

CHAPTER 2021-147

House Bill No. 871

An act relating to sovereign immunity for Child Protection Teams; amending s. 768.28, F.S.; revising the definition of the term “officer, employee, or agent” as it applies to immunity from personal liability in certain actions to include any member of a Child Protection Team established by the Department of Health in certain circumstances; providing an effective date.

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

Section 1. Paragraphs (a) and (b) of subsection (9) of section 768.28, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

768.28 Waiver of sovereign immunity in tort actions; recovery limits; limitation on attorney fees; statute of limitations; exclusions; indemnification; risk management programs.—

(9)(a) An ~~No~~ officer, employee, or agent of the state or of any of its subdivisions may not shall be held personally liable in tort or named as a party defendant in any action for any injury or damage suffered as a result of any act, event, or omission of action in the scope of her or his employment or function, unless such officer, employee, or agent acted in bad faith or with malicious purpose or in a manner exhibiting wanton and willful disregard of human rights, safety, or property. However, such officer, employee, or agent shall be considered an adverse witness in a tort action for any injury or damage suffered as a result of any act, event, or omission of action in the scope of her or his employment or function. The exclusive remedy for injury or damage suffered as a result of an act, event, or omission of an officer, employee, or agent of the state or any of its subdivisions or constitutional officers is shall be by action against the governmental entity, or the head of such entity in her or his official capacity, or the constitutional officer of which the officer, employee, or agent is an employee, unless such act or omission was committed in bad faith or with malicious purpose or in a manner exhibiting wanton and willful disregard of human rights, safety, or property. The state or its subdivisions are shall not be liable in tort for the acts or omissions of an officer, employee, or agent committed while acting outside the course and scope of her or his employment or committed in bad faith or with malicious purpose or in a manner exhibiting wanton and willful disregard of human rights, safety, or property.

(b) As used in this subsection, the term:

1. “Employee” includes any volunteer firefighter.
2. “Officer, employee, or agent” includes, but is not limited to, any health care provider when providing services pursuant to s. 766.1115; any nonprofit

independent college or university located and chartered in this state which owns or operates an accredited medical school, and its employees or agents, when providing patient services pursuant to paragraph (10)(f); ~~and any public defender or her or his employee or agent, including, among others, an assistant public defender or and an investigator; and any member of a Child Protection Team, as defined in s. 39.01(13), when carrying out her or his duties as a team member under the control, direction, and supervision of the state or any of its agencies or subdivisions.~~

Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2021.

Approved by the Governor June 21, 2021.

Filed in Office Secretary of State June 21, 2021.