

## CHAPTER 2023-35

### Committee Substitute for Committee Substitute for Senate Bill No. 256

An act relating to employee organizations representing public employees; amending s. 447.301, F.S.; requiring a public employee who desires to be a member of an employee organization to sign a membership authorization form beginning on a specified date; requiring that such form include a specified statement; authorizing a public employee to revoke membership in an employee organization at any time of the year; requiring an employee organization to revoke a public employee's membership upon receipt of his or her written request for revocation; prohibiting an employee organization from limiting an employee's right to revoke membership to certain dates; prohibiting a revocation form from requiring a reason for the public employee's decision to revoke his or her membership; requiring employee organizations to retain such authorization forms and requests for revocation for inspection by the Public Employees Relations Commission; providing applicability with respect to certain employee organizations; authorizing the commission to adopt rules; amending s. 447.207, F.S.; authorizing the commission to waive certain provisions for specified employee organizations under certain circumstances; amending s. 447.303, F.S.; prohibiting certain employee organizations from having dues and uniform assessments deducted and collected by the employer from certain salaries; authorizing public employees to pay dues and uniform assessments directly to the employee organization; authorizing certain employee organizations to have dues and uniform assessments deducted and collected by the employer from certain salaries; amending s. 447.305, F.S.; revising requirements for applications for initial registrations and renewals of registration of employee organizations; providing procedures for incomplete applications; requiring certain employee organizations to petition the commission for recertification as bargaining agents; authorizing a public employer or bargaining unit employee to challenge an employee organization's application for renewal of registration; requiring the commission or one of its designated agents to review the application; requiring the commission to revoke the registration and certification of the employee organization in certain circumstances; authorizing the commission to conduct investigations for specified purposes; authorizing the commission to revoke or deny an employee organization's registration or certification under certain circumstances; specifying that certain decisions issued by the commission are reviewable final agency actions; providing applicability with respect to certain employee organizations; requiring certain employee organizations to provide their members with an annual audited financial report; requiring employee organizations to notify their members annually of all costs of membership; amending s. 447.509, F.S.; revising prohibitions for employee organizations and certain persons and entities relating to employee organizations; amending s. 1012.2315, F.S.; removing duplicative

provisions; reenacting ss. 110.114(3) and 447.507(6)(a), F.S., relating to employee wage deductions and violation of strike prohibition and penalties, respectively, to incorporate the amendment made to s. 447.303, F.S., in references thereto; providing effective dates.

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

Section 1. Subsection (1) of section 447.301, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

447.301 Public employees' rights; organization and representation.—

(1)(a) Public employees shall have the right to form, join, and participate in, or to refrain from forming, joining, or participating in, any employee organization of their own choosing.

(b)1. Beginning July 1, 2023, a public employee who desires to be a member of an employee organization must sign and date a membership authorization form, as prescribed by the commission, with the bargaining agent.

2. The membership authorization form must identify the name of the bargaining agent, the name of the employee, the class code and class title of the employee, the name of the public employer and employing agency, if applicable, the amount of the initiation fee and of the monthly dues which the member must pay, and the name and total amount of salary, allowances, and other direct or indirect disbursements, including reimbursements, paid to each of the five highest compensated officers and employees of the employee organization disclosed under s. 447.305(2)(c).

3. The membership authorization form must contain the following statement in 14-point type:

The State of Florida is a right-to-work state. Membership or non-membership in a labor union is not required as a condition of employment, and union membership and payment of union dues and assessments are voluntary. Each person has the right to join and pay dues to a labor union or to refrain from joining and paying dues to a labor union. No employee may be discriminated against in any manner for joining and financially supporting a labor union or for refusing to join or financially support a labor union.

4. A public employee may revoke membership in the employee organization at any time of the year. Upon receipt of the employee's written revocation of membership, the employee organization must revoke a public employee's membership. The employee organization may not limit an employee's right to revoke membership to certain dates. If a public employee must complete a form to revoke membership in the employee organization,

the form may not require a reason for the public employee’s decision to revoke his or her membership.

5. An employee organization must retain for inspection by the commission such membership authorization forms and any revocations.

6. This paragraph does not apply to members of an employee organization that has been certified as a bargaining agent to represent law enforcement officers, correctional officers, or correctional probation officers as those terms are defined in s. 943.10(1), (2), or (3), respectively, or firefighters as defined in s. 633.102.

7. The commission may adopt rules to implement this paragraph.

Section 2. Subsection (12) is added to section 447.207, Florida Statutes, to read:

447.207 Commission; powers and duties.—

(12) Upon a petition by a public employer after it has been notified by the Department of Labor that the public employer’s protective arrangement covering mass transit employees does not meet the requirements of 49 U.S.C. s. 5333(b) and would jeopardize the employer’s continued eligibility to receive Federal Transit Administration funding, the commission may waive, to the extent necessary for the public employer to comply with the requirements of 49 U.S.C. s. 5333(b), any of the following for an employee organization that has been certified as a bargaining agent to represent mass transit employees:

(a) The prohibition on dues and assessment deductions provided in s. 447.303(1).

(b) The requirement to petition the commission for recertification.

(c) The revocation of certification provided in s. 447.305(6) and (7).

Section 3. Effective July 1, 2023, section 447.303, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

447.303 Dues; deduction and collection.—

(1) Except as authorized in subsection (2) or subject to a waiver granted pursuant to s. 447.207(12)(a), an employee organization that has been certified as a bargaining agent may not have its dues and uniform assessments deducted and collected by the employer from the salaries of those employees in the unit. A public employee may pay dues and uniform assessments directly to the employee organization that has been certified as the bargaining agent.

(2)(a) An Any employee organization that which has been certified as a bargaining agent to represent law enforcement officers, correctional officers,

or correctional probation officers as those terms are defined in s. 943.10(1), (2), or (3), respectively, or firefighters as defined in s. 633.102 ~~has~~ shall have the right to have its dues and uniform assessments deducted and collected by the employer from the salaries of those employees who authorize the deduction and collection of said dues and uniform assessments. However, such authorization is revocable at the employee's request upon 30 days' written notice to the employer and employee organization. Said deductions shall commence upon the bargaining agent's written request to the employer.

(b) Reasonable costs to the employer of said deductions ~~is~~ shall be a proper subject of collective bargaining.

(c) Such right to deduction, unless revoked under ~~pursuant to~~ s. 447.507, ~~is~~ shall be in force for so long as the employee organization remains the certified bargaining agent for the employees in the unit.

(3) The public employer is expressly prohibited from any involvement in the collection of fines, penalties, or special assessments.

Section 4. Effective October 1, 2023, section 447.305, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

447.305 Registration of employee organization.—

(1) Every employee organization seeking to become a certified bargaining agent for public employees shall register with the commission pursuant to the procedures set forth in s. 120.60 prior to requesting recognition by a public employer for purposes of collective bargaining and prior to submitting a petition to the commission requesting certification as an exclusive bargaining agent. Further, if such employee organization is not registered, it may not participate in a representation hearing, participate in a representation election, or be certified as an exclusive bargaining agent. The application for registration required by this section shall be under oath and in such form as the commission may prescribe and shall include:

(a) The name and address of the organization and of any parent organization or organization with which it is affiliated.

(b) The names and addresses of the principal officers and all representatives of the organization.

(c) The amount of the initiation fee and of the monthly dues which members must pay.

(d) The current annual audited financial statement of the organization.

(e) The name of its business agent, if any; if different from the business agent, the name of its local agent for service of process; and the addresses where such person or persons can be reached.

(f) A pledge, in a form prescribed by the commission, that the employee organization will conform to the laws of the state and that it will accept members without regard to age, race, sex, religion, or national origin.

(g) A copy of the current constitution and bylaws of the employee organization.

(h) A copy of the current constitution and bylaws of the state and national groups with which the employee organization is affiliated or associated. In lieu of this provision, and upon adoption of a rule by the commission, a state or national affiliate or parent organization of any registering labor organization may annually submit a copy of its current constitution and bylaws.

(2) A registration granted to an employee organization pursuant to the provisions of this section shall run for 1 year from the date of issuance. A registration shall be renewed annually by filing application for renewal under oath with the commission, which application shall reflect any changes in the information provided to the commission in conjunction with the employee organization's preceding application for registration or previous renewal, whichever is applicable. Each application for renewal of registration shall include a current annual audited financial statement, certified by an independent certified public accountant licensed under chapter 473 and report, signed by the employee organization's its president and treasurer or corresponding principal officers, containing the following information in such detail as may be necessary accurately to disclose its financial condition and operations for its preceding fiscal year and in such categories as the commission may prescribe:

(a) Assets and liabilities at the beginning and end of the fiscal year;

(b) Receipts of any kind and the sources thereof;

(c) Salary, allowances, and other direct or indirect disbursements, including reimbursed expenses, to each officer and also to each employee who, during such fiscal year, received more than \$10,000 in the aggregate from such employee organization and any other employee organization affiliated with it or with which it is affiliated or which is affiliated with the same national or international employee organization;

(d) Direct and indirect loans made to any officer, employee, or member which aggregated more than \$250 during the fiscal year, together with a statement of the purpose, security, if any, and arrangements for repayment; and

(e) Direct and indirect loans to any business enterprise, together with a statement of the purpose, security, if any, and arrangements for repayment.

(3) In addition to subsection (2), an employee organization that has been certified as the bargaining agent for public employees must include for each such certified bargaining unit the following information and documentation

as of the 30th day immediately preceding the date of renewal in its application for any renewal of registration on or after October 1, 2023:

(a) The number of employees in the bargaining unit who are eligible for representation by the employee organization.

(b) The number of employees in the bargaining unit who have submitted signed membership authorization forms without a subsequent revocation of such membership.

(c) The number of employees in the bargaining unit who paid dues to the employee organization.

(d) The number of employees in the bargaining unit who did not pay dues to the employee organization.

(e) Documentation provided by an independent certified public accountant retained by the employee organization which verifies the information provided in paragraphs (a)-(d).

(4) The employee organization must provide a copy of its application for renewal of registration relating to a public employer's employees to the public employer on the same day the application is submitted to the commission.

(5) An application for renewal of registration is incomplete and is not eligible for consideration by the commission if it does not include all of the information and documentation required in subsection (3). The commission shall notify the employee organization if the application is incomplete. An incomplete application must be dismissed if the required information and documentation are not provided within 10 days after the employee organization receives such notice.

(6) Notwithstanding the provisions of this chapter relating to collective bargaining, an employee organization that had less than 60 percent of the employees eligible for representation in the bargaining unit pay dues during its last registration period must petition the commission pursuant to s. 447.307(2) and (3) for recertification as the exclusive representative of all employees in the bargaining unit within 1 month after the date on which the employee organization applies for renewal of registration pursuant to subsection (2). The certification of an employee organization that does not comply with this section is revoked.

(7) The public employer or a bargaining unit employee may challenge an employee organization's application for renewal of registration if the public employer or bargaining unit employee believes that the application is inaccurate. The commission or one of its designated agents shall review the application to determine its accuracy and compliance with this section. If the commission finds that the application is inaccurate or does not comply with this section, the commission shall revoke the registration and certification of the employee organization.

(8) The commission may conduct an investigation to confirm the validity of any information submitted pursuant to this section. The commission may revoke or deny an employee organization's registration or certification if it finds that the employee organization:

(a) Failed to cooperate with the investigation conducted pursuant to this subsection; or

(b) Intentionally misrepresented the information it submitted pursuant to subsection (3).

A decision issued by the commission pursuant to this subsection is a final agency action that is reviewable pursuant to s. 447.504.

(9) Subsections (3)-(8) do not apply to an employee organization that has been certified as the bargaining agent to represent law enforcement officers, correctional officers, or correctional probation officers as those terms are defined in s. 943.10(1), (2), or (3), respectively, or firefighters as defined in s. 633.102.

~~(10)(3)~~ A registration fee shall accompany each application filed with the commission. The amount charged for an application for registration or renewal of registration shall not exceed \$15. All such money collected by the commission shall be deposited in the General Revenue Fund.

~~(11)(4)~~ Every employee organization shall keep accurate accounts of its income and expenses, which accounts shall be open for inspection at all reasonable times by any member of the organization or by the commission. In addition, each employee organization that has been certified as a bargaining agent must provide to its members an annual audited financial report that includes a detailed breakdown of revenues and expenditures, and an accounting of membership dues and assessments. The employee organization must notify its members annually of all costs of membership.

Section 5. Paragraphs (d) and (e) are added to subsection (1) of section 447.509, Florida Statutes, to read:

447.509 Other unlawful acts.—

(1) Employee organizations, their members, agents, or representatives, or any persons acting on their behalf are hereby prohibited from:

(d) Offering anything of value to a public officer as defined in s. 112.313(1) which the public officer is prohibited from accepting under s. 112.313(2).

(e) Offering any compensation, payment, or thing of value to a public officer as defined in s. 112.313(1) which the public officer is prohibited from accepting under s. 112.313(4).

Section 6. Effective October 1, 2023, paragraph (c) of subsection (4) of section 1012.2315, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

1012.2315 Assignment of teachers.—

(4) COLLECTIVE BARGAINING.—

~~(c)1.— In addition to the provisions under s. 447.305(2), an employee organization that has been certified as the bargaining agent for a unit of instructional personnel as defined in s. 1012.01(2) must include for each such certified bargaining unit the following information in its application for renewal of registration:~~

~~a.— The number of employees in the bargaining unit who are eligible for representation by the employee organization.~~

~~b.— The number of employees who are represented by the employee organization, specifying the number of members who pay dues and the number of members who do not pay dues.~~

~~2.— Notwithstanding the provisions of chapter 447 relating to collective bargaining, an employee organization whose dues paying membership is less than 50 percent of the employees eligible for representation in the unit, as identified in subparagraph 1., must petition the Public Employees Relations Commission pursuant to s. 447.307(2) and (3) for recertification as the exclusive representative of all employees in the unit within 1 month after the date on which the organization applies for renewal of registration pursuant to s. 447.305(2). The certification of an employee organization that does not comply with this paragraph is revoked.~~

Section 7. Effective July 1, 2023, for the purpose of incorporating the amendment made by this act to section 447.303, Florida Statutes, in a reference thereto, subsection (3) of section 110.114, Florida Statutes, is reenacted to read:

110.114 Employee wage deductions.—

(3) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsections (1) and (2), the deduction of an employee's membership dues deductions as defined in s. 447.203(15) for an employee organization as defined in s. 447.203(11) shall be authorized or permitted only for an organization that has been certified as the exclusive bargaining agent pursuant to chapter 447 for a unit of state employees in which the employee is included. Such deductions shall be subject to the provisions of s. 447.303.

Section 8. Effective July 1, 2023, for the purpose of incorporating the amendment made by this act to section 447.303, Florida Statutes, in a reference thereto, paragraph (a) of subsection (6) of section 447.507, Florida Statutes, is reenacted to read:

447.507 Violation of strike prohibition; penalties.—



(6)(a) If the commission determines that an employee organization has violated s. 447.505, it may:

1. Issue cease and desist orders as necessary to ensure compliance with its order.
2. Suspend or revoke the certification of the employee organization as the bargaining agent of such employee unit.
3. Revoke the right of dues deduction and collection previously granted to said employee organization pursuant to s. 447.303.
4. Fine the organization up to \$20,000 for each calendar day of such violation or determine the approximate cost to the public due to each calendar day of the strike and fine the organization an amount equal to such cost, notwithstanding the fact that the fine may exceed \$20,000 for each such calendar day. The fines so collected shall immediately accrue to the public employer and shall be used by him or her to replace those services denied the public as a result of the strike. In determining the amount of damages, if any, to be awarded to the public employer, the commission shall take into consideration any action or inaction by the public employer or its agents that provoked, or tended to provoke, the strike by the public employees.

Section 9. Except as otherwise expressly provided in this act, this act shall take effect upon becoming a law.

Approved by the Governor May 9, 2023.

Filed in Office Secretary of State May 9, 2023.