

Committee Substitute for
Committee Substitute for Senate Bill No. 1910

An act relating to workforce innovation; amending s. 445.048, F.S.; requiring that Workforce Florida, Inc., expand the Passport to Economic Progress demonstration program to a statewide program; authorizing Workforce Florida, Inc., to designate regional workforce boards to participate in the program; deleting the provision relating to the disregarding of income for purposes of determining eligibility for cash assistance; requiring that Workforce Florida, Inc., offer incentive bonuses; providing requirements for the incentive bonuses; providing that the bonuses are not an entitlement; deleting obsolete provisions; requiring Workforce Florida, Inc., to submit evaluations and recommendations for the program as part of its annual report to the Legislature; deleting obsolete provisions; creating the Florida Youth Summer Jobs Pilot Program; providing eligibility requirements for program participants and public employers; requiring the program to be administered by a regional workforce board in consultation with Workforce Florida, Inc.; providing employment and educational requirements; requiring the regional workforce board to make an annual report; providing certain uses for program funds; providing an effective date.

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

Section 1. Section 445.048, Florida Statutes, as amended by section 53 of chapter 2004-269, Laws of Florida, is amended to read:

445.048 Passport to Economic Progress ~~demonstration~~ program.—

(1) AUTHORIZATION.—Notwithstanding any law to the contrary, Workforce Florida, Inc., in conjunction with the Department of Children and Family Services and the Agency for Workforce Innovation, shall implement a Passport to Economic Progress ~~demonstration~~ program by ~~November 1, 2001~~, consistent with the provisions of this section ~~in Hillsborough and Manatee counties~~. Workforce Florida, Inc., may designate regional workforce boards to participate in the program. Expenses for the program may come from appropriated revenues or from funds otherwise available to a regional workforce board which may be legally used for such purposes. Workforce Florida, Inc., must consult with the applicable regional workforce boards and the applicable local offices of the Department of Children and Family Services which serve the program demonstration areas and must encourage community input into the implementation process.

(2) WAIVERS.—If Workforce Florida, Inc., in consultation with the Department of Children and Family Services, finds that federal waivers would facilitate implementation of the ~~demonstration~~ program, the department shall immediately request such waivers, and Workforce Florida, Inc., shall report to the Governor, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives if any refusal of the federal government to grant

such waivers prevents the implementation of the ~~demonstration~~ program. If Workforce Florida, Inc., finds that federal waivers to provisions of the Food Stamp Program would facilitate implementation of the ~~demonstration~~ program, the Department of Children and Family Services shall immediately request such waivers in accordance with s. 414.175.

~~(3) INCOME DISREGARD.—In order to provide an additional incentive for employment, and notwithstanding the amount specified in s. 414.095(12), for individuals residing in the areas designated for this demonstration program, the first \$300 plus one-half of the remainder of earned income shall be disregarded in determining eligibility for temporary cash assistance. All other conditions and requirements of s. 414.095(12) shall continue to apply to such individuals.~~

(3)(4) TRANSITIONAL BENEFITS AND SERVICES.—In order to assist them in making the transition to economic self-sufficiency, former recipients of temporary cash assistance participating in the passport ~~residing within the areas designated for this demonstration program~~ shall be eligible for the following benefits and services:

(a) Notwithstanding the time period specified in s. 445.030, transitional education and training support services as specified in s. 445.030 for up to 4 years after the family is no longer receiving temporary cash assistance;

(b) Notwithstanding the time period specified in s. 445.031, transitional transportation support services as specified in s. 445.031 for up to 4 years after the family is no longer receiving temporary cash assistance; and

(c) Notwithstanding the time period specified in s. 445.032, transitional child care as specified in s. 445.032 for up to 4 years after the family is no longer receiving temporary cash assistance.

All other provisions of ss. 445.030, 445.031, and 445.032 shall apply to such individuals, as appropriate. This subsection does not constitute an entitlement to transitional benefits and services. If funds are insufficient to provide benefits and services under this subsection, the board of directors of Workforce Florida, Inc., or its agent, may limit such benefits and services or otherwise establish priorities for the provisions of such benefits and services.

~~(4)(5) INCENTIVES TO ECONOMIC SELF-SUFFICIENCY WAGE SUPPLEMENTATION.—~~

(a) The Legislature finds that:

1. There are former recipients of temporary cash assistance and families who are eligible for temporary assistance for needy families who are working full time but whose incomes are below 200 percent of the federal poverty level.

2. Having incomes below 200 percent of the federal poverty level makes such individuals particularly vulnerable to reliance on public assistance

despite their best efforts to achieve or maintain economic independence through employment.

3. It is necessary to implement a performance-based program that defines economic incentives for achieving specific benchmarks toward self-sufficiency while the individual is working full-time supplement the wages of such individuals for a limited period of time in order to assist them in fulfilling the transition to economic self-sufficiency.

(b) Workforce Florida, Inc., in cooperation with the Department of Children and Family Services and the Agency for Workforce Innovation, shall offer performance-based incentive bonuses create a transitional wage supplementation program by November 1, 2001, as a component of the Passport to Economic Progress demonstration program in the areas designated for the demonstration program. This wage supplementation program does not constitute an entitlement to wage supplementation. The bonuses do not represent a program entitlement and shall be contingent on achieving specific benchmarks prescribed in the self-sufficiency plan. If the funds appropriated for this purpose are insufficient to provide this financial incentive wage supplementation, the board of directors of Workforce Florida, Inc., may reduce or suspend the bonuses in order not to exceed the appropriation or may direct the regional boards to use resources otherwise given to the regional workforce to pay such bonuses if such payments comply with applicable state and federal laws limit wage supplementation or otherwise establish priorities for wage supplementation.

(c) To be eligible for an incentive bonus wage supplementation under this subsection, an individual must:

1. Be a former recipient of temporary cash assistance who last received such assistance on or after January 1, 2000, or be part of a family that is eligible for temporary assistance for needy families;

2. Be employed full time, which for the purposes of this subsection means employment averaging at least 32 hours per week, until the United States Congress enacts legislation reauthorizing the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families block grant and, after the reauthorization, means employment complying with the employment requirements of the reauthorization; and

3. Have an average family income for the 6 months preceding the date of application for an incentive bonus wage supplementation which is less than 200 100 percent of the federal poverty level.

(d) Workforce Florida, Inc., shall determine the schedule for the payment of wage supplementation under this subsection. An individual eligible for wage supplementation under this subsection may receive a payment that equals the amount necessary to bring the individual's total family income for the period covered by the payment to 100 percent of the federal poverty level. An individual may not receive wage supplementation payments for more than a total of 12 months.

~~(c) The wage supplementation program authorized by this subsection shall be administered through the regional workforce boards and the one-stop delivery system, under policy guidelines, criteria, and applications developed by Workforce Florida, Inc., in cooperation with the Department of Children and Family Services and the Agency for Workforce Innovation. To the maximum extent possible, the regional workforce boards shall use electronic debit card technologies to provide wage supplementation payments under this program.~~

~~(5)(6) EVALUATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.—Workforce Florida, Inc., in conjunction with the Department of Children and Family Services, the Agency for Workforce Innovation, and the regional workforce boards in the areas designated for this demonstration program, shall conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the effectiveness of the demonstration program operated under this section. Evaluations and recommendations for the program shall be submitted by Workforce Florida, Inc., as part of its annual report to the Legislature. By January 1, 2003, Workforce Florida, Inc., shall submit a report on such evaluation to the Governor, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives. The report must include recommendations as to whether the demonstration program should be expanded to other service areas or statewide and whether the program should be revised to enhance its administration or effectiveness.~~

~~(6)(7) CONFLICTS.—If there is a conflict between the implementation procedures described in this section and federal requirements and regulations, federal requirements and regulations shall control.~~

Section 2. Florida Youth Summer Jobs Pilot Program.—

~~(1) CREATION.—Contingent upon appropriations, there is created the Florida Youth Summer Jobs Pilot Program within workforce development district 22 served by the Broward Workforce Development Board. The board shall, in consultation with Workforce Florida, Inc., provide a program offering at-risk and disadvantaged children summer jobs in partnership with local communities and public employers.~~

(2) ELIGIBILITY.—

~~(a) Children at least 14 but not more than 18 years of age are eligible to participate in the program if they are:~~

~~1. At risk of welfare dependency, including economically disadvantaged children, children of participants in the welfare transition program, children of migrant farmworkers, and children of teen parents. For purposes of this section, “economically disadvantaged children” are those whose family income is below 150 percent of the federal poverty level;~~

~~2. Children of working families whose family income does not exceed 150 percent of the federal poverty level;~~

~~3. Juvenile offenders;~~

~~4. Children in foster care; or~~

5. Children with disabilities.

(b) Employers are eligible to participate in the program under the following conditions:

1. The employer shall meet the program requirements of subsection (3).
2. The employer shall pay the state minimum wage to a program participant hired under the program.
3. The maximum hours required of a program participant per week shall not exceed 30 hours.
4. The employer shall comply with state and federal child labor and antidiscrimination laws.

(3) PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS.—

(a) The program shall:

1. Provide the program participant a work experience that will teach personal responsibility and reinforce the obligations and rewards of holding a job.
2. Allow for an academic enrichment component that will assist the program participant in remaining in or returning to school.
3. Provide documented learning experiences relevant to the type of work performed and tailored to the needs of the program participant.
4. Allow for the provision of life skills training by the local community or a third-party provider contracted by the local community if such skills training takes up no more than 10 percent of the program participant's work time.

(b) The program may begin on the day after the end of the regular school year in the local community and shall end before the first regular day of school in the local community.

(4) GOVERNANCE.—

(a) The pilot program shall be administered by the regional workforce board in consultation with Workforce Florida, Inc.

(b) The regional workforce board shall report to Workforce Florida, Inc., the number of at-risk and disadvantaged children who enter the program, the types of work activities they participate in, and the number of children who return to school, go on to postsecondary school, or enter the workforce full time at the end of the program. Workforce Florida, Inc., shall report to the Legislature by November 1 of each year on the performance of the program.

(5) FUNDING.—

(a) The regional workforce board shall, consistent with state and federal laws, use funds appropriated specifically for the pilot program to provide youth wage payments and educational enrichment activities. The regional workforce board and local communities may obtain private or state and federal grants or other sources of funds in addition to any appropriated funds.

(b) Program funds shall be used as follows:

1. No less than 85 percent of the funds shall be used for youth wage payments or educational enrichment activities. These funds shall be matched on a one-to-one basis by each local community that participates in the program.

2. No more than 2 percent of the funds may be used for administrative purposes.

3. The remainder of the funds may be used for transportation assistance, childcare assistance, or other assistance to enable a program participant to enter or remain in the program.

(c) The regional workforce board shall pay a participating employer an amount equal to one-half of the wages paid to a youth participating in the program. Payments shall be made monthly for the duration that the youth participant is employed as documented by the employer and confirmed by the regional workforce board.

Section 3. This act shall take effect upon becoming a law.

Approved by the Governor June 8, 2005.

Filed in Office Secretary of State June 8, 2005.