening record is in the Clearinghouse, that person may avoid the need for any future state screens and related fees for screenings, depending on the screening agencies or organizations.²⁹

Support Coordination Services and Qualified Organizations

The APD contracts with qualified organizations to provide support coordination services to individuals receiving services through the iBudget waiver.³⁰ Support coordinators assist clients and their families in identifying needs and resources, accessing and coordinating services, advocating on their behalf, and monitoring whether supports are effectively meeting the goals of the individual's support plan.³¹ Current law establishes criteria that organizations must meet to qualify as support coordination providers, which include staffing requirements, ethics and disciplinary standards, compliance with agency policies, training and competency requirements, and client education related to abuse, neglect, and exploitation.³²

²² Section 775.21, F.S.

²³ Section 775.261, F.S.

²⁴ Section 943.0435, F.S.

²⁵ Section 435.07(4)(b), F.S.

²⁶ Section 435.12, F.S.

²⁷ The Rap Back Service is managed by the FBI's Criminal Justice Information Services Division. For more information, see the Federal Bureau of Investigation, *Privacy Impact Assessment for the Next Generation Identification (NGI) Rap Back Service*, available at <https://www.fbi.gov/file-repository/pia-ngi-rap-back-service.pdf/view> (last visited on 02/10/2026).

²⁸ Section 435.12(2), F.S.

²⁹ Agency for Health Care Administration, *Clearinghouse Renewals*, available at https://ahca.myflorida.com/MCHQ/Central_Services/Background_Screening/Renewals.shtml (last visited on 02/10/2026). Fingerprints are retained for five years. Employers have an option to renew screenings at the end of the five-year period through a "Clearinghouse Renewal" process which allows employee's fingerprints to be retained without being re-fingerprinted.

³⁰ Section 393.0663, F.S.

³¹ Section 393.063(43), F.S.

³² Section 393.0663(2)(b), F.S.

III. Effect of Proposed Changes:

Section 1 amends s. 393.0655, F.S., to broaden who is required to be Level 2 background screened in licensed residential facilities and adult day training programs. This change removes the specific reference to only managers and supervisors and instead requires Level 2 employment screening for *all employees* of these facilities and programs. As a result, the screening requirement is broadened to apply uniformly to all employees of these facilities and programs, regardless of job title or supervisory status.

The bill also clarifies that background screening for all employees must include employment history checks pursuant to s. 435.03(1), F.S., and local criminal records checks through local law enforcement agencies. Existing statutory exemptions for certain volunteers, licensed health care professionals, family-selected providers, and household members remain unchanged.³³

Section 2 directs the APD to contract with a state university to develop and administer surveys regarding waiver support coordination services for the purposes of enhancing the quality, capacity, and consistency of such services. The university must survey the owners and operators of all qualified organizations in this state, waiver support coordinators currently employed by a qualified organization, and iBudget clients and their parents, caregivers, or legal guardians. The bill requires the state university, by October 1, 2026, to submit a final report to the APD that includes a compilation and analysis of the survey results.

At a minimum, the surveys must solicit data and input on:

- The quality, consistency, and accessibility of services provided by waiver support coordinators;
- Attributes and behaviors that define high-quality support coordination;
- Best practices and areas for improvement;
- Quantitative and qualitative metrics to assess waiver support coordinator performance; and
- Any other factors to improve service delivery.

The surveys of qualified organizations must also specifically address:

- Professional and educational prerequisites required by the qualified organization for employment as a waiver support coordinator;
- Methods to assess core competencies;
- The efficacy of the required waiver support coordinator mentoring program; and
- Operational and systemic challenges of recruiting and retaining qualified waiver support coordinators.

The surveys of waiver support coordinators must also specifically address:

³³ Licensed residential facilities and adult day training programs are not employees of the APD and do not have to report the number of employees of each facility or program. In Florida, there are both large and small licensed residential facilities and adult training programs some employ a small number of individuals who are all screened as direct care providers while other facilities and programs are large and may have administrative employees who do not have face to face interaction with clients and would not necessarily be required to complete a screening. Due to licensed residential facilities and adult day training programs not being required to report specific number of employees, the APD is unable to determine the specific number of employees who will be required to be screened under this legislation. Agency for Persons with Disabilities, *2026 Agency Legislative Bill Analysis SB 794*, on file with the Committee on Children, Families, and Elder Affairs.

- Individual caseload ratios, capacity, and geographic service areas;
- The efficacy of the required waiver support coordinator mentoring program; and
- Operational and systemic challenges of delivering effective support coordination.

The surveys of iBudget clients and their parents, caregivers, or legal guardians must also specifically address overall satisfaction with support coordination services.

The bill directs the APD to hold at least one public hearing in each service region to solicit input on enhancing waiver support coordinator services from relevant stakeholders. The APD must also conduct or contract for a gap analysis to assess the geographic distribution and caseload capacity of waiver support coordinators across the state.

The bill requires the APD, by February 15, 2027, to submit a report to the Governor, President of the Senate, and Speaker of the House of Representatives that:

- Identifies waiver support coordinator core competencies and performance measures to assess those core competencies;
- Provides recommendations on how to standardize assessment of waiver support coordinators; and
- Includes the full, final survey report submitted to the APD by the state university.

Section 3 provides that the bill shall take effect upon becoming law.

IV. Constitutional Issues:

A. Municipality/County Mandates Restrictions:

None.

B. Public Records/Open Meetings Issues:

None.

C. Trust Funds Restrictions:

None.

D. State Tax or Fee Increases:

None.

E. Other Constitutional Issues:

None Identified.

V. Fiscal Impact Statement:**A. Tax/Fee Issues:**

None.

B. Private Sector Impact:

There may be a negative private sector fiscal impact. Providers will have to cover the cost of the additional screenings. They will have increased administrative and financial obligations to ensure all employees meet screening requirements prior to employment. The cost for screening ranges from \$44, if no vendor processing fee is charged, to \$125, for an average cost of \$87. Residential facilities and Adult Training providers are not required to report the exact number of employees. Due to this, the APD has provided a chart below that outlines a range of the potential financial impact on providers based on the cost range above and the 5,880 providers.³⁴

| Additional Background Screening Breakdown | | |
|--|------------------------------|--|
| Average Cost per Background Screening | \$ 87 | |
| # Provider Staff Currently in Clearinghouse | 70,636 | |
| | | |
| | | |
| Additional % Added to Clearinghouse | Additional # Screened | Projected Annual Cost for Additional Individuals Screened |
| 5.0% | 3,532 | \$ 307,267 |
| 10.0% | 7,064 | \$ 614,533 |
| 15.0% | 10,595 | \$ 921,800 |
| 20.0% | 14,127 | \$ 1,229,066 |

C. Government Sector Impact:

There may be an indeterminate negative fiscal impact for the Agency for Health Care Administration and the Department of Children and Families, which will see an increase in administrative workload related to the increase in background screening processing and retainment.

To implement the requirements of Section 2 of the bill, the APD has estimates the following:

- \$500,000 to contract with a state university to develop and administer surveys and produce a report by October 1, 2026.
- \$25,080 staff to attend and host the six regional meetings.
- \$500,000 to contract for conduction of the gap analysis.

³⁴ Agency for Persons with Disabilities, *2026 Agency Legislative Bill Analysis SB 794*, on file with the Committee on Children, Families, and Elder Affairs.

- \$216,847 for one FTE and one OPS position oversee the day-to-day operations required to implement this section, including accurate and timely submission of the February 15, 2027, report.³⁵

VI. Technical Deficiencies:

None.

VII. Related Issues:

None.

VIII. Statutes Affected:

This bill substantially amends the following sections of the Florida Statutes: 393.0655, 393.0663, 393.0673

IX. Additional Information:

- A. **Committee Substitute – Statement of Substantial Changes:**
(Summarizing differences between the Committee Substitute and the prior version of the bill.)

CS by Children, Families, and Elder Affairs on February 10, 2026:

The CS removes:

- The revisions to criteria that organizations must meet to qualify as support coordination providers; and
- The revisions to the APD's ability to impose administrative fines.

The CS adds the following:

- Requires the APD to contract with a state university to survey support coordinators and submit a final report to the agency with a compilation and analysis of the survey results;
- Requires the APD to solicit input on enhancing support coordinator quality capacity and consistency;
- Requires the APD to conduct a gap analysis to assess geographic distribution and caseload capacity of support coordinators;
- Requires the APD to submit a report that identifies core competencies, specific performance metrics, and recommendations to standardize assessment of support coordinators; and
- Provides an earlier effective date.

- B. **Amendments:**

None.

³⁵ Agency for Persons with Disabilities, *2026 Agency Legislative Bill Analysis CS/SB 794*, on file with the Committee on Children, Families, and Elder Affairs

This Senate Bill Analysis does not reflect the intent or official position of the bill's introducer or the Florida Senate.

By Senator Yarborough

4-00779A-26

20261600__

A bill to be entitled

An act relating to child welfare; amending s. 39.01, F.S.; defining the terms "accredited child safety organization" and "child-serving organization"; revising the definition of the term "institutional child abuse or neglect"; creating s. 39.0151, F.S.; requiring certain organizations and agencies to provide employees with annual training approved by the Department of Children and Families relating to the protection of children from abuse and neglect; providing requirements for such training; requiring the department to create a process to recognize and approve qualified accrediting organizations for a specified purpose; providing requirements for qualified accrediting organizations to be approved by the department; requiring approved qualified accrediting organizations to maintain certain records and submit such records annually to the department; requiring the department to review the status of each qualified accrediting organization at certain intervals; authorizing the department to revoke its recognition and approval of a qualified accrediting organization for good cause; requiring the department to review the status of accredited child safety organizations at certain intervals; authorizing the department to renew or revoke the accreditation or certification of an accredited child safety organization; amending s. 39.101, F.S.; requiring the department to collect and analyze certain reports of

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abuse which are reported from or occurred at a child-serving organization; creating s. 627.0656, F.S.; requiring the Office of Insurance Regulation to approve rating plans for employer's liability insurance which provide a premium discount to certain child-serving organizations; providing requirements for such plans; providing legislative findings; requiring the Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability to conduct a study on the affordability and availability of liability coverage for child-serving organizations; requiring the office to provide a certain report to the Legislature by a certain date; amending ss. 39.302, 39.521, 39.6012, 394.495, 934.255, 960.065, and 984.03, F.S.; conforming cross-references; reenacting s. 39.301(2)(b), F.S., relating to initiation of protective investigations, to incorporate the amendment made to s. 39.01, F.S., in a reference thereto; providing an effective date.

Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

Section 1. Present subsections (3) through (13) and subsections (14) through (91) of section 39.01, Florida Statutes, are redesignated as subsections (4) through (14) and subsections (16) through (93), respectively, new subsections (3) and (15) are added to that section, and present subsections (10) and (39) of that section are amended, to read:

39.01 Definitions.—When used in this chapter, unless the

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context otherwise requires:

(3) "Accredited child safety organization" means an organization that has been certified or accredited by a qualified accrediting organization that is recognized and approved by the department. For purposes of this subsection, the term "certified or accredited" means an evidence-based and independent validation process managed through a professional association or accrediting organization.

(11)~~(10)~~ "Caregiver" means the parent, legal custodian, permanent guardian, adult household member, or other person responsible for a child's welfare as defined in subsection (59)~~(57)~~.

(15) "Child-serving organization" means any public or private agency, organization, facility, or institution that provides organized programming for children, including, but not limited to, public or private schools, public or private child care facilities and day care centers, residential homes, day camps, youth sports organizations, and other organizations whose employees or volunteers are adults entrusted with a child's care.

(41)~~(39)~~ "Institutional child abuse or neglect" means situations of known or suspected child abuse or neglect in which the person allegedly perpetrating the child abuse or neglect is an employee of or volunteer at a child-serving organization a~~public or private school, public or private day care center, residential home,~~ institution, facility, or agency or any other person at such institution responsible for the child's welfare as defined in subsection (59)~~(57)~~.

Section 2. Section 39.0151, Florida Statutes, is created to

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88 read:

89 39.0151 Training and certification of child-serving
90 organizations.—

91 (1) Each child-serving organization and each agency that
92 contracts with the department or the Department of Juvenile
93 Justice shall provide to all employees annual training relating
94 to the protection of children from abuse and neglect. The
95 training must be approved by the Department of Children and
96 Families and include, at a minimum, instruction on all of the
97 following:

98 (a) Common signs and symptoms of child abuse and neglect.

99 (b) Techniques for preventing child abuse and neglect,
100 including, but not limited to, techniques for ensuring proper
101 boundaries to prevent abuse, screening standards, and
102 supervision techniques designed to avoid inappropriate adult-
103 child interactions.

104 (c) Procedures for responding to a suspected case of child
105 abuse or neglect, including, but not limited to, any mandated
106 reporting responsibilities and procedures; procedures for
107 ensuring the child's safety and emotional well-being; and
108 procedures necessary to achieve an appropriate investigation of
109 any child abuse or neglect allegations.

110 (d) Information regarding sex trafficking and child sexual
111 exploitation, including steps to identify suspected victims.

112 (e) Child-friendly procedures necessary to prevent a child
113 victim of abuse or neglect from suffering further trauma or
114 revictimization, to protect the child's privacy, and to assist
115 the child's recovery.

116 (2) (a) The Department of Children and Families shall create

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117 a process to recognize and approve qualified accrediting
118 organizations that are authorized to accredit or certify child-
119 serving organizations as accredited child safety organizations.
120 The department shall recognize and approve a qualified
121 accrediting organization if such organization meets all of the
122 following requirements:

123 1. The organization is a nonprofit organization authorized
124 to operate in this state.

125 2. The organization has developed a curriculum or program
126 that substantially meets the requirements of subsection (1) and
127 offers such curriculum or program to child-serving
128 organizations. The curriculum or program must be provided to the
129 department for review, along with any other information
130 requested by the department.

131 3. The organization can demonstrate to the satisfaction of
132 the department a record of providing child abuse prevention and
133 response training to child-serving organizations in this state
134 for at least 2 years before the organization submits its
135 application to the department for recognition and approval.

136 (b) Once approved by the department, a qualified
137 accrediting organization must maintain a record of all training
138 it provides to child-serving organizations and annually submit
139 such record to the department. As part of its record, a
140 qualified accrediting organization must maintain the following:

141 1. A list of child-serving organizations that are trained
142 and become accredited child safety organizations.

143 2. Participant evaluations from all of the trainings the
144 qualified accrediting organization has provided.

145 (c) The department must review the status of each qualified

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146 accrediting organization on a biannual basis; however, the
147 department may conduct a review of each qualified accrediting
148 organization's status at any time. The department may revoke its
149 recognition and approval of a qualified accrediting organization
150 for good cause.

151 (d) The status of an accredited child safety organization
152 must be reviewed by the department at least every 3 years and
153 the accreditation or certification of such organization may be
154 renewed or revoked by the department upon such review.

155 Section 3. Paragraph (f) of subsection (3) of section
156 39.101, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

157 39.101 Central abuse hotline.—The central abuse hotline is
158 the first step in the safety assessment and investigation
159 process.

160 (3) COLLECTION OF INFORMATION AND DATA.—The department
161 shall:

162 (f)1. Collect and analyze child-on-child sexual abuse
163 reports and include such information in the aggregate
164 statistical reports.

165 2. Collect and analyze, in separate statistical reports,
166 those reports of child abuse, sexual abuse, and juvenile sexual
167 abuse which are reported from or which occurred on or at:

- 168 a. School premises;
169 b. School transportation;
170 c. School-sponsored off-campus events;
171 d. A school readiness program provider determined to be
172 eligible under s. 1002.88;
173 e. A private prekindergarten provider or a public school
174 prekindergarten provider, as those terms are defined in s.

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1002.51(7) and (8), respectively;

f. A public K-12 school as described in s. 1000.04;

g. A private school as defined in s. 1002.01;

h. A Florida College System institution or a state university, as those terms are defined in s. 1000.21(5) and (9), respectively; ~~or~~

i. A school, as defined in s. 1005.02; or

j. A child-serving organization.

Section 4. Section 627.0656, Florida Statutes, is created to read:

627.0656 Insurance discounts for accredited child safety organizations.—The office shall approve rating plans for employer's liability insurance which provide an appropriate reduction in premium charges to child-serving organizations as defined in s. 39.01 which are certified or accredited as accredited child safety organizations by the Department of Children and Families under s. 39.0151(2). The plans must be actuarially sound and must state the savings anticipated to result from a child-serving organization becoming an accredited child safety organization.

Section 5. Child safety and liability insurance study.—

(1) The Legislature finds that:

(a) Recent studies demonstrate that across the nation, including in this state, organizations that provide services to children face an existential threat to their ability to operate due to the unaffordability, and on occasion unavailability, of liability insurance.

(b) Private organizations that provide services to children are essential to the well-being of families and communities.

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204 Churches, synagogues, and other faith-based organizations
205 provide child care, organized activities, and educational
206 opportunities for children. Camps, scouting organizations, and
207 youth sports organizations provide children with the opportunity
208 to develop physically and mentally. Other organizations provide
209 residential care, foster care, and respite care for children in
210 difficult circumstances.

211 (c) The cost of liability insurance threatens the ability
212 of organizations to provide these services. Recently, the
213 shutdown of private foster agencies in California due to the
214 unavailability of insurance was averted only by legislative
215 intervention.

216 (d) The liability coverage affordability and availability
217 crisis for such organizations is driven by factors that include
218 social inflation; nationwide changes affecting the liability of
219 organizations for past incidents resulting in harm to children;
220 and the ongoing challenges of serving children while maintaining
221 proper procedures to screen and supervise employees and
222 volunteers, raise situational awareness of the risks of child
223 abuse within organizations, and take steps to prevent the
224 exploitation or abuse of children in their programs.

225 (e) Potential methods to ensure that private organizations
226 are able to continue carrying out their valuable work include
227 developing methods to reduce insurance rates, providing state
228 financial support to providers, and developing programs to
229 bolster child abuse and neglect prevention policies and
230 protocols within organizations.

231 (2) The Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government
232 Accountability shall conduct a study on the affordability and

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availability of liability coverage for child-serving organizations as defined in s. 39.01, Florida Statutes. The office shall identify potential legislative actions that may be taken to ensure the continued viability of such organizations and provide a report of its findings to the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives by July 1, 2027.

Section 6. Subsection (1) of section 39.302, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

39.302 Protective investigations of institutional child abuse, abandonment, or neglect.—

(1) The department shall conduct a child protective investigation of each report of institutional child abuse, abandonment, or neglect. Upon receipt of a report that alleges that an employee or agent of the department, or any other entity or person covered by s. 39.01(41) or (59) ~~s. 39.01(39) or (57)~~, acting in an official capacity, has committed an act of child abuse, abandonment, or neglect, the department shall initiate a child protective investigation within the timeframe established under s. 39.101(2) and notify the appropriate state attorney, law enforcement agency, and licensing agency, which shall immediately conduct a joint investigation, unless independent investigations are more feasible. When conducting investigations or having face-to-face interviews with the child, investigation visits shall be unannounced unless it is determined by the department or its agent that unannounced visits threaten the safety of the child. If a facility is exempt from licensing, the department shall inform the owner or operator of the facility of the report. Each agency conducting a joint investigation is

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entitled to full access to the information gathered by the department in the course of the investigation. A protective investigation must include an interview with the child's parent or legal guardian. The department shall make a full written report to the state attorney within 3 business days after making the oral report. A criminal investigation shall be coordinated, whenever possible, with the child protective investigation of the department. Any interested person who has information regarding the offenses described in this subsection may forward a statement to the state attorney as to whether prosecution is warranted and appropriate. Within 15 days after the completion of the investigation, the state attorney shall report the findings to the department and shall include in the report a determination of whether or not prosecution is justified and appropriate in view of the circumstances of the specific case.

Section 7. Paragraph (c) of subsection (1) of section 39.521, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

39.521 Disposition hearings; powers of disposition.—

(1) A disposition hearing shall be conducted by the court, if the court finds that the facts alleged in the petition for dependency were proven in the adjudicatory hearing, or if the parents or legal custodians have consented to the finding of dependency or admitted the allegations in the petition, have failed to appear for the arraignment hearing after proper notice, or have not been located despite a diligent search having been conducted.

(c) When any child is adjudicated by a court to be dependent, the court having jurisdiction of the child has the power by order to:

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1. Require the parent and, when appropriate, the legal guardian or the child to participate in treatment and services identified as necessary. The court may require the person who has custody or who is requesting custody of the child to submit to a mental health or substance abuse disorder assessment or evaluation. The order may be made only upon good cause shown and pursuant to notice and procedural requirements provided under the Florida Rules of Juvenile Procedure. The mental health assessment or evaluation must be administered by a qualified professional as defined in s. 39.01, and the substance abuse assessment or evaluation must be administered by a qualified professional as defined in s. 397.311. The court may also require such person to participate in and comply with treatment and services identified as necessary, including, when appropriate and available, participation in and compliance with a mental health court program established under chapter 394 or a treatment-based drug court program established under s. 397.334. Adjudication of a child as dependent based upon evidence of harm as defined in s. 39.01(39)(g) ~~s. 39.01(37)(g)~~ demonstrates good cause, and the court shall require the parent whose actions caused the harm to submit to a substance abuse disorder assessment or evaluation and to participate and comply with treatment and services identified in the assessment or evaluation as being necessary. In addition to supervision by the department, the court, including the mental health court program or the treatment-based drug court program, may oversee the progress and compliance with treatment by a person who has custody or is requesting custody of the child. The court may impose appropriate available sanctions for noncompliance upon a

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person who has custody or is requesting custody of the child or make a finding of noncompliance for consideration in determining whether an alternative placement of the child is in the child's best interests. Any order entered under this subparagraph may be made only upon good cause shown. This subparagraph does not authorize placement of a child with a person seeking custody of the child, other than the child's parent or legal custodian, who requires mental health or substance abuse disorder treatment.

2. Require, if the court deems necessary, the parties to participate in dependency mediation.

3. Require placement of the child either under the protective supervision of an authorized agent of the department in the home of one or both of the child's parents or in the home of a relative of the child or another adult approved by the court, or in the custody of the department. Protective supervision continues until the court terminates it or until the child reaches the age of 18, whichever date is first. Protective supervision shall be terminated by the court whenever the court determines that permanency has been achieved for the child, whether with a parent, another relative, or a legal custodian, and that protective supervision is no longer needed. The termination of supervision may be with or without retaining jurisdiction, at the court's discretion, and shall in either case be considered a permanency option for the child. The order terminating supervision by the department must set forth the powers of the custodian of the child and include the powers ordinarily granted to a guardian of the person of a minor unless otherwise specified. Upon the court's termination of supervision by the department, further judicial reviews are not required if

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permanency has been established for the child.

4. Determine whether the child has a strong attachment to the prospective permanent guardian and whether such guardian has a strong commitment to permanently caring for the child.

Section 8. Paragraph (c) of subsection (1) of section 39.6012, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

39.6012 Case plan tasks; services.—

(1) The services to be provided to the parent and the tasks that must be completed are subject to the following:

(c) If there is evidence of harm as defined in s. 39.01(39)(g) ~~s. 39.01(37)(g)~~, the case plan must include as a required task for the parent whose actions caused the harm that the parent submit to a substance abuse disorder assessment or evaluation and participate and comply with treatment and services identified in the assessment or evaluation as being necessary.

Section 9. Paragraph (p) of subsection (4) of section 394.495, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

394.495 Child and adolescent mental health system of care; programs and services.—

(4) The array of services may include, but is not limited to:

(p) Trauma-informed services for children who have suffered sexual exploitation as defined in s. 39.01(82)(g) ~~s. 39.01(80)(g)~~.

Section 10. Paragraph (c) of subsection (1) of section 934.255, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

934.255 Subpoenas in investigations of sexual offenses.—

(1) As used in this section, the term:

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(c) "Sexual abuse of a child" means a criminal offense based on any conduct described in s. 39.01(82) ~~s. 39.01(80)~~.

Section 11. Subsection (5) of section 960.065, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

960.065 Eligibility for awards.—

(5) A person is not ineligible for an award pursuant to paragraph (2)(a), paragraph (2)(b), or paragraph (2)(c) if that person is a victim of sexual exploitation of a child as defined in s. 39.01(82)(g) ~~s. 39.01(80)(g)~~.

Section 12. Subsections (1), (2), and (24) of section 984.03, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

984.03 Definitions.—When used in this chapter, the term:

(1) "Abandoned" or "abandonment" has the same meaning as in s. 39.01 ~~s. 39.01(1)~~.

(2) "Abuse" has the same meaning as in s. 39.01 ~~s. 39.01(2)~~.

(24) "Neglect" has the same meaning as in s. 39.01 ~~s. 39.01(53)~~.

Section 13. For the purpose of incorporating the amendment made by this act to section 39.01, Florida Statutes, in a reference thereto, paragraph (b) of subsection (2) of section 39.301, Florida Statutes, is reenacted to read:

39.301 Initiation of protective investigations.—

(2)

(b) As used in this subsection, the term "criminal conduct" means:

1. A child is known or suspected to be the victim of child abuse, as defined in s. 827.03, or of neglect of a child, as defined in s. 827.03.

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2. A child is known or suspected to have died as a result of abuse or neglect.

3. A child is known or suspected to be the victim of aggravated child abuse, as defined in s. 827.03.

4. A child is known or suspected to be the victim of sexual battery, as defined in s. 827.071, or of sexual abuse, as defined in s. 39.01.

5. A child is known or suspected to be the victim of institutional child abuse or neglect, as defined in s. 39.01, and as provided for in s. 39.302(1).

6. A child is known or suspected to be a victim of human trafficking, as provided in s. 787.06.

Section 14. This act shall take effect July 1, 2026.

The Florida Senate
APPEARANCE RECORD

Deliver both copies of this form to
Senate professional staff conducting the meeting

2/10/26
Meeting Date

Children, Family & Elder Aff
Committee

SB 1600
Bill Number or Topic

Amendment Barcode (if applicable)

Name Arron DiPietro Phone 904-608-4471

Address on file Email arand@family.org
Street

City State Zip

Speaking: ☐ For ☐ Against ☐ Information

OR

Waive Speaking: ☒ In Support ☐ Against

PLEASE CHECK ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:

☐ I am appearing without
compensation or sponsorship.

☒ I am a registered lobbyist,
representing:

Florida Family Voice

☐ I am not a lobbyist, but received
something of value for my appearance
(travel, meals, lodging, etc.),
sponsored by:

While it is a tradition to encourage public testimony, time may not permit all persons wishing to speak to be heard at this hearing. Those who do speak may be asked to limit their remarks so that as many persons as possible can be heard. If you have questions about registering to lobby please see Fla. Stat. §11.045 and Joint Rule 1. [2020-2022 Joint Rules.pdf \(flsenate.gov\)](#)

This form is part of the public record for this meeting.

S-001 (08/10/2021)

The Florida Senate

APPEARANCE RECORD

SB 1600

Bill Number or Topic

2/10/26

Meeting Date

Children's Family and Elder Affairs

Committee

Deliver both copies of this form to
Senate professional staff conducting the meeting

Amendment Barcode (if applicable)

Name DAVID DANIEL

Phone 850 224-5081

Address 311 EAST PARK AVENUE
Street

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TALLAHASSEE
City

FL
State

32301
Zip

Speaking: ☐ For ☐ Against ☐ Information

OR

Waive Speaking: ☒ In Support ☐ Against

PLEASE CHECK ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:

☐ I am appearing without
compensation or sponsorship.

☒ I am a registered lobbyist,
representing:

☐ I am not a lobbyist, but received
something of value for my appearance
(travel, meals, lodging, etc.),
sponsored by:

PARTNERS FOR FLORIDA'S CHILDREN & FAMILIES

While it is a tradition to encourage public testimony, time may not permit all persons wishing to speak to be heard at this hearing. Those who do speak may be asked to limit their remarks so that as many persons as possible can be heard. If you have questions about registering to lobby please see Fla. Stat. §11.045 and Joint Rule 1. [2020-2022 Joint Rules.pdf \(flsenate.gov\)](#)

This form is part of the public record for this meeting.

S-001 (08/10/2021)



496816

LEGISLATIVE ACTION

| Senate | . | House |
|------------|---|-------|
| Comm: RCS | . | |
| 02/11/2026 | . | |
| | . | |
| | . | |
| | . | |

The Committee on Children, Families, and Elder Affairs
(Yarborough) recommended the following:

Senate Amendment (with title amendment)

Delete everything after the enacting clause
and insert:

Section 1. Subsection (5) is added to section 409.993,
Florida Statutes, to read:

409.993 Lead agencies and subcontractor liability.—

(5) (a) The Office of Insurance Regulation, in collaboration
with the Department of Children and Families and community-based
care lead agencies and their subcontracted providers must review



496816

all available, relevant, and appropriate data from the previous five fiscal years related to liability insurance coverage and availability to analyze the following:

1. Access to and availability of liability insurance through authorized insurance companies, surplus lines companies, and self-insurance funds;

2. Factors affecting the ability to obtain and maintain liability insurance;

3. Cost of general liability insurance based on insurance premium documentation;

4. Claims data;

5. Settlement and judicial disposition data;

6. Community-based care lead agency operating budget and expenses;

7. Impact of insurance costs on the financial condition of community-based care lead agencies and their subcontractors; and

8. Consistency of statutory insurance requirements with the general insurance market.

(b) The Office of Insurance Regulation must develop a report on the findings of its review and analysis, including, but not limited to:

1. Summary of the methods used and data obtained for review and analysis;

2. Trends in insurance premium rates;

3. Trends in claims and settlements;

4. Trends in liability coverage affordability and availability;

5. Actionable recommendations for agency and legislative changes to ensure affordable and available liability insurance



496816

for community-based care lead agencies and their subcontractors.

(c) The report must be provided to the Governor, President of the Senate, and Speaker of the House of Representatives by January 1, 2027.

(d) The Office of Insurance Regulation is authorized to levy fines or otherwise penalize an insurance company for failure to reply to any request for information within 30 calendar days of such request. Any fine schedule set by the Office shall not exceed \$500 per day for the first 3 days late and \$1000 per day for each late day thereafter, which shall be transferred to the General Revenue Fund.

(e) The Department of Children and Families is authorized to levy fines or otherwise penalize a community-based care lead agency or subcontractor for failure to reply to any request for information within 30 calendar days of such request. Any fine schedule set by the Department shall not exceed \$500 per day for the first 3 days late and \$1000 for each late day thereafter, which shall be transferred to the General Revenue Fund.

(f) This subsection of law shall stand repealed on July 1, 2027, unless reviewed and saved from repeal through reenactment by the Legislature.

Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2025.

===== T I T L E A M E N D M E N T =====

And the title is amended as follows:

Delete everything before the enacting clause
and insert:

A bill to be entitled

An act relating to community-based care lead agency



496816

liability insurance; amending s. 409.993, F.S.;
requiring the Office of Insurance Regulation and the
Department of Children and Families to review and
analyze certain data; requiring the Office of
Insurance Regulation to provide a report to the
Governor and Legislature; allowing for the provision
of fines or other penalties by the Office of Insurance
Regulation or the Department of Children and Families
for failure to timely reply to certain requests of
information; providing for a cap on fines if a fine
schedule is created; providing for future repeal of
the section; providing an effective date.



466576

LEGISLATIVE ACTION

| | | |
|------------|---|-------|
| Senate | . | House |
| Comm: RCS | . | |
| 02/11/2026 | . | |
| | . | |
| | . | |
| | . | |

The Committee on Children, Families, and Elder Affairs
(Yarborough) recommended the following:

Senate Amendment to Amendment (496816)

Delete line 61
and insert:
Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2026.

The Florida Senate
BILL ANALYSIS AND FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

(This document is based on the provisions contained in the legislation as of the latest date listed below.)

Prepared By: The Professional Staff of the Committee on Children, Families, and Elder Affairs

BILL: CS/SB 1600

INTRODUCER: Children, Families, and Elder Affairs Committee and Senator Yarborough

SUBJECT: Child Welfare

DATE: February 11, 2026

REVISED: _____

| | ANALYST | STAFF DIRECTOR | REFERENCE | ACTION |
|----|---------|----------------|-----------|---------------|
| 1. | Rao | Tuszynski | CF | Fav/CS |
| 2. | | | AHS | |
| 3. | | | FP | |

Please see Section IX. for Additional Information:

COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE - Substantial Changes

I. Summary:

CS/SB 1600 increases the oversight of liability insurance availability and affordability for CBC lead agencies and their subcontractors. The bill requires the Office of Insurance Regulation (OIR) to collaborate with the DCF and CBC lead agencies and subcontractors to review all available, relevant, and appropriate data from the previous five fiscal years related to liability insurance coverage and availability. The bill specifies the metrics that must be included in the OIR's analysis.

The bill requires the OIR to develop a report on the findings of its analysis that demonstrates the trends in insurance premium rates, claims and settlements, and in liability coverage affordability and availability. The bill requires the OIR to include actionable recommendations that the DCF and Legislature may enact to ensure affordable liability coverage. The bill requires the OIR to provide the required report to the Governor, President of the Senate, and Speaker of the House of Representatives by January 1, 2027.

The bill establishes the authority of the OIR to levy fines or penalties on insurance companies and the DCF to levy fines or penalties on a CBC lead agency or subcontractor that fails to reply to any request for information within 30 calendar days of such request. The bill establishes limits for these fines and requires the fines to be transferred to the General Revenue fund.

The bill repeals the provisions of this bill on July 1, 2027, unless it is reenacted.

The bill is effective July 1, 2026.

II. Present Situation:

Child Welfare – Generally

Chapter 39, F.S. creates Florida’s dependency system charged with protecting children who have been abused, abandoned, or neglected.¹ Florida’s child welfare system identifies children and families in need of services through reports to the central abuse hotline and child protective investigations.² The Department of Children and Families (DCF) and community-based care lead agencies work with these families to address the problems endangering children, if possible. If these problems cannot be addressed, the child welfare system finds safe out-of-home placements for these children.³

Child welfare services are directed toward the prevention of child abuse, abandonment, and neglect.⁴ The DCF aims to increase the safety of the child within his or her home, using in-home services, such as parenting coaching and counseling to maintain and strengthen the child’s natural supports in the home environment.⁵ These services are coordinated by DCF-contracted community-based care (CBC) lead agencies. Ultimately, the DCF remains responsible for the operation of the central abuse hotline and investigations of abuse, abandonment, and neglect.⁶ Additionally, the department is responsible for all program oversight and the overall performance of the child welfare system.⁷

Department of Children and Families

The DCF implements a practice model for child and family well-being that is safety-focused, trauma-informed, and family-centered. Such practices are intended to ensure:

- Permanency. Florida’s children should enjoy long-term, secure relationships within strong families and communities.
- Child Well-Being. Florida’s children should be physically and emotionally healthy and socially competent.
- Safety. Florida’s children should live free from maltreatment.

¹ Chapter 39, F.S.

² See generally, s. 39.101, F.S. (establishing the central abuse hotline and timeframes for initiating investigations).

³ See s. 409.986(1)(a), F.S. (finding that it is the intent of the Legislature that the Department of Children and Families “provide child protection and child welfare services to children through contracting with CBC lead agencies”). A “community-based care lead agency” or “lead agency” means a single entity with which the DCF has a contract for the provision of care for children in the child protection and child welfare system, in a community that is no smaller than a county and no larger than two contiguous judicial circuits. Section 409.986(3)(d), F.S. The secretary of DCF may authorize more than one eligible lead agency within a single county if doing so will result in more effective delivery of services to children. *Id.*

⁴ Section 39.001, F.S.

⁵ See generally The Department of Children and Families, *Florida’s Child Welfare Practice Model*, available at: <https://www.myflfamilies.com/services/child-family/child-and-family-well-being/floridas-child-welfare-practice-model> (last visited 2/4/26).

⁶ Section 39.101, F.S.

⁷ *Id.*

- *Family Well-Being.* Florida's families should nurture, protect, and meet the needs of their children, and should be well integrated into their communities.⁸

The DCF is required to deliver services by contract through private providers to the extent allowed by law and funding.⁹ These private providers include CBC lead agencies that deliver child welfare services.

Community-Based Care Lead Agencies

The DCF, through CBCs, administer a system of care¹⁰ to children and families that must focus on:

- Prevention of separation of children from their families;
- Interventions to allow children to remain safely in their own homes;
- Reunification of families who have had their children removed from their care;
- Safety for children who are separated from their families;
- Promoting the well-being of children through emphasis on educational stability and timely health care;
- Permanency for children for whom reunification with their families is not possible or not in the child's best interest; and
- Transition to independence and self-sufficiency.¹¹

CBC lead agencies are contractually required to provide foster care and related services including, but not limited to, counseling, domestic violence services, substance abuse services, family preservation, emergency shelter, and adoption.¹² Statutorily, lead agencies are required to provide no more than 35 percent of all child welfare services in its geographic service area, thus CBC lead agencies contract with providers throughout the state for child welfare services.¹³ There are 16 CBCs statewide, which together serve the state's 20 judicial circuits, as follows:¹⁴

⁸ See generally Department of Children and Families (DCF), *Florida's Child Welfare Practice Model*, available at: https://www.myflfamilies.com/sites/default/files/2022-12/FLCSPPracticeModel_0.pdf (last visited 11/6/25).

⁹ Section 20.19(1)(c), F.S.

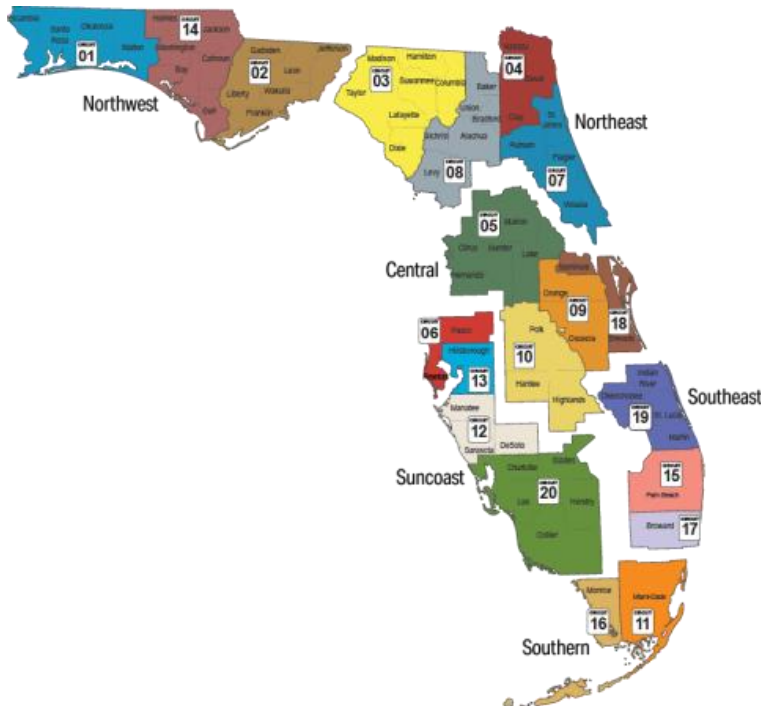
¹⁰ Section 409.145(1), F.S.

¹¹ *Id.*; Also see generally s. 409.988, F.S.

¹² Section 409.145(1), F.S.

¹³ CBC lead agencies may receive an exemption from the 35 percent direct services threshold if it can demonstrate there is a need for the lead agency to directly provide these services due to a lack of qualified providers the lead agency can subcontract with to perform such services. Section 409.988, F.S.

¹⁴ Florida Department of Children and Families, *Lead Agency Information*, available at: <https://www.myflfamilies.com/services/child-family/child-and-family-well-being/community-based-care/lead-agency-information> (last visited 2/10/26).



CBC lead agencies are required to perform several duties, including:¹⁵

- Serve children referred to the CBC as a result of a report of abuse, neglect, or abandonment to the central abuse hotline.
- Provide the DCF with accurate and timely information necessary for oversight by the DCF.
- Follow financial guidelines developed by DCF and provide for regular independent audits.
- Prepare all necessary court documents and attend dependency court proceedings.
- Ensure all individuals providing care to dependent children receive appropriate training and meet minimum employment standards established by the DCF.
- Maintain eligibility to receive all available federal child welfare funds.
- Adhere to child welfare best practices.
- Maintain written agreements with Healthy Families Florida lead entities in its service area to promote cooperative planning for the provision of prevention and intervention services.
- Comply with federal and state statutory requirements and agency rules in the provision of contractual services.
- Use authority to subcontract for the provision of services.
- Identify an employee to serve as a liaison with the community alliance and community-based and faith-based organizations interested in collaborating or offering services or other assistance on a volunteer basis to the children and families served by the CBC.
- Ensure that appropriate CBC staff and subcontractors are informed of the specific services or assistance available from local community-based and faith-based organizations.
- Identify it as a DCF contractor on its website and promotional literature.

¹⁵ Section 409.988, F.S.

- Ensure that it is addressing the unique needs of the fathers of children who are served by the lead agency.
- Post specified information regarding case management services on its website.

The DCF must develop and maintain written policies and procedures for monitoring compliance with the services CBC lead agencies are contracted to provide. The DCF is required to annually evaluate each lead agency's programmatic, operational, and fiscal operations.¹⁶

Dependency System Process

In some instances, services may not be enough to maintain a safe environment for a child to live in. When child welfare necessitates that the DCF remove a child from the home to ensure his or her safety, a series of dependency court proceedings must occur to place the child in an out-of-home placement, adjudicate the child dependent, and if necessary, terminate parental rights and free the child for adoption. This process is typically triggered by a report to the central abuse hotline and a child protective investigation that determines the child should not remain in his or her home, notwithstanding services the DCF provides. Generally, the dependency process includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- A report to the central abuse hotline.
- A child protective investigation to determine the safety of the child.
- In-home services or a shelter of the child and an out-of-home placement.
- A court finding that the child is dependent.¹⁷
- Case planning to address the problems that resulted in the child's dependency.
- Reunification with the child's parent or other appropriate permanency option, such as adoption.¹⁸

¹⁶ Section 409.987(21)(a), F.S.

¹⁷ A "child who is found to be dependent" refers to a child who is found by the court: to have been abandoned, abused, or neglected by the child's parents or legal custodians; to have been surrendered to the DCF or licensed child-placing agency for the purpose of adoption; to have parents or legal custodians that failed to substantially comply with the requirements of a case plan for the purpose of reunification; to have been voluntarily placed with a licensed child-placing agency for the purposes of subsequent adoption; to have no parent or legal custodians capable of providing supervision and care; to be at substantial risk of imminent abuse, abandonment, or neglect; or to have been sexually exploited and to have no parent, legal custodian, or responsible adult relative available to provide the necessary and appropriate supervision. Section 39.01(15), F.S.

¹⁸ Office of the States Courts Administrator, The Office of Family Courts, *A Caregiver's Guide to Dependency Court*, available at: <https://flcourts-media.flcourts.gov/content/download/218185/file/Web-Caregivers-Guide-Final-09.pdf> (last visited 2/5/26); see also ch. 39, F.S.

Central Abuse Hotline and Investigations

The DCF is statutorily required to operate and maintain a central abuse hotline to receive reports of known or suspected instances of child abuse,¹⁹ abandonment,²⁰ or neglect,²¹ or instances when a child does not have a parent, legal custodian, or adult relative available to provide supervision and care.²² The hotline must operate 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and accept reports through a single statewide toll-free telephone number or through electronic reporting.²³

If the hotline counselor determines a report meets the criteria of abuse, abandonment, or neglect, the report is accepted for a protective investigation.²⁴ Based on the report, the department makes a determination regarding when to initiate a protective investigation. All investigations must be completed within 24 hours; however, the DCF must commence an investigation immediately if it appears the following conditions are met:²⁵

- The immediate safety or well-being of a child is endangered;
- The family may flee or the child may be unavailable for the purposes of conducting a child protective investigation; or
- The facts reported to the central abuse hotline otherwise so warrant.

Once the DCF assigns a child protective investigator (CPI) to the case, the CPI assesses the safety and perceived needs of the child and family; whether in-home services are needed to stabilize the family; and whether the safety of the child necessitates removal and the provision of out-of-home services.²⁶

Office of Insurance Regulation

The Office of Insurance Regulation (Office) is housed within the Financial Services Commission of the Department of Financial Services.²⁷ The Office is responsible for all activities concerning insurers and other risk-bearing entities, including the following:²⁸

- Licensing;

¹⁹ Section 39.01(2), F.S. defines “abuse” as any willful or threatened act that results in any physical, mental, or sexual abuse, injury, or harm that causes or is likely to cause the child’s physical, mental, or emotional health to be significantly impaired.

²⁰ Section 39.01(1), F.S. defines “abandoned” or “abandonment” as a situation in which the parent or legal custodian of a child or, in the absence of a parent or legal custodian, the caregiver, while being able, has made no significant contribution to the child’s care and maintenance or has failed to establish or maintain a substantial and positive relationship with the child, or both. “Establish or maintain a substantial and positive relationship” means, in part, frequent and regular contact with the child, and the exercise of parental rights and responsibilities.

²¹ Section 39.01(53), F.S. states “neglect” occurs when a child is deprived of, or is allowed to be deprived of, necessary food, clothing, shelter, or medical treatment or a child is permitted to live in an environment when such deprivation or environment causes the child’s physical, mental, or emotional health to be significantly impaired or to be in danger of being significantly impaired, except when such circumstances are caused primarily by financial inability unless services have been offered and rejected by such person.

²² Section 39.201(1), F.S.

²³ Section 39.101(1), F.S.

²⁴ Section 39.201(4)(a), F.S.

²⁵ Section 39.101(2), F.S.

²⁶ See generally s. 39.301, F.S. and Part IV, Chapter 39, F.S. (regulating taking children into the custody of the DCF and shelter hearings).

²⁷ Section 20.121, F.S.

²⁸ Office of Insurance Regulation, *Organization and Operation*, available at: <https://flor.gov/about-us/organization-and-operation> (last visited 2/5/26).

- Rates;
- Policy Forms;
- Market conduct;
- Claims;
- Issuance of certificates of authority;
- Solvency;
- Viatical settlements;
- Premium financing; and
- Administrative supervision, as provided under the insurance code or Chapter 636, F.S.

The Director of the Office of Insurance Regulation, or the Commissioner of Insurance Regulation, leads the Office.²⁹

The Office has statutory authority and directives to regulate insurance rates in an effort to protect policyholders and the public against the adverse effects of excessive, inadequate, or unfairly discriminatory insurance rates.³⁰

Liability Insurance

Insurance refers to a contract whereby one undertakes to indemnify another or pay or allow a specified amount or a determinable benefit upon determinable contingencies.³¹ Typically, businesses and nonprofit organizations purchase general liability insurance or professional liability insurance, which protects against financial loss due to accidents (general liability) or malpractice, errors, or negligence (professional liability).³²

In recent years, there has been a national emphasis on the lack of availability and affordability of liability insurance for organizations that serve children. Reports of rising premiums and a lack of insurance providers willing to provide liability insurance leave many organizations struggling to find affordable liability insurance.³³ For instance, in 2024, California foster family agencies experienced a shortage of insurance coverage after a major insurer of nonprofits reported it would let current insurance policies expire and would not renew such policies.³⁴ The insurer cited the cost of sexual abuse claims as the impetus for letting the policies expire, although many foster family agencies reported not having sexual abuse claims filed against them.³⁵ Providers surveyed by the Association of Children's Residential and Community Services (ACRC) and the National Organization of State Associations for Children (NOSAC) echoed such experiences;

²⁹ Section 20.121, F.S.

³⁰ Section 627.0612

³¹ Section 624.02, F.S.,

³² U.S. Small Business Administration, *Get Business Insurance*, available at: <https://www.sba.gov/business-guide/launch-your-business/get-business-insurance#six-common-types-of-business-insurance> (last visited 1/31/26).

³³ Bipartisan Policy Center, *'The Perfect Storm': Child Care Providers' Challenges in Accessing and Affording Liability Insurance*, available at: <https://bipartisanpolicy.org/issue-brief/the-perfect-storm-child-care-providers-challenges-in-accessing-and-affording-liability-insurance/> (last visited 1/31/26).

³⁴ Los Angeles Times, *Thousands of foster kids in California could lose their homes amid insurance crisis*, available at: <https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2024-09-18/thousands-of-foster-kids-in-california-could-lose-their-homes-amid-insurance-crisis> (last visited 1/31/26).

³⁵ *Id.*

many providers experienced an increase in premium rates despite having no sexual abuse claims filed against them.³⁶

CBC Lead Agency and Subcontractor Liability Insurance Requirements

The Legislature acknowledges that securing liability insurance is one of the components necessary for private providers to secure a safe and stable environment for children in the child welfare system.³⁷ Thus, Florida law requires CBC lead agencies and subcontractors to hold liability insurance. However, the Legislature finds that the cost to maintain such insurance should not significantly reduce the resources of the providers.³⁸

Lead agencies and subcontractors are statutorily required to obtain general liability insurance and bodily injury liability insurance, if the staff transports children in personal automobiles.³⁹ To reduce the entity's financial risk associated with providing services, the lead agency or subcontractor may choose to purchase additional insurance policies based on the needs of the entity.

The following chart displays examples of the insurance policies CBC lead agencies and subcontractors may obtain:

| Lead Agencies and Subcontracted Providers Insurance Policies | | |
|---|---|--|
| Policy | Coverage Requirement | Damages Available |
| Statutorily Required Policies⁴⁰ | | |
| General Liability Insurance | \$3 million in aggregate general liability insurance coverage per policy period | \$1 million per occurrence |
| Bodily Injury Liability Insurance – <i>If staff transport children in personal automobiles</i> | Minimum \$100,000 per person per any one automobile accident | \$300,000 for all damages resulting from any one automobile accident on a personal vehicle |
| Optional Policies⁴¹ | | |
| Board & Executive Liability | Protects board of directors against personal liability for official duties. | |
| Improper Sexual Conduct and Physical Abuse Coverage (<i>also referred to as Sexual/Physical Abuse/Molestation Coverage</i>) | Covers the CBC lead agency or subcontractor for allegations of sexual or physical abuse. | |
| Social Service Professional (SSP) Coverage | Covers the organization and employees for damages due to negligence or errors and omissions during the work the organization provides. | |
| Nonowned Automobile Liability | Covers the organization from liability from an automobile accident involving an automobile not owned, leased, rented, or borrowed by the organization (the employee's personal automobile). | |

³⁶ ACRC and NOSAC, *Insuring Care: How Liability Insurance Access Threatens Community Services for Children 2025 National Survey Report*, available at: <https://togetherthevoice.org/insuringcare/> (last visited 2/5/26).

³⁷ Section 409.993(1), F.S.

³⁸ Section 409.993 (1), F.S.

³⁹ Section 409.993, F.S.

⁴⁰ Section 409.993, F.S.

⁴¹ Nonprofits Insurance Alliance, *Nonprofits Insurance 101*, available at: <https://insurancefornonprofits.org/nonprofits/insurance-101/> (last visited 9/8/25).

Upon an incident, such as an injury or allegation of abuse, the CBC or subcontractor files a claim with their insurer for coverage.⁴² Depending on the nature of the incident, the insurer may cover the claim and settle out of court, take the issue to trial, or deny the claim of the CBC lead agency or subcontractor.⁴³ Currently, there is no statutory requirement for CBC lead agencies or subcontractors to provide information to the DCF or Legislature regarding the number of claims lead agencies and subcontractors have, and how premiums have been affected due to such claims.

III. Effect of Proposed Changes:

Section 1 of the bill adds a new subsection to s. 409.993, F.S. to require the Office of Insurance Regulation (OIR), in collaboration with the DCF and CBC lead agencies and their subcontracted providers to review all available, relevant, and appropriate data from the previous five fiscal years related to liability insurance coverage and availability. The bill requires an analysis of the following metrics:

- Access to and availability of liability insurance through authorized insurance companies, surplus lines companies, and self-insurance funds;
- Factors affecting the ability to obtain and maintain liability insurance;
- Cost of general liability insurance based on insurance premium documentation;
- Claims data;
- Settlement and judicial disposition data;
- CBC lead agency operating budget and expenses;
- Impact of insurance costs on the financial condition of CBC lead agencies and their subcontractors; and
- Consistency of statutory insurance requirements with the general insurance market.

The bill requires the OIR to develop a report on the findings of its review and analysis that includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Summary of the methods used and data obtained for review and analysis;
- Trends in insurance premium rates;
- Trends in claims and settlements;
- Trends in liability coverage affordability and availability;
- Actionable recommendations for agency and legislative changes to ensure affordable and available liability insurance for CBC lead agencies and their subcontractors.

The bill requires the OIR to provide the required report to the Governor, President of the Senate, and Speaker of the House of Representatives by January 1, 2027.

The bill authorizes the OIR to levy fines or penalties on an insurance company that fails to reply to any request for information within 30 calendar days of such request. The bill limits such fines to not exceed \$500 per day for the first 3 days late and \$1,000 per day for each late day thereafter. Such fines shall be transferred to the General Revenue Fund.

⁴² Nonprofits Insurance Alliance, *Reporting Claims to NIA*, available at: <https://insurancefornonprofits.org/claims/#nonprofits> (last 2/10/26).

⁴³ *Id.*

The bill authorizes the DCF to levy fines or penalties on a CBC lead agency or subcontractor that fails to reply to any request for information within 30 calendar days of such request. The bill limits such fines to not exceed \$500 per day for the first 3 days late and \$1,000 per day for each late day thereafter. Such fines shall be transferred to the General Revenue Fund.

The bill repeals this newly created subsection of law on July 1, 2027, unless it is reenacted.

Section 2 of the bill provides an effective date of July 1, 2026.

IV. Constitutional Issues:

A. Municipality/County Mandates Restrictions:

None.

B. Public Records/Open Meetings Issues:

None.

C. Trust Funds Restrictions:

None.

D. State Tax or Fee Increases:

None.

E. Other Constitutional Issues:

None Identified.

V. Fiscal Impact Statement:

A. Tax/Fee Issues:

None.

B. Private Sector Impact:

None.

C. Government Sector Impact:

None.

VI. Technical Deficiencies:

None.

VII. Related Issues:

None.

VIII. Statutes Affected:

This bill substantially amends the following sections of the Florida Statutes: 409.993

IX. Additional Information:**A. Committee Substitute – Statement of Changes:**

(Summarizing differences between the Committee Substitute and the prior version of the bill.)

CS by Children, Families, and Elder Affairs on February 10, 2026:

- Removes changes made to Ch. 39, F.S. that created an accreditation process for child-serving organizations.
- Removes changes made to the definition of institutional child abuse and neglect to maintain current statute.
- Requires the Office of Insurance Regulation to collaborate with the DCF and CBC lead agencies to review data pertaining to liability insurance coverage and availability for the last five fiscal years.
- Requires the OIR to submit a report on such findings surrounding insurance coverage and availability by January 1, 2027.
- Authorizes the OIR to levy fines or penalize insurance companies and authorizes the DCF to levy fines or penalize CBC lead agencies or subcontractors for failure to reply to a request for information within 30 calendar days.
- Repeals the provisions of the bill July 1, 2027.

B. Amendments:

None.

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**STATE OF FLORIDA
DEPARTMENT OF STATE**

Division of Elections

I, Cord Byrd, Secretary of State,
do hereby certify that

Taylor N. Hatch

is duly appointed

**Secretary,
Department of Children and Families**

for a term beginning on the Fifteenth day of July, A.D., 2025, to
serve at the pleasure of the Governor and is subject to be
confirmed by the Senate during the next regular session of the
Legislature.



*Given under my hand and the Great Seal of the
State of Florida, at Tallahassee, the Capital, this
the Twentieth day of October, A.D., 2025.*

Secretary of State

DSDE 99 (3/03)

The original document has a reflective line mark in paper. Hold at an angle to view when checking.

If photocopied or chemically altered, the word "VOID" will appear.

"State of Florida" appears in small letters across the face of this 8 1/2 x 11" document.



RON DESANTIS
GOVERNOR

RECEIVED

2025 JUL 15 PM 4:57

DIVISION OF ELECTIONS
TALLAHASSEE, FL

July 15, 2025

Secretary Cord Byrd
Department of State
R.A. Gray Building, Room 316
500 South Bronough Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0250

Dear Secretary Byrd:

Please be advised I have made the following reappointment under the provisions of Section 20.19(a), Florida Statutes:

Ms. Taylor Hatch



as Secretary of the Department of Children and Families, subject to confirmation by the Senate. This appointment is effective July 15, 2025, for a term ending at the pleasure of the Governor.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature of Ron DeSantis in black ink.

Ron DeSantis
Governor

RD/ch

HAND DELIVERED

RECEIVED

OATH OF OFFICE

(Art. II, § 5(b), Fla. Const.; § 92.50, Florida Statutes)

2025 OCT 10 PM 4:23

DIVISION OF ELECTIONS
TALLAHASSEE, FL

STATE OF FLORIDA

County of Leon

I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will support, protect, and defend the Constitution and Government of the United States and of the State of Florida; that I am duly qualified to hold office under the Constitution of the State, and that I will well and faithfully perform the duties of

Secretary, Florida Department of Children and Families

(Full Name of Office - Abbreviations Not Accepted)

on which I am now about to enter, so help me God.

[NOTE: If you affirm, you may omit the words "so help me God." See § 92.52, Fla. Stat.]

Signature

Taylor N. Hatch

Sworn to and subscribed before me by means of physical presence ☒ OR online notarization ☐
this 10th day of October, 2025

Bridget A. Royster

Signature of Officer Administering Oath or of Notary Public

(To be completed only by judges administering oath - see § 92.50, Florida Statutes.)

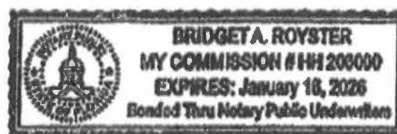
Print Name

Title

Court

(To be completed by officer administering oath, other than judges - see § 92.50, Florida Statutes.)

Affix Seal Below



Personally Known ☒ OR Produced Identification ☐

Type of Identification Produced _____

ACCEPTANCE

I accept the office listed in the above Oath of Office.

Mailing Address: Home ☒

Office ☐

Street or Post Office Box

City, State, Zip Code

Taylor N. Hatch

Print Name

Signature

Taylor N. Hatch

The Florida Senate
APPEARANCE RECORD

Deliver both copies of this form to
Senate professional staff conducting the meeting

SECRETARY HATCH
CONFIRMATION

2/10/26
Meeting Date

CF & EA
Committee

Amendment Barcode (if applicable)

Name NATALIE KELLY

Phone 850 893-1313

Address 122 S. CALHOUN STREET
Street

Email NATALIE@FLMANAGING
ENTITIES.COM

TALLAHASSEE FL 32301
City State Zip

Speaking: ☐ For ☐ Against ☐ Information

OR

Waive Speaking: ☒ In Support ☐ Against

PLEASE CHECK ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:

☐ I am appearing without
compensation or sponsorship.

☒ I am a registered lobbyist,
representing:

FLORIDA ASSOCIATION
OF MANAGING ENTITIES

☐ I am not a lobbyist, but received
something of value for my appearance
(travel, meals, lodging, etc.),
sponsored by:

While it is a tradition to encourage public testimony, time may not permit all persons wishing to speak to be heard at this hearing. Those who do speak may be asked to limit their remarks so that as many persons as possible can be heard. If you have questions about registering to lobby please see Fla. Stat. §11.045 and Joint Rule 1. [2020-2022JointRules.pdf \(flsenate.gov\)](#)

This form is part of the public record for this meeting.

S-001 (08/10/2021)

The Florida Senate

APPEARANCE RECORD

Deliver both copies of this form to
Senate professional staff conducting the meeting

Secretary Hatch Confirmation
Bill Number or Topic

2/10/26
Meeting Date

Children Families + Elder Affairs
Committee

Name Christy Lee Phone 813 784-4235

Address 6006 N Florida Ave #1506 Email Christy@advocates4familyjustice.org
Street
Tampa FL 33604
City State Zip

Speaking: ☐ For ☐ Against ☒ Information **OR** Waive Speaking: ☐ In Support ☐ Against

PLEASE CHECK ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:

☒ I am appearing without
compensation or sponsorship.

☐ I am a registered lobbyist,
representing:

☐ I am not a lobbyist, but received
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(travel, meals, lodging, etc.),
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S-001 (08/10/2021)

The Florida Senate
APPEARANCE RECORD

Deliver both copies of this form to
Senate professional staff conducting the meeting

Confirmation
Bill Number or Topic

2.10.26

Meeting Date

C, F & EA

Committee

Amendment Barcode (if applicable)

Name VICTORIA ZEPP

Phone 833.618.8180

Address 310 W. College Ave

Street

Email VICTORIA@TEAM180.COM

TLH

City

FL

State

32301

Zip

Speaking: ☐ For ☐ Against ☐ Information

OR

Waive Speaking: ☒ In Support ☐ Against

PLEASE CHECK ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:

☐ I am appearing without
compensation or sponsorship.

☒ I am a registered lobbyist,
representing:

FAMILY SUPPORT
SERVICES

☐ I am not a lobbyist, but received
something of value for my appearance
(travel, meals, lodging, etc.),
sponsored by:

While it is a tradition to encourage public testimony, time may not permit all persons wishing to speak to be heard at this hearing. Those who do speak may be asked to limit their remarks so that as many persons as possible can be heard. If you have questions about registering to lobby please see Fla. Stat. §11.045 and Joint Rule 1. [2020-2022 Joint Rules.pdf \(flsenate.gov\)](#)

This form is part of the public record for this meeting.

S-001 (08/10/2021)

The Florida Senate

APPEARANCE RECORD

Deliver both copies of this form to
Senate professional staff conducting the meeting

Confirmation

Bill Number or Topic

2/10/26

Meeting Date

C, F, EA

Committee

Amendment Barcode (if applicable)

Name

Victoria Zepp

Phone

833-618-8180

Address

310 W College Ave

Email

Victoria@team180.com

Street

TLH

City

FL

State

32301

Zip

Speaking:

☐

For

☐

Against

☐

Information

OR

Waive Speaking:

☒

In Support

☐

Against

PLEASE CHECK ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:

☐

I am appearing without
compensation or sponsorship.

☒

I am a registered lobbyist,
representing:

One Hope United

☐

I am not a lobbyist, but received
something of value for my appearance
(travel, meals, lodging, etc.),
sponsored by:

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Confirmation

Bill Number or Topic

Amendment Barcode (if applicable)

Name Victoria Zepp

Phone 833-618-8180

Address 310 W College Ave

Email victoria@team180.com

Street

TLH

City

FL

State

32301

Zip

Speaking: ☐ For ☐ Against ☐ Information

OR

Waive Speaking: ☒ In Support ☐ Against

PLEASE CHECK ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:

☐ I am appearing without
compensation or sponsorship.

☒ I am a registered lobbyist,
representing:

Children's
Home Network

☐ I am not a lobbyist, but received
something of value for my appearance
(travel, meals, lodging, etc.),
sponsored by:

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S-001 (08/10/2021)

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Confirmation

Bill Number or Topic

Amendment Barcode (if applicable)

2/10/26
Meeting Date

Children, Families, and Elder Affairs
Committee

Name Taylor Hatch

Phone 850-488-9410

Address 2415 N. Monroe St.
Street

Email taylor.hatch@myFLFamilies.com

Tallahassee FL 32303
City State Zip

Speaking: ☒ For ☐ Against ☐ Information **OR** Waive Speaking: ☐ In Support ☐ Against

PLEASE CHECK ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:

☐ I am appearing without
compensation or sponsorship.

☒ I am a registered lobbyist,
representing:

FL Dept. of Children
and Families

☐ I am not a lobbyist, but received
something of value for my appearance
(travel, meals, lodging, etc.),
sponsored by:

While it is a tradition to encourage public testimony, time may not permit all persons wishing to speak to be heard at this hearing. Those who do speak may be asked to limit their remarks so that as many persons as possible can be heard. If you have questions about registering to lobby please see Fla. Stat. §11.045 and Joint Rule 1. [2020-2022 Joint Rules.pdf \(flsenate.gov\)](#)

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