

Council Substitute for House Bill No. 509

An act relating to children's services; creating the Children and Youth Cabinet; providing a short title; providing legislative intent; providing organization, membership, and duties and responsibilities of the cabinet; providing for an advisory board; requiring the cabinet to prepare an annual report; providing an effective date.

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

Section 1. Children's cabinet; organization; responsibilities; annual report.—

(1) SHORT TITLE.—This act may be cited as the “Children and Youth Cabinet Act.”

(2) LEGISLATIVE FINDINGS AND INTENT.—

(a) The Legislature finds that all state agencies and programs that touch the lives of children and youth must work in a coordinated and comprehensive fashion, with an emphasis on providing a continuum of services that benefit children from prenatal care through programs supporting successful transition to self-sufficient adulthood. The Legislature further finds that creating a Children and Youth Cabinet is the best method by which the state might achieve the visions and plans necessary to ensure that this state is the first place families think of when asked, “Where do you want to raise a child?”

(b) The Legislature, in collaboration with the Governor, intends to develop and implement a shared vision among the branches of government in order to improve child and family outcomes in this state. By working collaboratively, the Legislature intends to invest in the education and skills of our children and youth, develop a cohesive vision and plan that ensures a long-term commitment to children and youth issues, align public resources serving children and youth to support their healthy growth and development, and promote increased efficiency and improved service delivery by all governmental agencies that provide services for children, youth, and their families.

(3) ORGANIZATION.—There is created the Children and Youth Cabinet, which is a coordinating council as defined in s. 20.03, Florida Statutes.

(a) The cabinet shall ensure that the public policy of this state relating to children and youth is developed to promote interdepartmental collaboration and program implementation in order that services designed for children and youth are planned, managed, and delivered in a holistic and integrated manner to improve the children's self-sufficiency, safety, economic stability, health, and quality of life.

(b) The cabinet is created in the Executive Office of the Governor, which shall provide administrative support and service to the cabinet.

(c) The cabinet shall meet for its organizational session no later than October 1, 2007. Thereafter, the cabinet shall meet at least six times each year in different regions of the state in order to solicit input from the public and any other individual offering testimony relevant to the issues considered. Each meeting must include a public-comment session.

(4) MEMBERS.—The cabinet shall consist of 15 members including the Governor and the following persons:

- (a)1. The Secretary of Children and Family Services;
2. The Secretary of Juvenile Justice;
3. The director of the Agency for Persons with Disabilities;
4. The director of the Agency for Workforce Innovation;
5. The Secretary of Health;
6. The Secretary of Health Care Administration;
7. The Commissioner of Education;
8. The director of the Statewide Guardian Ad Litem Office;
9. The director of the Office of Child Abuse Prevention; and
10. Five members representing children and youth advocacy organizations, who are not service providers and who are appointed by the Governor.

(b) The President of the Senate, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, the Attorney General, and the Chief Financial Officer, or their appointed designees, shall serve as ex officio members of the cabinet.

(c) The Governor or the Governor's designee shall serve as the chair of the cabinet.

(d) Nongovernmental members of the cabinet shall serve without compensation, but are entitled to receive per diem and travel expenses in accordance with s. 112.061, Florida Statutes, while in performance of their duties.

(5) DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES.—The Children and Youth Cabinet shall:

(a) Develop and implement a shared and cohesive vision using integrated services to improve child, youth, and family outcomes in this state.

(b) Develop, no later than December 31, 2007, a strategic plan to achieve the goals of the shared and cohesive vision. The plan shall be centered upon a long-term commitment to children and youth issues and align all public resources to serve children and youth and their families in a manner that supports the healthy growth and development of children. The plan shall prepare the children and youth to be responsible citizens and productive members of the workforce. The plan shall include a continuum of services

that will benefit children from prenatal care through services for youth in transition to adulthood.

(c) Develop and implement measurable outcomes for each state department, agency, and program that are consistent with the strategic plan. The cabinet shall establish a baseline measurement for each outcome and regularly report on the progress made toward achieving the desired outcome.

(d) Design and implement actions that will promote collaboration, creativity, increased efficiency, information sharing, and improved service delivery between and within state governmental organizations that provide services for children and youth and their families. In particular, the efforts shall include the long-range planning process mandated by s. 216.013, Florida Statutes.

(e) Foster public awareness of children and youth issues and develop new partners in the effort to serve children and youth.

(f) Create a children and youth impact statement for evaluating proposed legislation, requested appropriations, and programs. The impact statement shall be shared with the Legislature in their deliberative process.

(g) Identify existing and potential funding streams and resources for children's services, including, but not limited to, public funding, foundation and organization grants, and other forms of private funding opportunities, including public-private partnerships.

(h) Develop a children-and-youth-based budget structure and nomenclature that includes all relevant departments, funding streams, and programs. The budget shall facilitate improved coordination and efficiency, explore options for and allow maximization of federal financial participation, and implement the state's vision and strategic plan.

(i) Engage in other activities that will implement improved collaboration of agencies in order to create, manage, and promote coordinated policies, programs, and service-delivery systems that support children and youth.

(6) ADVISORY BOARD.—The Governor may appoint an advisory board to assist the cabinet in its tasks. The board shall include persons who can provide to the cabinet the best available technical and professional research and assistance. If an advisory board is created, it shall include representatives of children and youth advocacy organizations and youth, wherever practicable, who have been recipients of services and programs operated or funded by state agencies.

(7) ANNUAL REPORT.—The Children and Youth Cabinet shall, by February 1 of each year, provide an annual report to the Governor, the President of the Senate, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and the public concerning its activities and progress towards making this state the first place families think of when asked, "Where do they want to raise their children?" The annual report may include recommendations for needed legislation or rulemaking authority.

Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2007.

Approved by the Governor June 15, 2007.

Filed in Office Secretary of State June 15, 2007.