

20257012er

1  
2 An act relating to child welfare; amending s. 39.524,  
3 F.S.; requiring the Department of Children and  
4 Families to maintain copies of certain assessments and  
5 tools used to assess children for certain placement;  
6 requiring the department to maintain certain data in a  
7 specified format; amending s. 39.905, F.S.;  
8 authorizing the department to waive a specified  
9 requirement if there is an emergency need for a new  
10 domestic violence center; authorizing the department  
11 to issue a provisional certificate under certain  
12 circumstances; authorizing the department to adopt  
13 rules; amending ss. 402.305 and 409.175, F.S.;  
14 removing authority for the department to grant  
15 exemptions from working with children or the  
16 developmentally disabled; authorizing the department  
17 to grant limited exemptions to certain minimum  
18 standards and requirements, respectively; amending s.  
19 402.402, F.S.; subject to an appropriation, requiring  
20 the department to develop a child protective  
21 investigator and case manager recruitment program for  
22 a specified purpose; specifying requirements for the  
23 program; specifying duties of the department under the  
24 program, to be completed in collaboration with  
25 community-based care lead agencies; authorizing the  
26 department to adopt rules to implement the program;  
27 amending s. 409.987, F.S.; removing the requirement  
28 that an entity post a specified fidelity bond in order  
29 to serve as a lead agency; amending s. 409.993, F.S.;

20257012er

30 providing immunity from liability for subcontractors  
31 of lead agencies for certain acts or omissions;  
32 providing applicability; amending s. 409.996, F.S.;  
33 subject to an appropriation and beginning on a  
34 specified date, requiring the department to develop a  
35 4-year pilot program for treatment foster care;  
36 requiring the department to implement the pilot  
37 program by a specified date; requiring the department  
38 to coordinate with community-based care lead agencies  
39 to develop a specified process; requiring community-  
40 based care lead agencies to recruit individuals and  
41 families for a certain purpose; limiting participation  
42 in the pilot program to children meeting specified  
43 criteria; requiring the department to identify two  
44 judicial circuits determined to have the greatest need  
45 for implementation of such pilot program; requiring  
46 the department to arrange for an independent  
47 evaluation of the pilot program to make specified  
48 determinations; requiring the department to establish  
49 certain minimum standards for the pilot program;  
50 requiring the department, by a specified date, to  
51 submit to the Governor and the Legislature a final  
52 report which includes specified evaluations, findings,  
53 and recommendations; amending s. 1004.615, F.S.;  
54 specifying that incentives provided to state employees  
55 for participating in research or evaluation with the  
56 Florida Institute for Child Welfare do not violate  
57 certain laws or require certain reporting; amending  
58 ss. 402.30501, 1002.57, and 1002.59, F.S.; conforming

20257012er

59 cross-references; requiring the department to convene  
60 a case management workforce workgroup by a specified  
61 date; providing for membership of the workgroup;  
62 specifying duties of the workgroup, to be completed in  
63 collaboration with the Florida Institute for Child  
64 Welfare; providing for meetings of the workgroup;  
65 providing for the operation of the workgroup until a  
66 specified date; requiring the workgroup to submit a  
67 report to the Governor and the Legislature by a  
68 specified date; providing requirements for the report;  
69 requiring the department to contract for a detailed  
70 study of certain services for child victims of  
71 commercial sexual exploitation; requiring that the  
72 study be completed by a specified date; providing  
73 requirements for the study; providing effective dates.

74  
75 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

76  
77 Section 1. Subsection (3) of section 39.524, Florida  
78 Statutes, is amended to read:

79 39.524 Safe-harbor placement.—

80 (3) (a) By October 1 of each year, the department, with  
81 information from community-based care agencies, shall report to  
82 the Legislature on the prevalence of ~~child~~ commercial sexual  
83 exploitation of children; the specialized services provided and  
84 placement of such children; the local service capacity assessed  
85 pursuant to s. 409.1754; the placement of children in safe  
86 houses and safe foster homes during the year, including the  
87 criteria used to determine the placement of children; the number

20257012er

88 of children who were evaluated for placement; the number of  
89 children who were placed based upon the evaluation; the number  
90 of children who were not placed; and the department's response  
91 to the findings and recommendations made by the Office of  
92 Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability in its  
93 annual study on commercial sexual exploitation of children, as  
94 required by s. 409.16791; and must also maintain a copy of any  
95 paper-based assessments or tools used to assess a child for such  
96 placement, to be provided upon request of the Legislature.

97 (b) The department shall maintain individual-level data of  
98 all children assessed for placement in a safe house or safe  
99 foster home and use this data to produce information that  
100 specifies ~~specifying~~ the number of children who were verified as  
101 victims of commercial sexual exploitation, who were referred to  
102 nonresidential services in the community, who were placed in a  
103 safe house or safe foster home, and who were referred to a safe  
104 house or safe foster home for whom placement was unavailable,  
105 and shall identify the counties in which such placement was  
106 unavailable. The department shall include this data in its  
107 report under this subsection so that the Legislature may  
108 consider this information in developing the General  
109 Appropriations Act. The department shall maintain collected  
110 individual-level data in a format that allows for extraction and  
111 analysis of anonymized individual-level and aggregate data upon  
112 request by the Legislature.

113 Section 2. Paragraph (h) of subsection (1) of section  
114 39.905, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

115 39.905 Domestic violence centers.—

116 (1) Domestic violence centers certified under this part

20257012er

117 must:

118 (h) Demonstrate local need and ability to sustain  
119 operations through a history of 18 consecutive months' operation  
120 as a domestic violence center, including 12 months' operation of  
121 an emergency shelter as provided in paragraph (c), and a  
122 business plan which addresses future operations and funding of  
123 future operations. The department may waive this requirement if  
124 there is an emergency need for a new domestic violence center to  
125 provide services in an area and no other viable options exist to  
126 ensure continuity of services. If there is an emergency need,  
127 the department may issue a provisional certificate to the  
128 domestic violence center as long as the center meets all other  
129 criteria in this subsection. The department may adopt rules to  
130 provide minimum standards for a provisional certificate,  
131 including increased monitoring and site visits and the time  
132 period such certificate is valid.

133 Section 3. Subsection (2) of section 402.305, Florida  
134 Statutes, is amended to read:

135 402.305 Licensing standards; child care facilities.—

136 (2) PERSONNEL.—Minimum standards for child care personnel  
137 shall include minimum requirements as to:

138 (a) Good moral character based upon screening as defined in  
139 s. 402.302(15). This screening shall be conducted as provided in  
140 chapter 435, using the level 2 standards for screening set forth  
141 in that chapter, and include employment history checks, a search  
142 of criminal history records, sexual predator and sexual offender  
143 registries, and child abuse and neglect registry of any state in  
144 which the current or prospective child care personnel resided  
145 during the preceding 5 years.

20257012er

146 (b) Fingerprint submission for child care personnel, which  
147 shall comply with s. 435.12.

148 ~~(c) The department may grant exemptions from~~  
149 ~~disqualification from working with children or the~~  
150 ~~developmentally disabled as provided in s. 435.07.~~

151 (c) ~~(d)~~ Minimum age requirements. Such minimum standards  
152 shall prohibit a person under the age of 21 from being the  
153 operator of a child care facility and a person under the age of  
154 16 from being employed at such facility unless such person is  
155 under direct supervision and is not counted for the purposes of  
156 computing the personnel-to-child ratio.

157 (d) ~~(e)~~ Minimum training requirements for child care  
158 personnel.

159 1. Such minimum standards for training shall ensure that  
160 all child care personnel take an approved 40-clock-hour  
161 introductory course in child care, which course covers at least  
162 the following topic areas:

163 a. State and local rules and regulations which govern child  
164 care.

165 b. Health, safety, and nutrition.

166 c. Identifying and reporting child abuse and neglect.

167 d. Child development, including typical and atypical  
168 language, cognitive, motor, social, and self-help skills  
169 development.

170 e. Observation of developmental behaviors, including using  
171 a checklist or other similar observation tools and techniques to  
172 determine the child's developmental age level.

173 f. Specialized areas, including computer technology for  
174 professional and classroom use and early literacy and language

20257012er

175 development of children from birth to 5 years of age, as  
176 determined by the department, for owner-operators and child care  
177 personnel of a child care facility.

178 g. Developmental disabilities, including autism spectrum  
179 disorder and Down syndrome, and early identification, use of  
180 available state and local resources, classroom integration, and  
181 positive behavioral supports for children with developmental  
182 disabilities.

183

184 Within 90 days after employment, child care personnel shall  
185 begin training to meet the training requirements. Child care  
186 personnel shall successfully complete such training within 1  
187 year after the date on which the training began, as evidenced by  
188 passage of a competency examination. Successful completion of  
189 the 40-clock-hour introductory course shall articulate into  
190 community college credit in early childhood education, pursuant  
191 to ss. 1007.24 and 1007.25. Exemption from all or a portion of  
192 the required training shall be granted to child care personnel  
193 based upon educational credentials or passage of competency  
194 examinations. Child care personnel possessing a 2-year degree or  
195 higher that includes 6 college credit hours in early childhood  
196 development or child growth and development, or a child  
197 development associate credential or an equivalent state-approved  
198 child development associate credential, or a child development  
199 associate waiver certificate shall be automatically exempted  
200 from the training requirements in sub-subparagraphs b., d., and  
201 e.

202 2. The introductory course in child care shall stress, to  
203 the extent possible, an interdisciplinary approach to the study

20257012er

204 of children.

205 3. The introductory course shall cover recognition and  
206 prevention of shaken baby syndrome; prevention of sudden infant  
207 death syndrome; recognition and care of infants and toddlers  
208 with developmental disabilities, including autism spectrum  
209 disorder and Down syndrome; and early childhood brain  
210 development within the topic areas identified in this paragraph.

211 4. On an annual basis in order to further their child care  
212 skills and, if appropriate, administrative skills, child care  
213 personnel who have fulfilled the requirements for the child care  
214 training shall be required to take an additional 1 continuing  
215 education unit of approved inservice training, or 10 clock hours  
216 of equivalent training, as determined by the department.

217 5. Child care personnel shall be required to complete 0.5  
218 continuing education unit of approved training or 5 clock hours  
219 of equivalent training, as determined by the department, in  
220 early literacy and language development of children from birth  
221 to 5 years of age one time. The year that this training is  
222 completed, it shall fulfill the 0.5 continuing education unit or  
223 5 clock hours of the annual training required in subparagraph 4.

224 6. Procedures for ensuring the training of qualified child  
225 care professionals to provide training of child care personnel,  
226 including onsite training, shall be included in the minimum  
227 standards. It is recommended that the state community child care  
228 coordination agencies (central agencies) be contracted by the  
229 department to coordinate such training when possible. Other  
230 district educational resources, such as community colleges and  
231 career programs, can be designated in such areas where central  
232 agencies may not exist or are determined not to have the



20257012er

233 capability to meet the coordination requirements set forth by  
234 the department.

235 7. Training requirements shall not apply to certain  
236 occasional or part-time support staff, including, but not  
237 limited to, swimming instructors, piano teachers, dance  
238 instructors, and gymnastics instructors.

239 8. The child care operator shall be required to take basic  
240 training in serving children with disabilities within 5 years  
241 after employment, either as a part of the introductory training  
242 or the annual 8 hours of inservice training.

243 ~~(e)-(f)~~ Periodic health examinations.

244 ~~(f)-(g)~~ A credential for child care facility directors. The  
245 credential shall be a required minimum standard for licensing.

246

247 The department may grant limited exemptions to the minimum  
248 standards provided in this subsection which authorize a person  
249 to work in a specified role or with a specified population.

250 Section 4. Subsections (4) and (5) of section 402.402,  
251 Florida Statutes, are renumbered as subsections (5) and (6),  
252 respectively, and a new subsection (4) is added to that section,  
253 to read:

254 402.402 Child protection and child welfare personnel;  
255 attorneys employed by the department.-

256 (4) RECRUITMENT PROGRAM.-Subject to appropriation, the  
257 department shall develop and implement a child protective  
258 investigator and case manager recruitment program for the  
259 purpose of recruiting individuals who have previously held  
260 public safety and service positions, such as former law  
261 enforcement officers, first responders, military servicemembers,

20257012er

262 teachers, health care practitioners, and emergency management  
263 professionals. This recruitment program must focus on the  
264 education and recruitment of individuals who have held positions  
265 of public trust and who wish to further serve their communities  
266 as child welfare personnel.

267 (a) The department, in collaboration with community-based  
268 care lead agencies, shall:

269 1. Develop information pertaining to employment  
270 opportunities, application procedures, and training requirements  
271 for employment within the child welfare system and distribute  
272 such information to individuals who have previously held public  
273 safety and service positions.

274 2. Develop and implement an employment referral system with  
275 lead agencies for the case management population.

276 3. Collect the following information quarterly:

277 a. The total number of individuals who sought information  
278 from the program; were hired by the department as child  
279 protective investigators; were referred by the program to a lead  
280 agency for case management positions; and, based upon a referral  
281 by the program, were hired by the lead agency or contractor as a  
282 case manager.

283 b. The overall turnover rate for child protective  
284 investigators and case managers compared to the turnover rate  
285 for child protective investigators and case managers hired based  
286 upon this program.

287 (b) The department may adopt rules to implement this  
288 subsection.

289 Section 5. Paragraph (b) of subsection (5) and paragraph  
290 (e) of subsection (14) of section 409.175, Florida Statutes, are

20257012er

291 amended to read:

292 409.175 Licensure of family foster homes, residential  
293 child-caring agencies, and child-placing agencies; public  
294 records exemption.—

295 (5) The department shall adopt and amend rules for the  
296 levels of licensed care associated with the licensure of family  
297 foster homes, residential child-caring agencies, and child-  
298 placing agencies. The rules may include criteria to approve  
299 waivers to licensing requirements when applying for a child-  
300 specific license.

301 (b) The requirements for licensure and operation of family  
302 foster homes, residential child-caring agencies, and child-  
303 placing agencies shall include:

304 1. The operation, conduct, and maintenance of these homes  
305 and agencies and the responsibility which they assume for  
306 children served and the evidence of need for that service.

307 2. The provision of food, clothing, educational  
308 opportunities, services, equipment, and individual supplies to  
309 assure the healthy physical, emotional, and mental development  
310 of the children served.

311 3. The appropriateness, safety, cleanliness, and general  
312 adequacy of the premises, including fire prevention and health  
313 standards, to provide for the physical comfort, care, and well-  
314 being of the children served.

315 4. The ratio of staff to children required to provide  
316 adequate care and supervision of the children served and, in the  
317 case of family foster homes, the maximum number of children in  
318 the home.

319 5. The good moral character based upon screening,

20257012er

320 education, training, and experience requirements for personnel  
321 and family foster homes.

322 ~~6. The department may grant exemptions from~~  
323 ~~disqualification from working with children or the~~  
324 ~~developmentally disabled as provided in s. 435.07.~~

325 6.7. The provision of preservice and inservice training for  
326 all foster parents and agency staff.

327 7.8. Satisfactory evidence of financial ability to provide  
328 care for the children in compliance with licensing requirements.

329 8.9. The maintenance by the agency of records pertaining to  
330 admission, progress, health, and discharge of children served,  
331 including written case plans and reports to the department.

332 9.10. The provision for parental involvement to encourage  
333 preservation and strengthening of a child's relationship with  
334 the family.

335 10.11. The transportation safety of children served.

336 11.12. The provisions for safeguarding the cultural,  
337 religious, and ethnic values of a child.

338 12.13. Provisions to safeguard the legal rights of children  
339 served.

340 13.14. Requiring signs to be conspicuously placed on the  
341 premises of facilities maintained by child-caring agencies to  
342 warn children of the dangers of human trafficking and to  
343 encourage the reporting of individuals observed attempting to  
344 engage in human trafficking activity. The signs must advise  
345 children to report concerns to the local law enforcement agency  
346 or the Department of Law Enforcement, specifying the appropriate  
347 telephone numbers used for such reports. The department shall  
348 specify, at a minimum, the content of the signs by rule.

20257012er

349  
350 The department may grant limited exemptions to the requirements  
351 provided in this paragraph which authorize a person to work in a  
352 specified role or with a specified population.

353 (14)

354 (e)1. In addition to any other preservice training required  
355 by law, foster parents, as a condition of licensure, and agency  
356 staff must successfully complete preservice training related to  
357 human trafficking which must be uniform statewide and must  
358 include, but need not be limited to:

359 a. Basic information on human trafficking, such as an  
360 understanding of relevant terminology, and the differences  
361 between sex trafficking and labor trafficking;

362 b. Factors and knowledge on identifying children at risk of  
363 human trafficking; and

364 c. Steps that should be taken to prevent at-risk youths  
365 from becoming victims of human trafficking.

366 2. Foster parents, before licensure renewal, and agency  
367 staff, during each full year of employment, must complete  
368 inservice training related to human trafficking to satisfy the  
369 training requirement under subparagraph (5)(b)6. ~~(5)(b)7.~~

370 Section 6. Paragraph (c) of subsection (4) of section  
371 409.987, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

372 409.987 Lead agency procurement; boards; conflicts of  
373 interest.—

374 (4) In order to serve as a lead agency, an entity must:

375 (c) Demonstrate financial responsibility through an  
376 organized plan for regular fiscal audits and; the posting of a  
377 performance bond; ~~and the posting of a fidelity bond to cover~~

20257012er

378 ~~any costs associated with reprourement and the assessed~~  
379 ~~penalties related to a failure to disclose a conflict of~~  
380 ~~interest under subsection (7).~~

381 Section 7. Paragraph (b) of subsection (3) of section  
382 409.993, Florida Statutes, is redesignated as paragraph (c),  
383 paragraph (a) is amended, and a new paragraph (b) is added to  
384 that subsection, to read:

385 409.993 Lead agencies and subcontractor liability.—

386 (3) SUBCONTRACTOR LIABILITY.—

387 (a) A subcontractor of an eligible community-based care  
388 lead agency that is a direct provider of foster care and related  
389 services to children and families, and its employees or  
390 officers, except as otherwise provided in paragraph (c) ~~(b)~~,  
391 must, as a part of its contract, obtain a minimum of \$1 million  
392 per occurrence with a policy period aggregate limit of \$3  
393 million in general liability insurance coverage. The  
394 subcontractor of a lead agency must also require that staff who  
395 transport client children and families in their personal  
396 automobiles in order to carry out their job responsibilities  
397 obtain minimum bodily injury liability insurance in the amount  
398 of \$100,000 per person in any one automobile accident, and  
399 subject to such limits for each person, \$300,000 for all damages  
400 resulting from any one automobile accident, on their personal  
401 automobiles. In lieu of personal motor vehicle insurance, the  
402 subcontractor's casualty, liability, or motor vehicle insurance  
403 carrier may provide nonowned automobile liability coverage. This  
404 insurance provides liability insurance for automobiles that the  
405 subcontractor uses in connection with the subcontractor's  
406 business but does not own, lease, rent, or borrow. This coverage

20257012er

407 includes automobiles owned by the employees of the subcontractor  
408 or a member of the employee's household but only while the  
409 automobiles are used in connection with the subcontractor's  
410 business. The nonowned automobile coverage for the subcontractor  
411 applies as excess coverage over any other collectible insurance.  
412 The personal automobile policy for the employee of the  
413 subcontractor shall be primary insurance, and the nonowned  
414 automobile coverage of the subcontractor acts as excess  
415 insurance to the primary insurance. The subcontractor shall  
416 provide a minimum limit of \$1 million in nonowned automobile  
417 coverage. In a tort action brought against such subcontractor or  
418 employee, net economic damages shall be limited to \$2 million  
419 per liability claim and \$200,000 per automobile claim,  
420 including, but not limited to, past and future medical expenses,  
421 wage loss, and loss of earning capacity, offset by any  
422 collateral source payment paid or payable. In a tort action  
423 brought against such subcontractor, noneconomic damages shall be  
424 limited to \$400,000 per claim. A claims bill may be brought on  
425 behalf of a claimant pursuant to s. 768.28 for any amount  
426 exceeding the limits specified in this paragraph. Any offset of  
427 collateral source payments made as of the date of the settlement  
428 or judgment shall be in accordance with s. 768.76.

429 (b) A subcontractor of a lead agency that is a direct  
430 provider of foster care and related services is not liable for  
431 the acts or omissions of the lead agency, the department, or the  
432 officers, agents, or employees thereof. The limitation on  
433 liability established in this paragraph applies to contracts  
434 entered into or renewed after July 1, 2025.

435 Section 8. Subsection (27) is added to section 409.996,

20257012er

436 Florida Statutes, to read:

437       409.996 Duties of the Department of Children and Families.—  
438 The department shall contract for the delivery, administration,  
439 or management of care for children in the child protection and  
440 child welfare system. In doing so, the department retains  
441 responsibility for the quality of contracted services and  
442 programs and shall ensure that, at a minimum, services are  
443 delivered in accordance with applicable federal and state  
444 statutes and regulations and the performance standards and  
445 metrics specified in the strategic plan created under s.  
446 20.19(1).

447       (27) (a) Subject to appropriation, beginning July 1, 2025,  
448 the department shall develop a 4-year pilot program of treatment  
449 foster care or a substantially similar evidence-based program of  
450 professional foster care. The department shall implement the  
451 pilot program by January 1, 2026.

452       (b) The department shall implement and operate the pilot  
453 program and coordinate with community-based care lead agencies  
454 to develop a process for the placement of children in treatment  
455 foster care homes and deliver payment to the licensed providers  
456 operating the pilot treatment foster care homes.

457       (c) Community-based care lead agencies shall work with the  
458 department to recruit individuals and families as licensed  
459 providers and identify potential eligible children for placement  
460 in the pilot treatment foster care homes.

461       (d) Participation in the pilot program is limited to  
462 children who:

463       1. Are entering or continuing in foster care with high  
464 resource indicators, as determined by the department. These high



20257012er

465 resource indicators may include, but are not limited to, the  
466 potential for frequent placement change due to current or past  
467 behavior or Department of Juvenile Justice involvement; or

468 2. Are dependent and will require continued placement in  
469 foster care when the children are discharged from inpatient  
470 residential treatment.

471 (e) The department shall identify two judicial circuits  
472 within which the pilot program will be implemented. The  
473 department shall use relevant removal and placement data to  
474 identify areas with the greatest need for such a program.

475 (f) The department shall arrange for an independent  
476 evaluation of the pilot program to determine whether:

477 1. The pilot program is maintaining children in the least  
478 restrictive and most appropriate family-like setting near the  
479 child's home while he or she is in department care.

480 2. There is a long-term cost benefit associated with  
481 continuation and expansion of a treatment or professional foster  
482 care program.

483 (g) The department shall establish standards for the pilot  
484 program. Those standards must, at a minimum, ensure:

485 1. That placement of a child in a treatment foster care  
486 home is a temporary holistic treatment option and may not exceed  
487 9 months. A one-time 3-month extension may be granted if the  
488 department determines that the child is not ready for discharge  
489 from a treatment foster care home at 9 months.

490 2. Development and implementation of specialized training  
491 for treatment foster parents in care coordination, de-  
492 escalation, crisis management, and other identified relevant  
493 skills needed to care for children with high behavioral health

20257012er

494 needs that cannot be or have not been met in traditional foster  
495 care placements.

496 3. No more than two eligible children are placed at any  
497 time in a treatment foster care home.

498 4. At least one foster parent with specialized training is  
499 available and dedicated to the care and treatment of placed  
500 children.

501 5. A 24 hour on-call crisis person is available to provide  
502 in-home crisis intervention and placement stabilization  
503 services.

504 (h) By January 1, 2030, the department shall submit to the  
505 Governor, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the  
506 House of Representatives a final report that includes the  
507 independent evaluation, the department's findings and  
508 evaluation, recommendations as to whether the pilot program  
509 should be continued and expanded statewide and, if so, fiscal  
510 and policy recommendations to ensure effective expansion and  
511 continued operation of the program.

512 Section 9. Subsection (11) is added to section 1004.615,  
513 Florida Statutes, to read:

514 1004.615 Florida Institute for Child Welfare.—

515 (11) An incentive provided to state employees for  
516 participating in the institute's research or evaluation as  
517 required by the institute's statutory mission under this section  
518 may not be considered a violation of s. 112.313 or require  
519 reporting under s. 112.3148.

520 Section 10. Section 402.30501, Florida Statutes, is amended  
521 to read:

522 402.30501 Modification of introductory child care course

20257012er

523 for community college credit authorized.—The Department of  
524 Children and Families may modify the 40-clock-hour introductory  
525 course in child care under s. 402.305 or s. 402.3131 to meet the  
526 requirements of articulating the course to community college  
527 credit. Any modification must continue to provide that the  
528 course satisfies the requirements of s. 402.305(2)(d) ~~s.~~  
529 ~~402.305(2)(e)~~.

530 Section 11. Subsections (3) and (4) of section 1002.57,  
531 Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

532 1002.57 Prekindergarten director credential.—

533 (3) The prekindergarten director credential must meet or  
534 exceed the requirements of the Department of Children and  
535 Families for the child care facility director credential under  
536 s. 402.305(2)(f) ~~s. 402.305(2)(g)~~, and successful completion of  
537 the prekindergarten director credential satisfies these  
538 requirements for the child care facility director credential.

539 (4) The department shall, to the maximum extent  
540 practicable, award credit to a person who successfully completes  
541 the child care facility director credential under s.  
542 402.305(2)(f) ~~s. 402.305(2)(g)~~ for those requirements of the  
543 prekindergarten director credential which are duplicative of  
544 requirements for the child care facility director credential.

545 Section 12. Subsection (1) of section 1002.59, Florida  
546 Statutes, is amended to read:

547 1002.59 Emergent literacy and performance standards  
548 training courses.—

549 (1) The department, in collaboration with the Just Read,  
550 Florida! Office, shall adopt minimum standards for courses in  
551 emergent literacy for prekindergarten instructors. Each course

20257012er

552 must consist of 5 clock hours and provide instruction in  
553 strategies and techniques to address the age-appropriate  
554 progress of prekindergarten students in developing emergent  
555 literacy skills, including oral communication, knowledge of  
556 print and letters, phonological and phonemic awareness,  
557 vocabulary and comprehension development, and foundational  
558 background knowledge designed to correlate with the content that  
559 students will encounter in grades K-12, consistent with the  
560 evidence-based content and strategies grounded in the science of  
561 reading identified pursuant to s. 1001.215(7). The course  
562 standards must be reviewed as part of any review of subject  
563 coverage or endorsement requirements in the elementary, reading,  
564 and exceptional student educational areas conducted pursuant to  
565 s. 1012.586. Each course must also provide resources containing  
566 strategies that allow students with disabilities and other  
567 special needs to derive maximum benefit from the Voluntary  
568 Prekindergarten Education Program. Successful completion of an  
569 emergent literacy training course approved under this section  
570 satisfies requirements for approved training in early literacy  
571 and language development under ss. 402.305(2)(d)5. ~~ss.~~  
572 ~~402.305(2)(e)5.,~~ 402.313(6), and 402.3131(5).

573       Section 13. (1) Effective upon this act becoming a law,  
574 the Department of Children and Families shall convene a case  
575 management workforce workgroup by July 1, 2025. The workgroup  
576 shall be composed of persons with subject matter expertise in  
577 case management and child welfare policy.

578       (2) The department shall ensure the workgroup has at least  
579 two representatives with subject matter expertise in case  
580 management from each of the following:

20257012er

- 581        (a) The Department of Children and Families.
- 582        (b) Community-based care lead agencies.
- 583        (c) Contracted case management organizations.
- 584        (3) In collaboration with the Florida Institute for Child  
585 Welfare, the workgroup shall do all of the following:
- 586        (a) Review and analyze existing statutes, rules, operating  
587 procedures, and federal requirements relating to the provision  
588 of case management.
- 589        (b) Review and analyze legislative changes relating to case  
590 management processes during the preceding 10 years and the  
591 impact that those changes have had on workload and workforce.
- 592        (c) Gather statewide data to assess all of the following:
- 593        1. Compliance with statutory requirements.
- 594        2. Variations in case management practices.
- 595        3. Current workforce capacity.
- 596        4. Barriers to successful implementation of any statutes,  
597 rules, and operating procedures.
- 598        (d) Solicit insight from stakeholders, including frontline  
599 workers, supervisors, and administrators, regarding challenges  
600 and potential solutions.
- 601        (e) Analyze findings of the work conducted under paragraphs  
602 (a)-(d) to do all of the following:
- 603        1. Identify any needed statutory changes.
- 604        2. Evaluate whether the current structure, processes, and  
605 requirements of the statutes, rules, and operating procedures  
606 are duplicative or unworkable.
- 607        3. Evaluate how well case managers are implementing policy.
- 608        (f) Develop clear and actionable recommendations to  
609 streamline, clarify, standardize, and implement case management

20257012er

610 processes and practices that address workforce retention and  
611 allow for local community innovation.

612 (4) The workgroup shall meet as often as necessary to carry  
613 out these duties and responsibilities and shall operate until  
614 December 1, 2025, at which time it shall submit to the Governor,  
615 the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of  
616 Representatives a report that summarizes its work, describes and  
617 details its analysis of data, and recommends clear actionable  
618 policy.

619 Section 14. Effective upon this act becoming law, the  
620 Department of Children and Families shall contract for a  
621 detailed study of bed capacity for residential treatment  
622 services and a gap analysis of nonresidential treatment services  
623 for child victims of commercial sexual exploitation identified  
624 by the child welfare systems of care and those not involved in  
625 the child welfare systems of care. The study must include  
626 analyses of current capacity, current and projected future  
627 demand, and the state's current and projected future ability to  
628 meet that demand. The study must be completed by December 31,  
629 2025, and must, at a minimum, include all of the following:

630 (1) By department region, the current number of residential  
631 treatment beds in safe homes for treatment of child victims of  
632 commercial sexual exploitation, the number of individuals  
633 admitted and discharged annually, the types and frequency of  
634 diagnoses, and the lengths of stays.

635 (2) By department region, the current number of specialized  
636 safe therapeutic foster home placements for child victims of  
637 commercial sexual exploitation, the number of placements  
638 annually, and the lengths of stays.

20257012er

639       (3) By department region, an analysis of nonresidential  
640 treatment services for child victims of commercial sexual  
641 exploitation and the utilization of such services.

642       (4) Policy recommendations for ensuring sufficient bed  
643 capacity for residential treatment beds, ensuring specialized  
644 safe therapeutic foster home placements, and enhancing services  
645 for child victims of commercial sexual exploitation which could  
646 prevent the need for residential treatment beds.

647       Section 15. Except as otherwise expressly provided in this  
648 act and except for this section, which shall take effect upon  
649 this act becoming a law, this act shall take effect July 1,  
650 2025.