

Committee Substitute for Senate Bill No. 1278

An act relating to youth and young adults with disabilities; creating the Interagency Services Committee for Youth and Young Adults with Disabilities; providing legislative intent; providing that the committee be staffed by member agencies of the committee; providing for the membership of the committee; providing duties and responsibilities for the committee; requiring the committee to submit a report to the Governor and the Legislature; providing an effective date.

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

Section 1. Interagency Services Committee for Youth and Young Adults with Disabilities.—

(1) The Agency for Persons with Disabilities may create the Interagency Services Committee for Youth and Young Adults with Disabilities. It is the intent of the Legislature that the committee develop strategies to ensure successful transition to employment or further education of youth and young adults with disabilities and to eliminate barriers that impede educational opportunities leading to future employment.

(2)(a) The committee shall consist of heads, or their designees, of the following agencies and bureaus or divisions of agencies: the Department of Education and, in that department, the Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services, the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, the Division of Blind Services, the Division of Community Colleges, workforce education, and the office of interagency programs; the Agency for Persons with Disabilities; the Agency for Health Care Administration; the Division of Children's Medical Services Network in the Department of Health; children's mental health in the Department of Children and Family Services; the Department of Juvenile Justice; the Department of Corrections; the Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged; and the Florida Housing Finance Corporation. Agency representatives must be at least at the bureau chief level. The committee may invite representation from the following private and public parties: the Able Trust; the Business Leadership Network; the Florida Advocacy Center; the Governor's Americans with Disabilities Act Working Group; the Florida Association for Centers for Independent Living; an individual with a disability; and a parent or guardian of an individual with a disability. The members of the committee shall designate one of its members as chairperson.

(b) The Department of Children and Family Services, the Department of Education, the Department of Health, and the Agency for Persons with Disabilities shall provide staff support to the committee. Meetings and records of the committee are subject to ss. 119.07 and 286.011, Florida Statutes. The chairperson may designate one of the agencies providing staff support to perform administrative responsibilities for the committee.

(c) Committee members shall serve without compensation but are entitled to reimbursement for expenses incurred in carrying out their duties as provided in s. 112.061, Florida Statutes. Members who are public officers or employees shall be reimbursed through the budget entity through which they are compensated. Reimbursement for members who are not public officers or employees shall alternate between the budget entities represented on the committee.

(3) The committee shall:

(a) Identify the roles and responsibilities of each agency with regard to the committee goals.

(b) Develop collaborative relationships to identify and assist in removing federal and state barriers to achieving the goals.

(c) Identify common or comparable performance measures for all agencies that serve youth and young adults with disabilities.

(d) Design a mechanism to annually assess the progress toward the goals by each agency.

(e) Collect and disseminate information on research-based practices of state and local agencies on successful strategies.

(f) Develop strategies to educate public and private employers on the benefit of hiring persons with disabilities.

(g) Develop strategies to encourage and provide incentives for public and private employers to hire persons with disabilities.

(h) Recommend a statewide system of accountability which would include incentives for persons with disabilities; service providers, including school districts, technical centers, and community colleges; and businesses and industries providing integrated competitive employment to individuals with disabilities.

(4) The committee shall present a report of its findings and recommendations to the Governor, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives by March 1, 2007, and a final report on its findings and recommendations by January 1, 2008. The committee is abolished on June 1, 2008.

Section 2. This act shall take effect upon becoming a law.

Approved by the Governor June 7, 2006.

Filed in Office Secretary of State June 7, 2006.