

## CHAPTER 2024-240

### Committee Substitute for Committee Substitute for House Bill No. 1267

An act relating to economic self-sufficiency; amending s. 414.065, F.S.; providing that a participant has good cause for noncompliance with work requirements for a specified time period under certain circumstances; amending s. 414.105, F.S.; providing requirements for staff members of local workforce development boards when interviewing participants; amending s. 414.455, F.S.; requiring certain persons to participate in an employment and training program; amending s. 445.009, F.S.; requiring benefit management and career planning using a specified tool as part of the state's one-stop delivery system; amending s. 445.011, F.S.; requiring the Department of Commerce to develop certain training; conforming provisions to changes made by the act; amending s. 445.017, F.S.; requiring a local workforce development board to administer an intake survey; amending s. 445.024, F.S.; authorizing certain participants to participate in certain programs or courses for a specified number of hours per week; authorizing the Department of Commerce to suspend certain work requirements under certain circumstances; requiring the department to issue notice to participants under certain circumstances; amending s. 445.028, F.S.; requiring the Department of Children and Families to administer an exit survey; creating s. 445.0281, F.S.; providing voluntary case management services to certain persons for specified purposes; providing requirements for such case management services and case managers; amending s. 445.035, F.S.; requiring CareerSource Florida, Inc., in collaboration with other entities, to develop standardized intake and exit surveys for specified purposes; specifying when such surveys must be administered; providing requirements for such surveys; requiring completed surveys to be submitted to CareerSource Florida, Inc., and disseminated quarterly to certain departments; requiring the Department of Commerce, in consultation with other entities, to prepare and submit an annual report to the Legislature; providing requirements for such report; creating s. 1002.935, F.S.; creating the School Readiness Plus Program within the Department of Education; providing requirements for the program; providing eligibility requirements to receive a subsidy under the program; requiring early learning coalitions to administer the program and provide participants access to a specified tool; prohibiting early learning coalitions from spending more than a certain percentage on administrative costs of the program in a fiscal year; providing for the calculation of the amount of the subsidy; providing requirements for parents to receive a subsidy; providing an appropriation; providing an effective date.

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

Section 1. Subsection (1) of section 414.065, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

414.065 Noncompliance with work requirements.—

(1) PENALTIES FOR NONPARTICIPATION IN WORK REQUIREMENTS AND FAILURE TO COMPLY WITH ALTERNATIVE REQUIREMENT PLANS.—The department shall establish procedures for administering penalties for nonparticipation in work requirements and failure to comply with the alternative requirement plan. If an individual in a family receiving temporary cash assistance fails to engage in work activities required in accordance with s. 445.024, the following penalties shall apply. ~~Before~~ Prior to the imposition of a sanction, the participant ~~must~~ shall be notified orally or in writing that the participant is subject to sanction and that action will be taken to impose the sanction unless the participant complies with the work activity requirements. The participant ~~must~~ shall be counseled as to the consequences of noncompliance and, if appropriate, ~~shall~~ be referred for services that could assist the participant to fully comply with program requirements. If the participant has good cause for noncompliance or demonstrates satisfactory compliance, the sanction ~~may~~ shall not be imposed. If the requirements of s. 445.024(2)(a)1. are suspended pursuant to s. 445.024(2)(a)2., a participant in noncompliance because of such suspension is considered to have good cause for noncompliance for up to 6 weeks after the change in the participant's work requirements. If the participant has subsequently obtained employment, the participant ~~must~~ shall be counseled regarding the transitional benefits that may be available and provided information about how to access such benefits. The department shall administer sanctions related to food assistance consistent with federal regulations.

(a)1. First noncompliance: temporary cash assistance ~~is~~ shall be terminated for the family for a minimum of 10 days or until the individual who failed to comply does so.

2. Second noncompliance: temporary cash assistance ~~is~~ shall be terminated for the family for 1 month or until the individual who failed to comply does so, whichever is later. Upon meeting this requirement, temporary cash assistance ~~must~~ shall be reinstated to the date of compliance or the first day of the month following the penalty period, whichever is later.

3. Third noncompliance: temporary cash assistance ~~is~~ shall be terminated for the family for 3 months or until the individual who failed to comply does so, whichever is later. The individual ~~must~~ shall be required to comply with the required work activity upon completion of the 3-month penalty period, before reinstatement of temporary cash assistance. Upon meeting this requirement, temporary cash assistance ~~must~~ shall be reinstated to the date of compliance or the first day of the month following the penalty period, whichever is later.

(b) If a participant receiving temporary cash assistance who is otherwise exempted from noncompliance penalties fails to comply with the alternative requirement plan required in accordance with this section, the penalties provided in paragraph (a) shall apply.

If a participant fully complies with work activity requirements for at least 6 months, the participant must ~~shall~~ be reinstated as being in full compliance with program requirements for purpose of sanctions imposed under this section.

Section 2. Subsection (10) of section 414.105, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

414.105 Time limitations of temporary cash assistance.—Except as otherwise provided in this section, an applicant or current participant shall receive temporary cash assistance for no more than a lifetime cumulative total of 48 months, unless otherwise provided by law.

(10) A member of the staff of the local workforce development board shall interview and assess the employment prospects and barriers of each participant who is within 6 months of reaching the 48-month time limit. The staff member shall do all of the following:

(a) Administer the exit survey required under s. 445.035.

(b) Use a tool to demonstrate future financial impacts of the participant’s change in income and benefits over time.

(c) Assist the participant in identifying actions necessary to become employed before reaching the benefit time limit for temporary cash assistance.

(d) and, If appropriate, shall refer the participant for services that could facilitate employment, including, but not limited to, transitional benefits and services.

Section 3. Section 414.455, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

414.455 Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program; legislative authorization; mandatory participation in employment and training programs.—

(1) Notwithstanding s. 414.45, and unless expressly required by federal law, the department must ~~shall~~ obtain specific authorization from the Legislature before seeking, applying for, accepting, or renewing any waiver of work requirements established by the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program under 7 U.S.C. s. 2015(o).

(2) Unless prohibited by the Federal Government, the department must require a person who is receiving food assistance; who is 18 to 59 years of age, inclusive; who does not have children under the age of 18 in his or her

home; who does not qualify for an exemption; and who is determined by the department to be eligible, to participate in an employment and training program.

Section 4. Paragraph (k) of subsection (1) of section 445.009, Florida Statutes, is redesignated as paragraph (l), and a new paragraph (k) is added to that subsection, to read:

445.009 One-stop delivery system.—

(1) The one-stop delivery system is the state's primary customer-service strategy for offering every Floridian access, through service sites or telephone or computer networks, to the following services:

(k) Benefit management and career planning using a tool to demonstrate future financial impacts of the participant's change in income and benefits over time.

Section 5. Subsections (1) and (5) of section 445.011, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

445.011 Consumer-first workforce system.—

(1) The department, in consultation with the state board, the Department of Education, and the Department of Children and Families, shall implement, subject to legislative appropriation, an automated consumer-first workforce system that improves coordination among required one-stop partners and is necessary for the efficient and effective operation and management of the workforce development system. This system must ~~shall~~ include, but is ~~is~~ need not be limited to, the following:

(a) An integrated management system for the one-stop service delivery system, which includes, at a minimum, common registration and intake for required one-stop partners, screening for needs and benefits, benefit management and career planning using a tool to demonstrate future financial impacts of the participant's change in income and benefits over time, case management, training benefits management, service and training provider management, performance reporting, executive information and reporting, and customer-satisfaction tracking and reporting.

1. The system should report current budgeting, expenditure, and performance information for assessing performance related to outcomes, service delivery, and financial administration for workforce programs pursuant to s. 445.004(5) and (9).

2. The system should include auditable systems and controls to ensure financial integrity and valid and reliable performance information.

3. The system should support service integration and case management across programs and agencies by providing for case tracking for participants in workforce programs, participants who receive benefits pursuant to public

assistance programs under chapter 414, and participants in welfare transition programs under this chapter.

(b) An automated job-matching information system that is accessible to employers, job seekers, and other users via the Internet, and that includes, at a minimum, all of the following:

1. Skill match information, including skill gap analysis; resume creation; job order creation; skill tests; job search by area, employer type, and employer name; and training provider linkage.;

2. Job market information based on surveys, including local, state, regional, national, and international occupational and job availability information.;

3. Service provider information, including education and training providers, child care facilities and related information, health and social service agencies, and other providers of services that would be useful to job seekers.

(5) The department shall develop training for required one-stop partners on the use of the consumer-first workforce system, best practices for the use of a tool demonstrating future financial impacts of the participant's change in income and benefits over time, the different case management methods, the availability of welfare transition services, and how to prequalify individuals for workforce programs.

Section 6. Subsection (4) of section 445.017, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

445.017 Diversion.—

(4)(a) The local workforce development board shall screen each family on a case-by-case basis for barriers to obtaining or retaining employment. The screening must ~~shall~~ identify barriers that, if corrected, may prevent the family from receiving temporary cash assistance on a regular basis. At the time of screening, the local workforce development board shall administer the intake survey required under s. 445.035(2).

(b) Assistance to overcome a barrier to employment is not limited to cash, but may include vouchers or other in-kind benefits.

Section 7. Subsection (2) of section 445.024, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

445.024 Work requirements.—

(2) WORK ACTIVITY REQUIREMENTS.—Each individual who is not otherwise exempt from work activity requirements must participate in a work activity for the maximum number of hours allowable under federal law; however, a participant may not be required to work more than 40 hours

per week. The maximum number of hours each month that a family may be required to participate in community service or work experience programs is the number of hours that would result from dividing the family's monthly amount for temporary cash assistance and food assistance by the applicable minimum wage. However, the maximum hours required per week for community service or work experience may not exceed 40 hours.

(a)1. A participant who has not earned a high school diploma or its equivalent may participate in adult general education, as defined in s. 1004.02(3), or a high school equivalency examination preparation, as defined in s. 1004.02(16). A participant must participate in such program or course for at least 20 hours per week in order to satisfy the participant's work activity requirement.

2. If the state's TANF work participation rate, as provided by federal law, does not exceed the federal minimum work participation rate by 10 percentage points in any month, the requirements of this subsection may be suspended by the department until the work participation rate exceeds the federal minimum work participation rate by 10 percentage points for at least 3 consecutive months.

3. If the requirements of this subsection are suspended, the department must issue notice to the affected participants of the changed work requirements within 5 days after the change in such work requirements.

(b)(a) A participant in a work activity may also be required to enroll in and attend a course of instruction designed to increase literacy skills to a level necessary for obtaining or retaining employment if the instruction plus the work activity does not require more than 40 hours per week.

(c)(b) Program funds may be used, as available, to support the efforts of a participant who meets the work activity requirements and who wishes to enroll in or continue enrollment in an adult general education program or other training programs.

Section 8. Subsections (1) and (2) of section 445.028, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

445.028 Transitional benefits and services.—In cooperation with the department, the Department of Children and Families shall develop procedures to ensure that families leaving the temporary cash assistance program receive transitional benefits and services that will assist the family in moving toward self-sufficiency. At a minimum, such procedures must include, but are not limited to, the following:

(1) Each recipient of cash assistance who is determined ineligible for cash assistance for a reason other than a work activity sanction must ~~shall~~ be contacted by the workforce system case manager and provided information about the availability of transitional benefits and services. Such contact must include the administration of the exit survey required under s.

445.035(2) and shall be attempted before prior to closure of the case management file.

(2) Each recipient of temporary cash assistance who is determined ineligible for cash assistance due to noncompliance with the work activity requirements must shall be contacted and provided information in accordance with s. 414.065(1). Such contact must include the administration of the exit survey required under s. 445.035(2).

Section 9. Section 445.0281, Florida Statutes, is created to read:

445.0281 Transitional case management.—Each recipient of cash assistance who is determined ineligible for cash assistance for a reason other than noncompliance with work activity requirements is eligible for voluntary case management services administered by the local workforce development board. Case management services must be available to support families who transition to economic self-sufficiency and to mitigate dependency on cash assistance. Case management services must include, but are not limited to, career planning, job search assistance, resume building, basic financial planning, connection to support services, and benefits management using a tool to demonstrate future financial impacts of the participant’s change in income and benefits over time, as applicable. Case managers must connect recipients to other transitional benefits as needed.

Section 10. Section 445.035, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

445.035 Data collection and reporting.—

(1) The Department of Children and Families and the state board shall collect data necessary to administer this chapter and make the reports required under federal law to the United States Department of Health and Human Services and the United States Department of Agriculture.

(2) CareerSource Florida, Inc., in collaboration with the department, the Department of Children and Families, and the local workforce development boards, shall develop standardized intake and exit surveys for the purpose of collecting and aggregating data to monitor program effectiveness, inform program improvements, and allocate resources.

(a) The intake survey must be administered by the local workforce development boards during the required diversion screening process under s. 445.017. The intake survey must be administered to each new recipient of temporary cash assistance under chapter 414 who has not otherwise completed the survey.

(b) The intake survey must, at a minimum, collect qualitative or quantitative data, as applicable, relating to all of the following:

1. The recipient’s perceived individual barriers to employment.

2. The reasons cited by the recipient for his or her separation from employment in the previous 12 months.

3. The recipient's stated goals for employment or professional development.

4. The recipient's highest level of education or credentials attained or training received at the time of enrollment.

5. The recipient's awareness of welfare transition services.

(c) The exit survey must be administered by the local workforce development boards to recipients of temporary cash assistance under chapter 414 as recipients prepare to transition off of temporary cash assistance. Based on a recipient's circumstances, the exit survey must be administered to the recipient at one of the following points of contact:

1. The recipient is approaching the statutory time limitation for temporary cash assistance and is interviewed pursuant to s. 414.105(10); or

2. At such time when the recipient becomes ineligible for cash assistance and is contacted pursuant to s. 445.028.

(d) The exit survey must, at a minimum, collect data relating to all of the following:

1. The recipient's enrollment in other public benefits programs at the time of exit.

2. Whether the recipient has a long-term career plan.

3. The recipient's credentials or education attained or training received during enrollment.

4. Barriers to the recipient's employment which were addressed during enrollment.

5. Any remaining barriers to the recipient's employment.

(e) The completed surveys must be submitted to CareerSource Florida, Inc., and anonymized data must be disseminated quarterly to the department and the Department of Children and Families.

(f) The department, in consultation with CareerSource Florida, Inc., and the Department of Children and Families, shall prepare and submit to the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives a report by January 1 of each year. The report must include, at a minimum, the results of the intake and exit surveys, an analysis of the barriers to employment experienced by the survey respondents, and any recommendations for legislative and administrative changes to mitigate such barriers and improve the effective use of transitional benefits.



Section 11. Section 1002.935, Florida Statutes, is created to read:

1002.935 School Readiness Plus Program.—The School Readiness Plus Program is created within the Department of Education to support the continued school readiness and child care needs of working families with children. The program is contingent upon a legislative appropriation and is provided on a first-come, first-served basis.

(1)(a) A child who is determined to be ineligible for school readiness program funds due to family income during the annual eligibility redetermination process pursuant to s. 1002.87(6) is eligible for a subsidy under this section if the family income is between 85 percent and 100 percent, inclusive, of the state median income.

(b)1. The early learning coalitions established in s. 1002.83 shall administer the School Readiness Plus Program and provide participants with access to the benefit management and career planning tool described in s. 445.009(1)(k).

2. The early learning coalitions must spend the minimum amount of funds necessary for the efficient and effective administration of the School Readiness Plus Program. The early learning coalitions may not use more than 5 percent of the funds allowed for the program for administrative costs in a fiscal year.

(2)(a) The amount of the subsidy is a percentage of the early learning coalition's approved school readiness program provider reimbursement rates as calculated pursuant to s. 1002.84(17). An early learning coalition shall consider family income and a required parent copayment that increases in relation to the family income when establishing the percentage for the amount of the subsidy for the program.

(b) The amount of the subsidy and parent copayment must be sufficient to allow the family to access eligible school readiness providers pursuant to s. 1002.88 and enable the parent to achieve self-sufficiency.

(3) For a parent to receive a subsidy under the program, he or she must:

(a) Provide any documentation necessary to verify the parent's eligibility to receive the subsidy.

(b) Be responsible for the payment of all child care expenses in excess of the amount of the subsidy.

Section 12. For the 2024-2025 fiscal year, the sum of \$23,076,259 in nonrecurring funds is appropriated from the General Revenue Fund to the Department of Education to implement the School Readiness Plus Program established in s. 1002.935, Florida Statutes, as created by this act. The funds shall be placed in reserve. The Department of Education is authorized pursuant to chapter 216, Florida Statutes, to submit budget amendments requesting the release of the funds. The release of funds is contingent upon

the submission of an allocation plan developed by the Department of Education in collaboration with the early learning coalitions established under s. 1002.83, Florida Statutes.

Section 13. This act shall take effect July 1, 2024.

Approved by the Governor June 13, 2024.

Filed in Office Secretary of State June 13, 2024.