

CHAPTER 2026-131

Committee Substitute for House Bill No. 1115

An act relating to the grants for genetic counseling education; creating s. 1009.8963, F.S.; creating the Genetic Counseling Education Enhancement Grant Program within the State University System; providing the purpose of the program; subject to legislative appropriation, requiring the Board of Governors to award grant funds to state universities for specified purposes; requiring the program to reward excellence among genetic counseling programs based on specified criteria; providing authorized uses of grant funds; prohibiting such funds from being used for specified purposes; requiring state universities participating in the program to maintain specified records; requiring such state universities to submit an annual report; requiring the Board of Governors to submit an annual summary of such reports to the Governor and Legislature by a specified date; requiring the Board of Governors to adopt regulations; providing an effective date.

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

Section 1. Section 1009.8963, Florida Statutes, is created to read:

1009.8963 The Genetic Counseling Education Enhancement Grant Program.—

(1) The Genetic Counseling Education Enhancement Grant Program is created within the State University System to support the development, growth, and sustainability of graduate level genetic counseling programs accredited by a recognized accrediting body. The Board of Governors shall award competitive grants to state universities to address faculty shortages, student financial barriers, and clinical training needs in genetic counseling.

(2) Subject to appropriation, the board shall award funds to:

(a) Establish an accredited program at a state university through a one-time start-up grant based upon an application submitted in a format prescribed by the board. The application must include:

1. A detailed plan demonstrating how grant funds will be used to achieve program accreditation.

2. The projected outcomes of establishing the program, including all of the following:

a. The anticipated program enrollment.

b. The plan for hiring and retaining faculty for the program.

c. The anticipated program completion rates.

d. The anticipated first-time American Board of Genetic Counseling board certification examination passage rates.

e. The anticipated program contributions to the state's genetic counseling workforce.

3. Documentation demonstrating that the proposed program is supported by sufficient clinical training capacity consistent with nationally recognized accreditation standards, and that the proposed growth represents a net increase in statewide training opportunities rather than a redistribution of existing supervision resources.

(b) Accredited programs based on program performance according to the following metrics:

1. The number of students completing the genetic counseling program.

2. The first-time American Board of Genetic Counseling board certification examination passage rate for students completing the state university's genetic counseling program.

The program shall reward excellence among genetic counseling programs with an average first-time American Board of Genetic Counseling board certification examination passage rate above the national average.

(3)(a) Grant funds provided through the program must be used for:

1. The recruitment and retention of qualified faculty, including, but not limited to, salaries, professional development, and incentives.

2. Financial assistance to students enrolled in the accredited program. Such financial assistance must be in the form of scholarships that cover tuition, required books and materials, and reasonable living expenses.

3. The establishment and maintenance of clinical rotations required for completion of the master's degree in genetic counseling, including partnerships with health care facilities for supervised practicum experiences, simulation training resources, and faculty oversight.

(b) Grant funds may not be used for:

1. General administrative overhead costs.

2. The construction of new facilities.

3. Nonprogram-related activities.

(c) State universities that receive a grant through the program must maintain records sufficient to demonstrate compliance with this subsection.

(4)(a) Each state university receiving funds pursuant to this section shall submit an annual report to the board. The report must include:

1. Expenditures.
2. The outcomes achieved using grant funds.
3. Plans for the upcoming fiscal year for the program.

(b) The board shall annually compile the reports into a statewide summary. The summary must be submitted to the Governor, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives by July 1 of each year.

(5) The Board of Governors shall adopt regulations to administer this section.

Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2026.

Approved by the Governor June 11, 2026.

Filed in Office Secretary of State June 11, 2026.