

By the Committee on Health Policy; and Senators Torres, Wright, Book, Taddeo, Stewart, Jones, Cruz, Rouson, Gibson, Powell, Ausley, Bracy, Burgess, and Harrell

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1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to the Military Medics and Corpsmen of
3 Florida program; creating s. 295.126, F.S.; defining
4 terms; authorizing the Department of Health to
5 establish the Military Medics and Corpsmen of Florida
6 (MMACOF) program in collaboration with Florida Is For
7 Veterans, Inc.; providing the purpose of MMACOF;
8 providing the components of the program; requiring
9 Florida Is For Veterans, Inc., to recruit and review
10 the eligibility of certain veterans for the program;
11 requiring Florida Is For Veterans, Inc., to assist
12 certain veterans with certain applications; requiring
13 the department to waive certain fees for such
14 applicants; providing application requirements;
15 requiring certain disclosures by an applicant;
16 requiring Florida Is For Veterans, Inc., to recruit,
17 establish, and maintain a statewide list of
18 participating health care providers; requiring the
19 participating health care providers to agree to
20 specified terms; requiring Florida Is For Veterans,
21 Inc., to assist such veterans with identifying and
22 applying to a participating health care providers for
23 employment; requiring the Board of Medicine to
24 determine the areas in which such veterans are
25 eligible to practice; requiring the board to specify
26 which skills such veterans may practice under direct
27 supervision; requiring the board to place such
28 veterans in a specified status if certain conditions
29 are met; requiring the department to provide such

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30 veterans with specified information; providing that a
31 certain status expires within a certain timeframe if
32 not renewed before a specified date; requiring certain
33 veterans to provide specified information to the
34 department; authorizing the department to issue a
35 certain certificate to such veterans under specified
36 conditions; providing that such certificate is valid
37 for a certain timeframe subject to specified
38 conditions; requiring the department to provide by
39 rule a method to renew such certificate; requiring
40 such veterans to provide the department specified
41 information within a certain timeframe after
42 employment; requiring a certificateholder to provide
43 Florida Is For Veterans, Inc., with specified
44 information within a certain timeframe; requiring
45 participating health care providers to provide certain
46 information to the department and to Florida Is For
47 Veterans, Inc., within a certain timeframe; requiring
48 certain education and training programs to provide the
49 department and Florida Is For Veterans, Inc., with
50 specified information within a specified timeframe;
51 providing acts that are grounds for denial of a
52 certificate or disciplinary action; authorizing the
53 department or the board to enter certain orders;
54 prohibiting the department or the board from issuing
55 or reinstating a certificate until certain conditions
56 are met by the veteran; requiring the board to adopt
57 rules relating to disciplinary action; providing that
58 veterans who do not meet program requirements may

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59 receive certain assistance from the program; requiring
60 the program to assist veterans and their spouses with
61 obtaining certain employment; authorizing the
62 department and the board to adopt rules; amending s.
63 295.21, F.S.; providing the purpose for a health care
64 service program for veterans through Florida Is For
65 Veterans, Inc.; providing an effective date.
66

67 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:
68

69 Section 1. Section 295.126, Florida Statutes, is created to
70 read:

71 295.126 Military Medics and Corpsmen of Florida (MMACOF)
72 program.—

73 (1) DEFINITIONS.—As used in this section, the term:

74 (a) "Department" means the Department of Health.

75 (b) "Military-trained health care veteran" means a person
76 who:

77 1. Has served within the preceding consecutive 12 months as
78 a medic in the United States Army, a medical technician in the
79 United States Air Force, a hospital corpsman in the United
80 States Navy, or a health services technician in the United
81 States Coast Guard;

82 2. Was discharged or separated from military service under
83 conditions other than dishonorable;

84 3. Has received "MMACOF Health Care Program Qualified"
85 status from the department under paragraph (3) (a);

86 4. Is enrolled, on at least a half-time basis, in an
87 approved and accredited Florida health care education and

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88 training program specific to the health care field for which the
89 department has issued the veteran his or her "MMACOF Health Care
90 Program Qualified" status; and

91 5. Has applied for and received approval from the
92 department for the MMACOF Health Care Certification program.

93 (c) "Participating health care provider" means:

94 1. A physician licensed under chapter 458 or an osteopathic
95 physician licensed under chapter 459;

96 2. A professional corporation or partnership of physicians
97 licensed under chapter 458 or osteopathic physicians licensed
98 under chapter 459;

99 3. A hospital or ambulatory surgical center licensed under
100 chapter 395;

101 4. An office registered under s. 458.328 or s. 459.0138;

102 5. A commercial enterprise having medical facilities for
103 its employees, which are supervised by one or more physicians
104 licensed under chapter 458 or osteopathic physicians licensed
105 under chapter 459; or

106 6. A facility licensed under chapter 395 which offers
107 medical services to the public and is supervised by one or more
108 physicians licensed under chapter 458 or osteopathic physicians
109 licensed under chapter 459.

110 (d) "Veteran" has the same meaning as in s. 1.01(14) or
111 means a former member of the Florida National Guard.

112 (2) PROGRAM ESTABLISHMENT AND PURPOSES.—The department, in
113 collaboration with Florida Is For Veterans, Inc., may establish
114 and administer the Military Medics and Corpsmen of Florida
115 (MMACOF) program. The purpose of the program is to offer
116 clinical, leadership, and nonclinical career pathways to

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117 veterans and their spouses seeking careers in health care or
118 health care-related fields within this state.

119 (3) PROGRAM COMPONENTS.—The MMACOF program shall consist of
120 the following components:

121 (a) MMACOF Health Care Certification program.—

122 1. Florida Is For Veterans, Inc., shall recruit and review
123 the military eligibility of veterans according to the military
124 requirements for acceptance into the MMACOF Health Care
125 Certification program.

126 2. Florida Is For Veterans, Inc., shall assist each
127 individual veteran in completing a department MMACOF Health Care
128 Certification program application form, which must be developed
129 by the department and each board, or the department if there is
130 no board. The department shall waive the application fee,
131 certificate fee, and unlicensed activity fee for such
132 applicants.

133 3. The MMACOF Health Care Certification program application
134 must include, but is not limited to, the following information:

135 a. The individual's civilian and military education; health
136 care education and training; a list of practice skills regularly
137 performed in the military during service as a medic in the
138 United States Army, a medical technician in the United States
139 Air Force, a hospital corpsman in the United States Navy, or a
140 health services technician in the United States Coast Guard; and
141 any other health care-related education or experience the
142 individual has received as a civilian or as an active duty
143 servicemember; and

144 b.(I) A disclosure by the MMACOF Health Care Certification
145 program applicant stating whether he or she is currently

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146 enrolled, on at least a half-time basis, in an approved and
147 accredited Florida health care education and training program
148 for a specified health care practice area listed in subparagraph
149 6., and the status of that enrollment; or

150 (II) If the MMACOF Health Care Certification program
151 applicant is not currently enrolled in an approved and
152 accredited Florida health care education and training program,
153 the applicant's preference for the health care practice area in
154 which he or she seeks to pursue future education and training
155 and, if known, which approved and accredited Florida health care
156 education and training program he or she plans to enter under
157 the MMACOF Health Care Certification program.

158 4. Florida Is For Veterans, Inc., shall recruit, establish,
159 and maintain a statewide list of MMACOF Health Care
160 Certification program participating health care providers.
161 Participating health care providers must agree to employ
162 unlicensed but military-trained health care veterans who hold an
163 MMACOF Health Care Certificate in specific health care fields;
164 are qualified to perform specific health care skills under the
165 direct supervision of a licensed health care provider in the
166 specific field, and are enrolled on at least a half-time basis
167 in an approved and accredited Florida health care education and
168 training program for the health care field specified on the
169 veteran's MMACOF Health Care Certificate.

170 5. Florida Is For Veterans, Inc., shall assist veterans who
171 hold an MMACOF Health Care Certificate in identifying
172 participating health care providers for potential employment,
173 including providing assistance with resume writing, application
174 completion, and interviewing skills.

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175 6. The Board of Medicine shall review, in consultation with
176 any other professional board it deems appropriate, each
177 veteran's individual MMACOF Health Care Certification program
178 application and, based on criteria set forth in board rule,
179 shall determine within 30 days in which of the following health
180 care practice areas the individual veteran is eligible to
181 practice under the direct supervision of a health care
182 practitioner, as defined by the specific profession's practice
183 act, while the veteran is enrolled on at least a half-time basis
184 in an approved and accredited Florida health care education and
185 training program for one of the following practice areas:

- 186 a. Certified nursing assistant;
187 b. Dental assistant;
188 c. Dental hygienist;
189 d. Emergency medical technologist;
190 e. Licensed practical nurse;
191 f. Laboratory technologist;
192 g. Medical assistant;
193 h. Optician;
194 i. Physician assistant;
195 j. Occupational therapy assistant;
196 k. Radiologic technologist;
197 l. Registered nurse;
198 m. Respiratory care or therapy technician;
199 n. Paramedic;
200 o. Pharmacy technician;
201 p. Physical therapist assistant; or
202 q. Physical therapist.

203 7. The Board of Medicine shall delineate the practice

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204 skills that the military-trained health care veteran is
205 permitted to perform under the direct supervision of a licensed
206 health care practitioner in the field in which the veteran is to
207 practice.

208 8. Once the Board of Medicine has determined from the
209 information submitted by the MMACOF Health Care Certification
210 program applicant that he or she has sufficient civilian or
211 military health care education and training in one or more
212 health care practice areas set out in subparagraph 6., the
213 veteran's application shall be given "MMACOF Health Care Program
214 Qualified" status, and the veteran shall be notified of this
215 status in writing within 14 days. The department must also
216 provide the veteran with a list of practice skills the Board of
217 Medicine has determined he or she has experience to perform
218 under direct supervision when employed by a participating health
219 care provider after obtaining his or her MMACOF Health Care
220 Certificate. The notification to the veteran of "MMACOF Health
221 Care Program Qualified" status must include instructions on how
222 the veteran may obtain an MMACOF Health Care Certificate.

223 9. The Board of Medicine's initial determination of the
224 veteran's "MMACOF Program Health Care Qualified" status expires
225 18 months after its first issuance, unless the veteran applies
226 for an MMACOF Health Care Certificate before the expiration
227 date.

228 10. To obtain an MMACOF Health Care Certificate, a veteran
229 whose MMACOF Health Care Certification application is in "MMACOF
230 Program Health Care Qualified" status must provide to the
231 department documentation of his or her enrollment on at least a
232 half-time basis, signed by the registrar or similar

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233 representative of the approved and accredited Florida health
234 care education and training program, for his or her approved
235 health care field on a form or in the manner prescribed by
236 department rule.

237 11. Upon receipt by the department of the veteran's proof
238 of at least half-time enrollment in an approved and accredited
239 Florida health care education and training program for the
240 health care field for which the veteran is "MMACOF Program
241 Health Care Qualified," the department may issue to the veteran
242 an MMACOF Health Care Certificate that qualifies the unlicensed
243 veteran for employment with a participating health care provider
244 in a position matching the health care field listed on the
245 veteran's MMACOF Health Care Certificate.

246 12. The veteran's MMACOF Health Care Certificate is valid
247 for the length of time the veteran remains actively enrolled on
248 at least a half-time basis in an approved and accredited Florida
249 health care education and training program, and he or she may
250 continue to practice the skills approved by the Board of
251 Medicine in a participating civilian health care provider
252 setting while enrolled on at least a one-half time basis in an
253 accredited and approved Florida health care educational and
254 training program or accredited nursing program, as provided by
255 s. 464.019(4) (a).

256 13. The department shall provide by rule a method for
257 annual renewal of military-trained health care veterans' MMACOF
258 Program Health Care Certifications.

259 14. A MMACOF Health Care Certificateholder must provide the
260 department and Florida Is For Veterans, Inc., with the following
261 information within 10 days after civilian employment under his

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262 or her MMACOF Health Care Certificate with a participating
263 health care provider:

264 a. The name, address, and telephone number of the
265 participating health care provider that employs the military-
266 trained health care veteran; and

267 b. The name and phone number of a contact health care
268 provider who is responsible for supervising the military-trained
269 health care veteran and who shall be in possession of a copy of
270 the list of practice skills for which the board has determined
271 the military-trained health care veteran has sufficient
272 experience to perform under supervision with his or her MMACOF
273 Health Care Certificate.

274 15. An MMACOF Health Care Certificateholder must notify the
275 department and Florida Is For Veterans, Inc., in writing within
276 10 days after:

277 a. The military-trained health care veteran's termination
278 of his or her employment with a participating health care
279 provider; or

280 b. The military-trained health care veteran's failure to
281 remain in or maintain active enrollment on at least a half-time
282 basis in an approved and accredited Florida health care
283 education and training program.

284 16. A participating health care provider that employs a
285 military-trained health care veteran in any capacity must notify
286 the department and Florida Is For Veterans, Inc., in writing
287 within 10 days after the employment termination of a military-
288 trained health care veteran, including the reasons for the
289 termination.

290 17. An approved and accredited Florida health care

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291 education and training program that has enrolled a military-
292 trained health care veteran who holds a MMACOF Health Care
293 Certificate and who is employed by a participating health care
294 provider must notify the department and Florida Is For Veterans,
295 Inc., in writing within 10 days after the:

296 a. Termination of the military-trained health care
297 veteran's enrollment from the approved and accredited Florida
298 health care education and training program for any reason,
299 specifying the reasons for termination;

300 b. Military-trained health care veteran's enrollment
301 dropping below a half-time basis; or

302 c. Military-trained health care veteran's class absences
303 being of sufficient number to cause the military-trained health
304 care veteran to drop or fail classes, dropping his or her
305 enrollment to less than a half-time basis.

306 18. The following acts constitute grounds for denial of an
307 MMACOF Health Care Certificate or disciplinary action, as
308 specified in s. 456.072(2):

309 a. Obtaining or attempting to obtain an MMACOF Health Care
310 Certificate by bribery, fraud, or knowing misrepresentation.

311 b. Having an MMACOF Health Care Certificate revoked,
312 suspended, or otherwise acted against, including denial, in
313 another jurisdiction.

314 c. Being convicted or found guilty of, or entering a plea
315 of nolo contendere to, regardless of adjudication, a crime in
316 any jurisdiction which relates to practicing as a military-
317 trained health care veteran under an MMACOF Health Care
318 Certificate.

319 d. Willfully making or filing a false report or record,

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320 willfully failing to file a report or record that directly
321 relates to practicing as a military-trained health care veteran
322 under an MMACOF Health Care Certificate, or willfully impeding
323 or obstructing the filing of a report or record required by
324 another person.

325 e. Circulating false, misleading, or deceptive advertising.

326 f. Engaging in unprofessional conduct, including any
327 departure from or failure to conform to acceptable standards
328 related to practicing as a military-trained health care veteran
329 under an MMACOF Health Care Certificate.

330 g. Engaging or attempting to engage in the illegal
331 possession, sale, or distribution of any illegal or controlled
332 substance.

333 h. Willfully failing to report any known violation of
334 chapter 457; chapter 458; chapter 459; chapter 460; chapter 461;
335 chapter 462; chapter 463; chapter 464; chapter 465; chapter 466;
336 chapter 467; part I, part II, part III, part V, part X, part
337 XIII, or part XIV of chapter 468; chapter 478; chapter 480; part
338 I, part II, or part III of chapter 483; chapter 484; chapter
339 486; chapter 490; or chapter 491.

340 i. Engaging in the delivery of military-trained health care
341 skills without an active MMACOF Health Care Certificate.

342 j. Failing to perform any statutory or legal obligation
343 placed upon a military-trained health care veteran.

344 k. Accepting and performing professional responsibilities
345 that the certificateholder knows, or has reason to know, he or
346 she is not competent to perform.

347 l. Delegating military-trained health care skills to a
348 person the certificateholder knows, or has reason to know, is

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349 unqualified by training, experience, or licensure to perform.

350 m. Being judicially determined mentally incompetent.

351 n. Being unable to practice as a military-trained health
352 care veteran with reasonable skill and safety because of a
353 mental or physical condition or illness or the use of alcohol,
354 controlled substances, or any other substance that impairs one's
355 ability to practice.

356 o. Disclosing the identity of or information about a
357 patient without written permission, except for information that
358 does not identify a patient and is used for training purposes in
359 an approved training program.

360 p. Violating any provision of this section or chapter 456,
361 or any rules adopted pursuant thereto.

362 q. The department may, upon probable cause, compel a
363 certificateholder to submit to a mental or physical examination
364 by physicians designated by the department. The cost of an
365 examination shall be borne by the certificateholder, and his or
366 her failure to submit to such an examination shall constitute an
367 admission of the allegations against him or her, consequent upon
368 which a default and a final order may be entered without the
369 taking of testimony or presentation of evidence, unless the
370 failure was due to circumstances beyond his or her control.

371 r. A certificateholder disciplined under this paragraph
372 shall, at reasonable intervals, be afforded an opportunity to
373 demonstrate that he or she can resume the practice as a
374 military-trained health care veteran with reasonable skill and
375 safety.

376 s. In any proceeding under this subparagraph, the record of
377 proceedings or the orders entered by the board may not be used

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378 against a certificateholder in any other proceeding.

379 19. The department or Board of Medicine may enter an order
380 denying certification or imposing any of the penalties in s.
381 456.072(2) against any applicant for certification who is found
382 guilty of any of the violations specified in s. 456.072(1).

383 20. The department or Board of Medicine may not issue or
384 reinstate a military-trained health care veteran's MMACOF Health
385 Care Certificate to a person it deemed unqualified until it is
386 satisfied that such person has complied with the terms and
387 conditions of the final order and that the certificateholder can
388 safely practice as a military-trained health care veteran.

389 21. The Board of Medicine may, by rule, establish
390 guidelines for the disposition of disciplinary cases involving
391 specific violations. The guidelines may include minimum and
392 maximum fines, periods of supervision during probation, or
393 conditions upon probation or reissuance of a military-trained
394 health care veteran's MMACOF Health Care Certificate.

395 (b) *No Veteran Left Behind.*—Veterans who do not meet the
396 definition of the term "military-trained health care veteran"
397 but who have served in health care-related fields shall receive
398 assistance from the MMACOF program in resume writing,
399 mentorship, and obtaining employment with participating health
400 care providers.

401 (c) *Health Care Leadership.*—The MMACOF program shall assist
402 veterans and their spouses, in the course of the veterans'
403 military service, who have gained management experience or have
404 completed any advanced degree in finding civilian health care
405 leadership and management employment in a variety of health care
406 disciplines.

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407 (4) RULEMAKING AUTHORITY.—The department and the Board of
408 Medicine may adopt rules pursuant to ss. 120.536(1) and 120.54
409 to implement this section.

410 Section 2. Subsection (2) of section 295.21, Florida
411 Statutes, is amended to read:

412 295.21 Florida Is For Veterans, Inc.—

413 (2) PURPOSE.—

414 (a) The purpose of the corporation is to promote Florida as
415 a veteran-friendly state that seeks to provide veterans with
416 employment opportunities and that promotes the hiring of
417 veterans by the business community. The corporation shall
418 encourage retired and recently separated military personnel to
419 remain in the state or to make the state their permanent
420 residence. The corporation shall promote the value of military
421 skill sets to businesses in the state, assist in tailoring the
422 training of veterans to match the needs of the employment
423 marketplace, and enhance the entrepreneurial skills of veterans.

424 (b) A subprogram dedicated to health care services
425 employment may be created under the Veterans Employment and
426 Training Services Program. The purpose of the health care
427 service program is to link veterans who have armed service
428 health care training and who are seeking employment in health
429 care fields to health care organizations seeking to hire
430 dedicated, well-trained workers. The program is to meet the
431 health care workforce demands of this state by facilitating
432 access to training and education in health fields for veterans
433 and to promote the health care licensing programs provided by
434 the state.

435 Section 3. This act shall take effect July 1, 2022.