

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 Appropriations

BILL: CS/CS/HB 23, 1st Eng.

INTRODUCER: Health Care Appropriations Subcommittee; Children, Families and Seniors Subcommittee; and Representative Eagle and others

SUBJECT: Public Assistance

DATE: May 2, 2017

REVISED: _____

ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR	REFERENCE	ACTION
1. <u>Sneed</u>	<u>Hansen</u>	<u>AP</u>	<u>Fav/1 amendment</u>

I. Please see Section IX. for Additional Information:
II. COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE - Substantial Changes

I. Summary:

CS/CS/HB 23 makes a number of changes to the state's main economic assistance programs administered by the Department of Children and Families (DCF).

For the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, or Temporary Cash Assistance Program (TCA), the bill:

- Increases penalties for noncompliance with work requirements;
- Requires an individual work plan for each recipient to assist them to meet the work requirements;
- Prohibits certain locations where electronic benefits transfer (EBT) cards can be used; and
- Imposes a replacement fee for lost EBT cards replaced more than 5 times in a year.

The bill prohibits relative caregiver payments when the dependent child is a parent of a child where both live with the relative.

For the Food Assistance Program or SNAP, the bill:

- Prohibits the DCF from expanding financial eligibility standards unless authorized by the Legislature or required by federal rule; and
- Directs the DCF to seek federal approval to establish asset limits of \$2,250 for households without elderly or disabled members and \$3,250 for households with elderly or disabled members and implement an asset verification service.

In addition, the bill makes several changes to CareerSource Florida, Inc., which assists recipients in meeting work requirements. The bill increases reporting requirements for participant employment data. The bill requires the implementation of a pilot program to increase employment among TCA and SNAP participants.

The bill makes appropriations to the DCF and the DEO of trust fund moneys to implement the requirements of the bill. *See Section V.*

The bill has an effective date of July 1, 2017.

II. Present Situation:

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)

The TANF program is a block grant that provides federal funding to states for a wide range of benefits and activities to support indigent families. It is best known for providing cash assistance to needy families with children. The TANF program was created in the 1996 welfare reform law as part of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act.¹ In Florida, the 1996 legislature passed the Work and Gain Economic Self-Sufficiency Act in anticipation of passage of federal welfare reform. The Department of Children and Families (DCF) refers to the benefits from TANF as Temporary Cash Assistance.

The purpose of TANF is to:

- To provide assistance to needy families with children so that they can live in their own home or the homes of relatives;
- To end the dependency of needy parents on government benefits through work, job preparation, and marriage;
- To reduce the incidence of out-of-wedlock pregnancies; and
- To promote the formation and maintenance of two-parent families.²

Eligibility

Florida law specifies two major categories of families who may be eligible for TANF cash assistance, those families that are work-eligible, and those child-only cases.³ While many of the basic eligibility requirements apply to all of these categories, there are some distinctions between the categories in terms of requirements and restrictions.

Work-Eligible Cases

Within the TANF work-eligible cases, there are single parent families and two-parent families. Single parent families can receive cash assistance for the parent and the children. The parent is subject to all of the financial and non-financial requirements described below including the work

¹ Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, An Overview of Program Requirements. January 2016. Department of Children and Families. <http://www.dcf.state.fl.us/programs/access/docs/TANF%20101%20final.pdf>.

² U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, see <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ofa/programs/tanf/about> (last visited March 29, 2017).

³ s. 414.045(1), Florida Statutes.

requirements and time limits. Single parents with a child under age six meet the participation rate with 20 hours of work participation per week.

Two-parent families with children are eligible on the same basis as single-parent families except the work requirement for two-parent families includes a higher number of hours of participation per week (35 hours or 55 hours if child care is subsidized) than required for single-parent families (30 hours).

Child-Only Cases

There are two child-only types of TANF cases. The first is where the child is living with a relative or situations where a custodial parent is not eligible to be included in the eligibility group.⁴ In the majority of situations, the child is living with a grandparent or other relative. Child-only families also include situations where a parent is receiving federal Supplemental Security Income (SSI) payments and situations where the parent is not a U.S. citizen and is ineligible due to their immigration status. Grandparents or other relatives receiving child-only payments are not subject to the TANF work requirement or the TANF time limit.

The second type of child-only TANF case is called the Relative Caregiver case where the child has been adjudicated dependent due to the original parents' inability to care for the child and the child has been placed with relatives by the court. These relatives are eligible for a payment that is higher than the typical child-only payment, but less than the payment for licensed foster care. As with other child-only families, grandparents or relatives receiving Relative Caregiver payments are not subject to the TANF work requirements or time limits.

To be eligible, families must meet both financial and non-financial requirements established in state law. In general, families must include a child (or a pregnant woman) and be residents of Florida. Children under age 5 must be current with childhood immunizations and children age 6 to 18 must attend school and parents or caretakers must participate in school conferences. Countable assets must be \$2,000 or less and licensed vehicles needed for individuals subject to the work requirement may not exceed \$8,500.

Noncitizens

Florida law currently excludes a pro-rata share of the income from a parent who is an illegal noncitizen or ineligible noncitizen.⁵ This means that a portion of the income that an illegal citizen parent contributes to the family is not counted towards the family's income for TANF eligibility.

Work requirements

Adults in families receiving cash assistance must work or participate in work related activities for a specified number of hours per week depending on the number of work-eligible adults in the family and the age of children.⁶

⁴ Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, An Overview of Program Requirements. January 2016. Department of Children and Families. <http://www.dcf.state.fl.us/programs/access/docs/TANF%20101%20final.pdf>.

⁵ s. 414.095(3)(d), F.S.

⁶ *Id*

Type of Family	Work participation Hours Required
Other single parent families or two-parent families where one parent is disabled	30 hours weekly with at least 20 hours in core activities
Married teen or teen head of household under age 20	Maintains satisfactory attendance at secondary school or the equivalent or participates in education related to employment for at least 20 hours weekly
Two-parent families who do not receive subsidized child care	35 hours per week (total among both parents) with at least 30 hours in core activities
Two-parent families who receive subsidized child care	55 hours per week with at least 50 hours in core activities

Federal law includes 12 work activities, including 9 that are “core” activities in that they may be used to satisfy any of the average weekly participation requirements and 3 that are “supplemental” in that they may only be used to satisfy the work activity requirement after the “core” requirement is met.

Core Activities include:

- Unsubsidized employment
- Subsidized private sector employment
- Subsidized public sector employment
- Job search and job readiness (limited to not more than 6 weeks in a federal fiscal year with not more than 4 weeks consecutive).
- Community service
- Work experience
- On-the-job training
- Vocational educational training (limited to 12 months for an individual), and
- Caring for a child of a recipient in community service.⁷

Supplemental Activities include:

- Job skills training directly related to employment
- Education directly related to employment (for those without a high school or equivalent degree), and
- Completion of a secondary school program.⁸

The department works with CareerSource Florida, Inc., known locally as the regional workforce boards to serve the families defined as work-eligible. Workforce boards assist the client in employment training and securing employment. The boards also document whether the client meets the work requirements under TANF and reports this information to the department. If a client does not meet his or her work requirements, the department will sanction the client by reducing or eliminating cash assistance.

⁷ *Id*

⁸ *Id*

Amount of Assistance

The amount of temporary cash assistance received by a family depends on family size and whether the family must pay for housing. The following monthly amounts are specified in s. 414.095(10), F.S.

Family Size	No Obligation To Pay for Shelter	Shelter Costs Less than \$50	Shelter Costs Greater than \$50
1	\$95	\$153	\$180
2	\$158	\$205	\$241
3	\$198	\$258	\$303
4	\$254	\$309	\$364
5	\$289	\$362	\$426

Time Limits

Federal law restricts receipt of federal TANF benefits to not more than 60 months of assistance. States may exempt up to 20 percent of the caseload from the time limit due to state-defined hardship. Florida law limits receipt of assistance to not more than 48 cumulative months of assistance with exemptions to the time limit provided for hardship. Examples of hardship would include individuals receiving Social Security disability benefits (which are different from SSI benefits) or individuals caring for a disabled family member when the disability and the need for care have been medically verified.

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

The Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) under the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), administers the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). SNAP offers nutrition assistance to millions of eligible, low-income individuals and families, in the form of funds to purchase “eligible food,”⁹ and provides economic benefits to communities by reducing poverty and food insecurity.

The federal government funds 100% of the benefit amount.¹⁰ However, the FNS and states share the administrative costs of the program. Federal laws, regulations, and waivers provide states with various policy options to better target benefits to those most in need, streamline program administration and field operations, and coordinate SNAP activities with those of other programs.

⁹ The Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 defines eligible food as any food or food product intended for human consumption except alcoholic beverages, tobacco, hot foods and hot food products prepared for immediate consumption, with some exceptions. 7 USC § 2012(k); see also 7 CFR § 271.2. For an explanation of the inclusion of “junk food” and luxury items as eligible foods, see UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE FOOD AND NUTRITION SERVICE, *Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Eligible Food Items*, <https://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/eligible-food-items> (last visited April 28, 2017).

¹⁰ For FFY 2016, the maximum benefit amount was \$649 for a family of four, with an average benefit amount of \$471. *Policy Basics: Introduction to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)*, CENTER FOR BUDGET AND POLICY PRIORITIES, updated March 24, 2016, available at <http://www.cbpp.org/sites/default/files/atoms/files/policybasics-foodstamps.pdf> (last visited April 28, 2017).

The amount of benefits, or allotment, a household will qualify for depends on the number of individuals in the household and the household's net income. To calculate a household's allotment, 30% of its net income is subtracted from the maximum allotment for that household size.¹¹ This is because SNAP households are expected to spend about 30% of their own resources on food.¹² For example, a household of three with a net monthly income of \$1,500 must subtract \$450 from the maximum allotment for their household, which is \$511 per month; the household would receive a food stamp allotment of \$61 for the month.

SNAP Eligibility

Federal law establishes two ways for a household to be eligible for SNAP:

- Having a gross income below 130% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) (or 165% FPL if at least one person is age 60 or older, or is disabled),¹³ a net income of 100% FPL, and less than \$2,250 of counted liquid and nonliquid assets (or \$3,250 if at least one person is age 60 or older or is disabled);¹⁴ or
- Being “categorically,” or automatically, eligible based on receiving benefits from other specified low-income assistance programs.¹⁵

Categorical eligibility allows households that already met financial eligibility rules in specified means-tested programs¹⁶ to be eligible for SNAP without going through another financial eligibility determination. Federal regulations *require* that states make categorically eligible those households in which all members are either eligible for or receive *cash* benefits, known as temporary cash assistance (TCA), from the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program, Social Security Income (SSI), or another general assistance program.¹⁷

SNAP Eligibility Verification

The DCF administers the Automated Community Connection to Economic Self-Sufficiency (ACCESS) Program, which verifies identities and determines eligibility for SNAP as well as TANF and Medicaid.¹⁸ The DCF collects household, identity, and income information from applicants. For example, SNAP applicants must provide the DCF with proof of identity, citizenship, and noncitizen status of household members, including furnishing a Social Security number or proof of Social Security number application for each member.¹⁹ Applicants also

¹¹ Id.

¹² Id.

¹³ 7 CFR § 273.9(a)(1)-(2); 7 USC § 2014(c).

¹⁴ 7 CFR § 273.8(b) sets the maximum allowable resources at \$2,000 and \$3,000, respectively; however, these limits were raised to \$2,250 and \$3,250 pursuant to annual cost-of-living adjustments in October 2014, and remain at that level today. *See*, letter from Lizbeth Silberman, Director, Program Development Division, Food and Nutrition Service, United States Department of Agriculture, to all Regional Directors of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, RE: SNAP -Fiscal Year 2017 Cost-of-Living Adjustments, Aug. 10, 2016, available at, <https://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/snap/SNAP-Fiscal-Year-2017-Cost-of-Living-Adjustments.pdf> (last visited April 28, 2017).

¹⁵ 7 CFR § 273.2(j).

¹⁶ Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Supplemental Security Income (SSI), or state-financed general assistance (GA) programs.

¹⁷ 7 CFR § 273.2(j)(i).

¹⁸ Rule 65A-1.205. F.A.C

¹⁹ *Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program: DCF Has Mechanisms in Place to Facilitate Eligibility, Verify Participant Identity, and Monitor Benefit Use*, OPPAGA, Jan. 7, 2016.

provide proof of earned and unearned income for each household member (such as recent check stubs, child support information, and notices from the Social Security or Veteran's Administrations).²⁰

The ACCESS system's identity verification module compares the applicant's data against its database to verify an applicant's identity.²¹ The ACCESS system also validates information by comparing applicant's or recipient's data with income and eligibility data provided through the use of approximately 20 data exchanges, some of which are required by the federal government while others are used at the state's option. To finalize the application process, the ACCESS system's identity verification module generates four unique identity verification questions that an applicant may choose to answer before submitting the full application. These questions are complex and unrelated to the basic identifying information a thief could obtain from stealing an applicant's wallet.

Once eligible, recipients must report when their household income exceeds 130% FPL. The DCF takes action to reevaluate SNAP eligibility or recalculate the SNAP benefit amount only on changes where the recipient's income exceeds 130% of the FPL or when it obtains certain information from its databases that would impact the recipient's benefit eligibility or amount.

SNAP Work Requirements

Beginning January 1, 2016, Florida implemented mandatory work requirements for all able bodied adults without dependents (ABAWD) in all 67 counties, reinstating benefit limits for ABAWDs who fail to meet work requirements.²²

ABAWDs who must comply with work requirements are referred to their regional workforce boards,²³ which provide information about available jobs, on-the-job training, and education and training services. ABAWDs may meet work requirements in a variety of ways by accessing services offered through regional workforce boards. ABAWDs are required to inform their CareerSource worker of their monthly hours working, volunteering, or in a work program to retain their SNAP benefits.

Relative Caregiver Program

The Relative Caregiver Program provides TCA to individuals who meet eligibility rules and have custody of a relative child under age 18 who has been court-ordered dependent by a Florida court and placed in their home by a DCF Child Welfare/Community Based Care contracted provider.²⁴ The intent of the Relative Caregiver Program is to provide relative caregivers who could not otherwise afford to take the child into their homes a means to avoid exposing the child to the trauma of shelter or foster care.

²⁰ Id.

²¹ Id.

²² 7 CFR § 273.24(b).

²³ Rule 65A-1.605(5), F.A.C.

²⁴ S. 39.5085(2), F.S.

The Relative Caregiver Program provides one type of child-only TCA. Payments are based on the child's age and any countable income.²⁵ The DCF ceases to provide child-only Relative Caregiver Program benefits when the parent or step-parent resides in the home with the relative caregiver and the child. The DCF terminates the benefits in this situation based on the requirement in s. 414.095(2)(a)5., F.S., that parents who live with their minor children to be included in the eligibility determination and households containing a parent are considered work-eligible households. Through rule 65C-28.008(2)(d), F.A.C., the DCF terminates payments through the Relative Caregiver Program if the parent is in the home for 30 consecutive days.²⁶ However, at least one court has ruled that caregivers may continue to receive the Relative Caregiver Program benefits while the parent resides in the home, because the prohibition against the parent residing in the home is not in statute and the DCF rules cannot be used to establish an eligibility guideline not included in the statute.²⁷ Court orders in such cases result in the DCF being required to make disallowed TANF expenditures.

Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) Card Program

Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) is an electronic system that allows a recipient to authorize transfer of their government benefits, including from the SNAP and TCA programs, to a retailer account to pay for products received.²⁸ The EBT card program is administered on the federal level by the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) within the United States Department of Agriculture and at the state level by the DCF.

In Florida, benefits are deposited into a TCA or SNAP account each month; the benefits in the TCA or SNAP account are accessed using the Florida EBT Automated Community Connection to Economic Self Sufficiency (ACCESS) card.²⁹ Even though the EBT card is issued in the name of an applicant, any eligible member of the household is allowed to use the EBT card.³⁰ Additionally, recipients may designate an authorized representative as a secondary cardholder who can receive an EBT card and access the food assistance account. Authorized representatives are often someone responsible for caring for the recipient. The ACCESS Florida system allows recipients to designate one authorized representative per household.

Prohibited Use

The Middle Class Tax Relief and Job Creation Act of 2012 required states receiving TANF to create policies and practices as necessary to prevent assistance provided under the program from being used in any EBT transaction in the following establishments:

- Any liquor store;
- Any casino, gambling casino, or gaming establishment; or

²⁵ Rule 65C-28.008(2)(g), F.A.C.

²⁶ However, a relative may receive the Relative Caregiver Program payment for a minor parent who is in his or her care, as well as for that minor parent's child, if both children have been adjudicated dependent and meet all other eligibility requirements.

²⁷ Department of Children and Families, Agency Analysis of 2017 House Bill 1121, p. 4, (Mar. 10, 2017).

²⁸ U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND NUTRITION SERVICES, *EBT: General Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) Information*, <http://www.fns.usda.gov/ebt/general-electronic-benefit-transfer-ebt-information> (last visited April 28, 2017).

²⁹ DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES, *Welcome to EBT*, <http://www.myflfamilies.com/service-programs/access-florida-food-medical-assistance-cash/welcome-ebt> (last visited April 28, 2017).

³⁰ 7 C.F.R. § 273.2(n)(3).

- Any retail establishment which provides adult-oriented entertainment in which performers disrobe or perform in an unclothed state for entertainment.³¹
- In 2013, Florida enacted legislation³² that prohibits EBT cards from being accepted at the following locations or for the following activities:
- The purchase of an alcoholic beverage as defined in s. 561.01, F.S., and sold pursuant to the Florida Beverage Law.
- An adult entertainment establishment, as defined in s. 847.001, F.S.;
- A pari-mutuel facility, as defined in s. 550.02, F.S.;
- A slot machine facility, as defined in s. 551.102, F.S.;
- A commercial bingo facility that operates outside the provisions of s. 849.0931, F.S.; and
- A casino, gaming facility, or Internet café, including gaming activities authorized under part II of chapter 285.³³

Replacement of EBT Cards

When a recipient loses his or her EBT card, he or she must call the EBT vendor's customer service telephone number to request a replacement EBT card.³⁴ The vendor then deactivates the card, and sends the household a new card.³⁵ Federal regulations allow recipients to request an unlimited number of replacement EBT cards.³⁶ While states cannot limit the number of replacement cards, frequent requests for replacement cards can be an indicator of EBT card fraud, such as trafficking, which occurs when an EBT card containing benefits is exchanged for cash. The FNS and the DCF consider multiple replacement cards a preliminary indicator of trafficking.

The FNS aims to preserve food assistance access for vulnerable populations (e.g., mentally ill and homeless people) who are at risk of losing their cards but who are not committing fraud,³⁷ while preventing others from trafficking and replacing their EBT cards. In the interest of preventing fraud, FNS regulations require states to monitor all client requests for EBT card replacements and send a notice, upon the fourth request in a 12-month period, alerting the household that their account is being monitored for potential suspicious activity.³⁸

In Fiscal Year 2014-2015, the DCF sent 13,967 letters to households that had requested four or more cards.³⁹ The letter informs the recipient that the card does not need to be replaced each month and that it is important to keep track of the card.⁴⁰ The letter also informs the recipient that this number of replacement requests is not normal and that the household's EBT behavior is

³¹ P.L. 112-96. Section 4004.

³² S. 1, chapter 2013-88, Laws of Florida.

³³ S. 402.82(4), F.S.

³⁴ The Florida Legislature's Office of Program Policy Analysis & Government Accountability, *Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program: DCF Has Mechanisms in Place to Facilitate Eligibility, Verify Participant Identity, and Monitor Benefit Use*, Dec. 3, 2015, p. 8 (research memorandum on file with Children, Families, and Seniors Subcommittee staff).

³⁵ *Id.*

³⁶ 7 C.F.R. § 276.4

³⁷ 7 C.F.R. § 274.6(b)(5)(iii).

³⁸ 7 C.F.R. § 274.6(b)(6); in Florida, after the EBT vendor provides a fourth replacement card to a household within a 12-month span, DCF sends a letter to the household.

³⁹ *Supra*, note 34.

⁴⁰ *Id.*

being monitored.⁴¹ Additionally, in Fiscal Year 2014-2015, less than one-third of the households who requested four cards (4,653 households) requested yet another replacement card after receiving the letter, and the DCF Office of Public Benefits Integrity referred these cases to the Department of Financial Services Division of Public Assistance Fraud for potential fraud investigation.⁴²

Federal regulations allow states to charge recipients for the cost to replace an excessive⁴³ number of cards. The FNS allows states to charge for the cost of the EBT card after four replaced cards. Under the DCF's EBT contract, the vendor reports that replacements costs \$3.50 per card.⁴⁴ A number of other states that charge for replacement cards. Those states charge between \$2.00 to \$5.00⁴⁵ per replacement card with some exceptions for good cause or financial hardship.

III. Effect of Proposed Changes:

Section 1 amends s. 414.065, F.S., specifying sanctions for noncompliance with TANF work requirements. The penalty for not completing the work requirements is changed from the termination of benefits from 10 days to 1 month. Once the recipient complies with the work requirements, assistance begins again the first day of the month following the penalty time period. Sanctions for non-compliance are on the parent only; children under age 16 continue to receive assistance through an alternative payee.⁴⁶ In the second instance of not meeting work requirements, the bill increases the sanction of terminating benefits to the parent from one month to three. For the third time of noncompliance, the penalty is increased from 3 to 6 months. The bill adds a penalty for the fourth instance of noncompliance of termination of benefits for 12 months.

Section 2 amends s. 445.024, F.S., relating to work requirements for TANF participants. The bill requires a work plan agreement with the individual developed by the Department of Economic Opportunity, CareerSource Florida, and the DCF. The plan must be in plain language, state what is expected of the participant, when and how they would be sanctioned, and contain strategies to help them overcome barriers to complete the work requirements.

Section 3 amends s. 402.82, F.S., to expand the locations where EBT cards are prohibited to include: medical marijuana treatment centers or dispensing organizations; cigar stores and stands, pipe stores, smoke shops and tobacco shops; and business establishments primarily engaged in the practice of body piercing, branding or tattooing.

In addition, the bill imposes a fee on the TANF participant if the EBT card is lost or stolen 5 times in one year. The cost of the replacement card will be deducted from the amount of the cash assistance. The DCF may waive the replacement fee for participants with extreme financial hardships.

⁴¹ Id.

⁴² Id.

⁴³ Defined by federal regulation as in excess of four cards within a 12-month span.

⁴⁴ *Supra*, note 34.

⁴⁵ By way of example, Louisiana and Maryland charge \$2.00, New Mexico charges \$2.50, and Massachusetts charges \$5.00.

⁴⁶ Department of Children and Families bill analysis for SB 570. Feb. 21, 2017. On file with the Senate Committee on Children, Families, and Elder Affairs.

Section 4 amends s. 39.5085, F.S., relating to the Relative Caregiver Program. Consistent with federal law, the bill prohibits payments to a relative caring for a dependent child when the parent of the child lives with the relative. Payments can, however be made in cases where both the parent and child are adjudicated dependent.

Section 5 amends 414.14, F.S., to require the DCF to simplify and align state public assistance policy with federal policy. Current law requires the DCF to align food assistance and medical assistance eligibility policies to simplify the budgeting process and reduce payment errors. If the department determines that the current law is inconsistent with federal law, the DCF may change procedures to improve the administration of the program. The bill allows the DCF to change these provisions only if the change does not increase the income or resource eligibility standards for the program.

Section 6 amends s. 414.175, F.S., relating to the review of existing waivers. Current law requires the DCF to review federal law and obtain waivers to improve the operation of the federal food assistance program. The bill limits the department to obtaining waivers only when such waivers do not increase income or resource eligibility standards above what is allowed by federal regulation.

Section 7 creates s. 414.315, F.S., establishing food assistance program resource eligibility standards. The bill requires the DCF to seek federal approval to implement the following asset limits for food assistance recipients:

- \$2,250 in liquid and non-liquid assets for households without elderly or disabled members, and
- \$3,250 in liquid and non-liquid assets for households that include an elderly or disabled member.

The bill requires the DCF to obtain specific authorization from the Legislature for any waiver that expands resource eligibility for food assistance programs, unless such eligibility change is required by federal law. These requirements are not applicable to households that are categorically eligible under federal rule.

Section 8 creates s. 414.393, F.S., to require the DCF to implement an asset verification service to determine eligibility for public assistance programs. This requirement is contingent on federal approval.

Section 9 amends s. 445.004, F.S., to increase the reporting requirements for the annual report by CareerSource Florida, Inc. The report must now include data on employment outcomes for TCA and SNAP participants subject to work requirements. The bill requires CareerSource Florida, Inc. to implement a pilot program to increase employment and income of TCA and SNAP participants. The pilot targets participants who face significant barriers to employment. The bill defines significant barriers to include such things as substance abuse, mental illness, or job skill deficiencies. CareerSource Florida must contract with a provider with experience in workforce programs for the pilot by October 31, 2017. The bill provides additional requirements of the pilot.

Section 10 appropriates the following funds to the DCF for Fiscal Year 2017-2018 to implement the provisions of the bill:

- \$3,342,525 in nonrecurring funds from the Federal Grants Trust Fund to contract with a vendor to develop an asset verification service for food assistance programs pursuant to s. 414.393, F.S., and
- \$300,000 in nonrecurring funds from the Federal Grants Trust Fund to perform the technology modifications necessary to implement the asset verification services.

Section 11 appropriates \$500,000 from the Welfare Transition Trust Fund for Fiscal Year 2017-2018 to the DEO for distribution to CareerSource Florida, Inc., to contract for the development of a program to serve temporary cash assistance work registrants with significant barriers to employment to overcome such barriers.

Section 12 appropriates \$952,360 in nonrecurring funds from the Federal Grants Trust Fund to make the technology modifications necessary to implement the changes to the disbursement of TCA and the replacement of EBT cards.

Section 13 provides an effective date of July 1, 2017.

IV. Constitutional Issues:

A. Municipality/County Mandates Restrictions:

None.

B. Public Records/Open Meetings Issues:

None.

C. Trust Funds Restrictions:

None.

V. Fiscal Impact Statement:

A. Tax/Fee Issues:

None.

B. Private Sector Impact:

The DCF may charge the costs of replacement cards against an EBT cardholder's benefits. The cardholder's benefits will be reduced by the cost to replace his or her EBT card.

C. Government Sector Impact:

The bill creates a fiscal impact on both the DCF and the DEO. Funding is provided in the bill. For fiscal year 2017-2018, the bill appropriates the following nonrecurring funds:

- \$3,342,525 from the Federal Grants Trust Fund to the DCF to contract with a vendor to develop an asset verification service for public assistance programs;
- \$300,000 from the Federal Grants Trust Fund to the DCF to perform the technology modifications necessary to implement the asset verification service;
- \$500,000 from the Welfare Transition Trust Fund to the DEO for distribution to CareerSource Florida, Inc., to contract for the development of a pilot program to serve temporary cash assistance work registrants with significant barriers to employment to overcome such barriers; and
- \$952,360 from the Federal Grants Trust Fund for the purpose of making the technology modifications necessary to implement the changes to the disbursement of TCA and the replacement of EBT cards.

VI. Technical Deficiencies:

None.

VII. Related Issues:

None.

VIII. Statutes Affected:

This bill substantially amends the following sections of the Florida Statutes: 414.065, 445.024, 402.82, 39.5085, 414.14, 414.175, 414.315, 414.393, and 445.004.

This bill creates sections 414.315 and 414.393 of the Florida Statutes.

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

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

None.

B. Amendments:**Barcode 968490 by Appropriations on May 1, 2017:**

The amendment:

- Removes the increase in penalties for participants that do not comply with work requirements under the Temporary Cash Assistance program.
- Removes the language prohibiting the DCF from seeking waivers from the federal government that would expand financial eligibility for the Temporary Cash Assistance and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Programs.
- Removes language setting liquid and non-liquid asset limits for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program participants.
- Removes language requiring the DCF to contract with a vendor to conduct asset verification for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program participants.

- Removes language requiring a pilot project at three locations to assist Temporary Cash Assistance and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program participants with meeting work requirements.
- Removes appropriations to the DCF for the asset verification service, to the DEO for the pilot project to assist Temporary Cash Assistance and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program participants with meeting work requirements, and to the DCF for information technology changes needed to implement a fee for replacement of EBT cards under certain circumstances.
- Requires the Legislature's Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability (OPPAGA) to conduct a study of local workforce development boards to determine why Temporary Cash Assistance recipients do not meet work requirements.
- Creates a TANF Reemployment Pilot Program in Pinellas County to assist TANF recipients develop return-to-work plans and gain employment.
- Provides appropriations of \$150,000 in nonrecurring funds from the General Revenue Fund and \$150,000 in nonrecurring funds from the Federal Grants Trust Fund for the TANF Reemployment Pilot Program.