

By the Committees on Fiscal Policy; and Children, Families, and Elder Affairs

594-03663-24

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1                   A bill to be entitled  
2       An act relating to economic self-sufficiency; amending  
3       s. 414.065, F.S.; providing that a participant has  
4       good cause for noncompliance with work requirements  
5       for a specified time period under certain  
6       circumstances; making technical changes; amending s.  
7       414.105, F.S.; providing requirements for staff  
8       members of local workforce development boards when  
9       interviewing participants; amending s. 414.455, F.S.;  
10      requiring certain persons to participate in an  
11      employment and training program; making a technical  
12      change; amending s. 445.009, F.S.; requiring benefit  
13      management and career planning using a specified tool  
14      as part of the state's one-stop delivery system;  
15      amending s. 445.011, F.S.; requiring the Department of  
16      Commerce to develop certain training; conforming  
17      provisions to changes made by the act; making a  
18      technical change; amending s. 445.017, F.S.; requiring  
19      a local workforce development board to administer a  
20      specified intake survey; amending s. 445.024, F.S.;  
21      authorizing certain participants to participate in  
22      certain programs or courses for a specified number of  
23      hours per week; authorizing the Department of Commerce  
24      to suspend certain work requirements under certain  
25      circumstances; requiring the department to issue  
26      notice to participants under certain circumstances;  
27      amending s. 445.028, F.S.; requiring the Department of  
28      Children and Families to administer an exit survey;  
29      making technical changes; creating s. 445.0281, F.S.;

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30 providing voluntary case management services to  
31 certain persons for specified purposes; providing  
32 requirements for such case management services and  
33 case managers; amending s. 445.035, F.S.; requiring  
34 CareerSource Florida, Inc., in collaboration with  
35 other entities, to develop standardized intake and  
36 exit surveys for specified purposes; specifying when  
37 such surveys must be administered; providing  
38 requirements for such surveys; requiring completed  
39 surveys to be submitted to CareerSource Florida, Inc.,  
40 and disseminated quarterly to certain departments;  
41 requiring the Department of Commerce, in consultation  
42 with other entities, to prepare and submit an annual  
43 report to the Legislature; providing requirements for  
44 such report; creating s. 1002.935, F.S.; creating the  
45 School Readiness Plus Program within the Department of  
46 Education; providing requirements for the program;  
47 providing eligibility requirements to receive a  
48 subsidy under the program; requiring early learning  
49 coalitions to administer the program and provide  
50 participants access to a specified tool; prohibiting  
51 early learning coalitions from spending more than a  
52 certain percentage on administrative costs of the  
53 program in a fiscal year; providing for the  
54 calculation of the amount of the subsidy; providing  
55 requirements for parents to receive a subsidy;  
56 providing an appropriation; providing an effective  
57 date.

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

60  
61 Section 1. Subsection (1) of section 414.065, Florida  
62 Statutes, is amended to read:

63 414.065 Noncompliance with work requirements.—

64 (1) PENALTIES FOR NONPARTICIPATION IN WORK REQUIREMENTS AND  
65 FAILURE TO COMPLY WITH ALTERNATIVE REQUIREMENT PLANS.—The  
66 department shall establish procedures for administering  
67 penalties for nonparticipation in work requirements and failure  
68 to comply with the alternative requirement plan. If an  
69 individual in a family receiving temporary cash assistance fails  
70 to engage in work activities required in accordance with s.  
71 445.024, the following penalties shall apply. Before ~~Prior to~~  
72 the imposition of a sanction, the participant must ~~shall~~ be  
73 notified orally or in writing that the participant is subject to  
74 sanction and that action will be taken to impose the sanction  
75 unless the participant complies with the work activity  
76 requirements. The participant must ~~shall~~ be counseled as to the  
77 consequences of noncompliance and, if appropriate, ~~shall be~~  
78 referred for services that could assist the participant to fully  
79 comply with program requirements. If the participant has good  
80 cause for noncompliance or demonstrates satisfactory compliance,  
81 the sanction may ~~shall~~ not be imposed. If the requirements of s.  
82 445.024(2)(a)1. are suspended pursuant to s. 445.024(2)(a)2., a  
83 participant in noncompliance because of such suspension is  
84 considered to have good cause for noncompliance for up to 6  
85 weeks after the change in the participant's work requirements.  
86 If the participant has subsequently obtained employment, the  
87 participant must ~~shall~~ be counseled regarding the transitional

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88 benefits that may be available and provided information about  
89 how to access such benefits. The department shall administer  
90 sanctions related to food assistance consistent with federal  
91 regulations.

92 (a)1. First noncompliance: temporary cash assistance is  
93 ~~shall be~~ terminated for the family for a minimum of 10 days or  
94 until the individual who failed to comply does so.

95 2. Second noncompliance: temporary cash assistance is ~~shall~~  
96 ~~be~~ terminated for the family for 1 month or until the individual  
97 who failed to comply does so, whichever is later. Upon meeting  
98 this requirement, temporary cash assistance must ~~shall~~ be  
99 reinstated to the date of compliance or the first day of the  
100 month following the penalty period, whichever is later.

101 3. Third noncompliance: temporary cash assistance is ~~shall~~  
102 ~~be~~ terminated for the family for 3 months or until the  
103 individual who failed to comply does so, whichever is later. The  
104 individual must ~~shall be required to~~ comply with the required  
105 work activity upon completion of the 3-month penalty period,  
106 before reinstatement of temporary cash assistance. Upon meeting  
107 this requirement, temporary cash assistance must ~~shall~~ be  
108 reinstated to the date of compliance or the first day of the  
109 month following the penalty period, whichever is later.

110 (b) If a participant receiving temporary cash assistance  
111 who is otherwise exempted from noncompliance penalties fails to  
112 comply with the alternative requirement plan required in  
113 accordance with this section, the penalties provided in  
114 paragraph (a) ~~shall~~ apply.

115  
116 If a participant fully complies with work activity requirements

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117 for at least 6 months, the participant must ~~shall~~ be reinstated  
118 as being in full compliance with program requirements for  
119 purpose of sanctions imposed under this section.

120 Section 2. Subsection (10) of section 414.105, Florida  
121 Statutes, is amended to read:

122 414.105 Time limitations of temporary cash assistance.—  
123 Except as otherwise provided in this section, an applicant or  
124 current participant shall receive temporary cash assistance for  
125 no more than a lifetime cumulative total of 48 months, unless  
126 otherwise provided by law.

127 (10) A member of the staff of the local workforce  
128 development board shall interview and assess the employment  
129 prospects and barriers of each participant who is within 6  
130 months of reaching the 48-month time limit. The staff member  
131 shall do all of the following:

132 (a) Administer the exit survey required under s.  
133 445.035(2).

134 (b) Use a tool to demonstrate future financial impacts of  
135 the participant's change in income and benefits over time.

136 (c) Assist the participant in identifying actions necessary  
137 to become employed before reaching the benefit time limit for  
138 temporary cash assistance.

139 (d) ~~and,~~ If appropriate, ~~shall~~ refer the participant for  
140 services that could facilitate employment, including, but not  
141 limited to, transitional benefits and services.

142 Section 3. Section 414.455, Florida Statutes, is amended to  
143 read:

144 414.455 Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program;  
145 legislative authorization.—

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146       (1) Notwithstanding s. 414.45, and unless expressly  
147 required by federal law, the department must ~~shall~~ obtain  
148 specific authorization from the Legislature before seeking,  
149 applying for, accepting, or renewing any waiver of work  
150 requirements established by the Supplemental Nutrition  
151 Assistance Program under 7 U.S.C. s. 2015(o).

152       (2) Unless prohibited by the Federal Government, the  
153 department must require a person who is receiving food  
154 assistance; who is 18 to 59 years of age, inclusive; who does  
155 not have children under the age of 18 in his or her home; who  
156 does not qualify for an exemption; and who is determined by the  
157 department to be eligible, to participate in an employment and  
158 training program.

159       Section 4. Present paragraph (k) of subsection (1) of  
160 section 445.009, Florida Statutes, is redesignated as paragraph  
161 (l), and a new paragraph (k) is added to that subsection, to  
162 read:

163       445.009 One-stop delivery system.—

164       (1) The one-stop delivery system is the state's primary  
165 customer-service strategy for offering every Floridian access,  
166 through service sites or telephone or computer networks, to the  
167 following services:

168       (k) Benefit management and career planning using a tool to  
169 demonstrate future financial impacts of the participant's change  
170 in income and benefits over time.

171       Section 5. Subsections (1) and (5) of section 445.011,  
172 Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

173       445.011 Consumer-first workforce system.—

174       (1) The department, in consultation with the state board,

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175 the Department of Education, and the Department of Children and  
176 Families, shall implement, subject to legislative appropriation,  
177 an automated consumer-first workforce system that improves  
178 coordination among required one-stop partners and is necessary  
179 for the efficient and effective operation and management of the  
180 workforce development system. This system must ~~shall~~ include,  
181 but is ~~need~~ not ~~be~~ limited to, the following:

182 (a) An integrated management system for the one-stop  
183 service delivery system, which includes, at a minimum, common  
184 registration and intake for required one-stop partners,  
185 screening for needs and benefits, benefit management and career  
186 planning using a tool to demonstrate future financial impacts of  
187 the participant's change in income and benefits over time, case  
188 management, training benefits management, service and training  
189 provider management, performance reporting, executive  
190 information and reporting, and customer-satisfaction tracking  
191 and reporting.

192 1. The system should report current budgeting, expenditure,  
193 and performance information for assessing performance related to  
194 outcomes, service delivery, and financial administration for  
195 workforce programs pursuant to s. 445.004(5) and (9).

196 2. The system should include auditable systems and controls  
197 to ensure financial integrity and valid and reliable performance  
198 information.

199 3. The system should support service integration and case  
200 management across programs and agencies by providing for case  
201 tracking for participants in workforce programs, participants  
202 who receive benefits pursuant to public assistance programs  
203 under chapter 414, and participants in welfare transition

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204 programs under this chapter.

205 (b) An automated job-matching information system that is  
206 accessible to employers, job seekers, and other users via the  
207 Internet, and that includes, at a minimum, all of the following:

208 1. Skill match information, including skill gap analysis;  
209 resume creation; job order creation; skill tests; job search by  
210 area, employer type, and employer name; and training provider  
211 linkage. ~~†~~

212 2. Job market information based on surveys, including  
213 local, state, regional, national, and international occupational  
214 and job availability information. ~~† and~~

215 3. Service provider information, including education and  
216 training providers, child care facilities and related  
217 information, health and social service agencies, and other  
218 providers of services that would be useful to job seekers.

219 (5) The department shall develop training for required one-  
220 stop partners on the use of the consumer-first workforce system,   
221 best practices for the use of a tool demonstrating future  
222 financial impacts of the participant's change in income and  
223 benefits over time, the different case management methods, the  
224 availability of welfare transition services, and how to  
225 prequalify individuals for workforce programs.

226 Section 6. Subsection (4) of section 445.017, Florida  
227 Statutes, is amended to read:

228 445.017 Diversion.—

229 (4) (a) The local workforce development board shall screen  
230 each family on a case-by-case basis for barriers to obtaining or  
231 retaining employment. The screening must ~~shall~~ identify barriers  
232 that, if corrected, may prevent the family from receiving



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233 temporary cash assistance on a regular basis. At the time of  
234 screening, the local workforce development board shall  
235 administer the intake survey required under s. 445.035(2).

236 (b) Assistance to overcome a barrier to employment is not  
237 limited to cash, but may include vouchers or other in-kind  
238 benefits.

239 Section 7. Subsection (2) of section 445.024, Florida  
240 Statutes, is amended to read:

241 445.024 Work requirements.—

242 (2) WORK ACTIVITY REQUIREMENTS.—Each individual who is not  
243 otherwise exempt from work activity requirements must  
244 participate in a work activity for the maximum number of hours  
245 allowable under federal law; however, a participant may not be  
246 required to work more than 40 hours per week. The maximum number  
247 of hours each month that a family may be required to participate  
248 in community service or work experience programs is the number  
249 of hours that would result from dividing the family's monthly  
250 amount for temporary cash assistance and food assistance by the  
251 applicable minimum wage. However, the maximum hours required per  
252 week for community service or work experience may not exceed 40  
253 hours.

254 (a)1. A participant who has not earned a high school  
255 diploma or its equivalent may participate in adult general  
256 education, as defined in s. 1004.02(3), or a high school  
257 equivalency examination preparation, as defined in s.  
258 1004.02(16). A participant must participate in such program or  
259 course for at least 20 hours per week in order to satisfy the  
260 participant's work activity requirement.

261 2. If the state's TANF work participation rate, as provided

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262 by federal law, does not exceed the federal minimum work  
263 participation rate by 10 percentage points in any month, the  
264 requirements of this subsection may be suspended by the  
265 department until the work participation rate exceeds the federal  
266 minimum work participation rate by 10 percentage points for at  
267 least 3 consecutive months.

268 3. If the requirements of this subsection are suspended,  
269 the department must issue notice to the affected participants of  
270 the changed work requirements within 5 days after the change in  
271 such work requirements.

272 (b)(a) A participant in a work activity may also be  
273 required to enroll in and attend a course of instruction  
274 designed to increase literacy skills to a level necessary for  
275 obtaining or retaining employment if the instruction plus the  
276 work activity does not require more than 40 hours per week.

277 (c)(b) Program funds may be used, as available, to support  
278 the efforts of a participant who meets the work activity  
279 requirements and who wishes to enroll in or continue enrollment  
280 in an adult general education program or other training  
281 programs.

282 Section 8. Subsections (1) and (2) of section 445.028,  
283 Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

284 445.028 Transitional benefits and services.—In cooperation  
285 with the department, the Department of Children and Families  
286 shall develop procedures to ensure that families leaving the  
287 temporary cash assistance program receive transitional benefits  
288 and services that will assist the family in moving toward self-  
289 sufficiency. At a minimum, such procedures must include, but are  
290 not limited to, the following:

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291 (1) Each recipient of cash assistance who is determined  
292 ineligible for cash assistance for a reason other than a work  
293 activity sanction must ~~shall~~ be contacted by the workforce  
294 system case manager and provided information about the  
295 availability of transitional benefits and services. Such contact  
296 must include the administration of the exit survey required  
297 under s. 445.035(2) and ~~shall~~ be attempted before ~~prior to~~  
298 closure of the case management file.

299 (2) Each recipient of temporary cash assistance who is  
300 determined ineligible for cash assistance due to noncompliance  
301 with the work activity requirements must ~~shall~~ be contacted and  
302 provided information in accordance with s. 414.065(1). Such  
303 contact must include the administration of the exit survey  
304 required under s. 445.035(2).

305 Section 9. Section 445.0281, Florida Statutes, is created  
306 to read:

307 445.0281 Transitional case management.—Each recipient of  
308 cash assistance who is determined ineligible for cash assistance  
309 for a reason other than noncompliance with work activity  
310 requirements is eligible for voluntary case management services  
311 administered by the local workforce development board. Case  
312 management services must be available to support families who  
313 transition to economic self-sufficiency and to mitigate  
314 dependency on cash assistance. Case management services must  
315 include, but are not limited to, career planning, job search  
316 assistance, resume building, basic financial planning,  
317 connection to support services, and benefits management using a  
318 tool to demonstrate future financial impacts of the  
319 participant's change in income and benefits over time, as

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320 applicable. Case managers must connect recipients to other  
321 transitional benefits as needed.

322 Section 10. Section 445.035, Florida Statutes, is amended  
323 to read:

324 445.035 Data collection and reporting.—

325 (1) The Department of Children and Families and the state  
326 board shall collect data necessary to administer this chapter  
327 and make the reports required under federal law to the United  
328 States Department of Health and Human Services and the United  
329 States Department of Agriculture.

330 (2) CareerSource Florida, Inc., in collaboration with the  
331 department, the Department of Children and Families, and the  
332 local workforce development boards, shall develop standardized  
333 intake and exit surveys for the purpose of collecting and  
334 aggregating data to monitor program effectiveness, inform  
335 program improvements, and allocate resources.

336 (a) The intake survey must be administered by the local  
337 workforce development boards during the required diversion  
338 screening process under s. 445.017. The intake survey must be  
339 administered to each new recipient of temporary cash assistance  
340 under chapter 414 who has not otherwise completed the survey.

341 (b) The intake survey must, at a minimum, collect  
342 qualitative or quantitative data, as applicable, relating to all  
343 of the following:

344 1. The recipient's perceived individual barriers to  
345 employment.

346 2. The reasons cited by the recipient for his or her  
347 separation from employment in the previous 12 months.

348 3. The recipient's stated goals for employment or

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349 professional development.

350 4. The recipient's highest level of education or  
351 credentials attained or training received at the time of  
352 enrollment.

353 5. The recipient's awareness of welfare transition  
354 services.

355 (c) The exit survey must be administered by the local  
356 workforce development boards to recipients of temporary cash  
357 assistance under chapter 414 as recipients prepare to transition  
358 off of temporary cash assistance. Based on a recipient's  
359 circumstances, the exit survey must be administered to the  
360 recipient at one of the following points of contact:

361 1. The recipient is approaching the statutory time  
362 limitation for temporary cash assistance and is interviewed  
363 pursuant to s. 414.105(10); or

364 2. At such time when the recipient becomes ineligible for  
365 cash assistance and is contacted pursuant to s. 445.028.

366 (d) The exit survey must, at a minimum, collect data  
367 relating to all of the following:

368 1. The recipient's enrollment in other public benefits  
369 programs at the time of exit.

370 2. Whether the recipient has a long-term career plan.

371 3. The recipient's credentials or education attained or  
372 training received during enrollment.

373 4. Barriers to the recipient's employment which were  
374 addressed during enrollment.

375 5. Any remaining barriers to the recipient's employment.

376 (e) The completed surveys must be submitted to CareerSource  
377 Florida, Inc., and anonymized data must be disseminated

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378 quarterly to the department and the Department of Children and  
379 Families.

380 (f) The department, in consultation with CareerSource  
381 Florida, Inc., and the Department of Children and Families,  
382 shall prepare and submit to the President of the Senate and the  
383 Speaker of the House of Representatives a report by January 1 of  
384 each year. The report must include, at a minimum, the results of  
385 the intake and exit surveys, an analysis of the barriers to  
386 employment experienced by the survey respondents, and any  
387 recommendations for legislative and administrative changes to  
388 mitigate such barriers and improve the effective use of  
389 transitional benefits.

390 Section 11. Section 1002.935, Florida Statutes, is created  
391 to read:

392 1002.935 School Readiness Plus Program.—The School  
393 Readiness Plus Program is created within the Department of  
394 Education to support the continued school readiness and child  
395 care needs of working families with children. The program is  
396 contingent upon a legislative appropriation and is provided on a  
397 first-come, first-served basis.

398 (1) (a) A child who is determined to be ineligible for  
399 school readiness program funds due to family income during the  
400 annual eligibility redetermination process pursuant to s.  
401 1002.87(6) is eligible for a subsidy under this section if the  
402 family income is between 85 percent and 100 percent, inclusive,  
403 of the state median income.

404 (b)1. The early learning coalitions established in s.  
405 1002.83 shall administer the School Readiness Plus Program and  
406 provide participants with access to the benefit management and

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407 career planning tool described in s. 445.009(1)(k).

408 2. The early learning coalitions must spend the minimum  
409 amount of funds necessary for the efficient and effective  
410 administration of the School Readiness Plus Program. The early  
411 learning coalitions may not use more than 5 percent of the funds  
412 allowed for the program for administrative costs in a fiscal  
413 year.

414 (2)(a) The amount of the subsidy is a percentage of the  
415 early learning coalition's approved school readiness program  
416 provider reimbursement rates as calculated pursuant to s.  
417 1002.84(17). An early learning coalition shall consider family  
418 income and a required parent copayment that increases in  
419 relation to the family income when establishing the percentage  
420 for the amount of the subsidy for the program.

421 (b) The amount of the subsidy and parent copayment must be  
422 sufficient to allow the family to access eligible school  
423 readiness providers pursuant to s. 1002.88 and enable the parent  
424 to achieve self-sufficiency.

425 (3) For a parent to receive a subsidy under the program, he  
426 or she must:

427 (a) Provide any documentation necessary to verify the  
428 parent's eligibility to receive the subsidy.

429 (b) Be responsible for the payment of all child care  
430 expenses in excess of the amount of the subsidy.

431 Section 12. For the 2024-2025 fiscal year, the sum of  
432 \$23,076,259 in nonrecurring funds is appropriated from the  
433 General Revenue Fund to the Department of Education to implement  
434 the School Readiness Plus Program established in s. 1002.935,  
435 Florida Statutes. These funds shall be placed in reserve. The

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436 department is authorized to submit budget amendments requesting  
437 the release of the funds pursuant to chapter 216, Florida  
438 Statutes. Release of the funds is contingent upon the submission  
439 of an allocation plan developed by the department in  
440 collaboration with the early learning coalitions established  
441 pursuant to s. 1002.83, Florida Statutes.

442 Section 13. This act shall take effect July 1, 2024.