

THE FLORIDA SENATE
2011 SUMMARY OF LEGISLATION PASSED
**Committee on Children, Families,
And Elder Affairs**

CS/HB 279 — Training/Certification/Child Welfare Personnel

by Health and Human Services Access Subcommittee and Rep. Davis (CS/SB 380 by Children, Families, and Elder Affairs Committee and Senator Wise)

The bill amends legislative intent relating to the training and certification of child welfare personnel by eliminating the responsibility of the Department of Children and Families (DCF or department) to establish, maintain, and oversee child welfare training academies and by requiring that persons providing child welfare services earn and maintain a certification from a third party credentialing entity that is approved by the department. The bill creates definitions for the terms "child welfare certification," "core competency," "preservice curriculum," and "third-party credentialing entity."

The bill requires the department to approve one or more third-party credentialing entities for the purpose of developing and administering child welfare certification programs for persons who provide child welfare services and provides the criteria for a credentialing entity to secure DCF approval. The bill requires the department to approve core competencies and related pre-service curricula. The bill allows community-based care agencies, sheriffs' offices, and the department to contract for training and requires department approved credentialing entities to grant reciprocity and award a child welfare certification to individuals who hold certificates issued by the department for a specified period of time. No cost will be incurred by the department or the certificateholder.

The use of the Child Welfare Training Trust Fund is amended by the bill, and the child welfare training academies are eliminated. The bill also eliminates the ability of the department to develop certification programs.

If approved by the Governor, these provisions take effect October 1, 2011.

Vote: Senate 37-0; House 117-0