

Committee on Children, Families, and Elder Affairs

CS/CS/CS/SB 1690 — Sexual Exploitation and Human Trafficking

by Fiscal Policy Committee; Appropriations Committee on Health and Human Services; Children, Families, and Elder Affairs Committee; and Senator Ingoglia

The bill requires the Services and Resources Committee of the Statewide Council on Human Trafficking to conduct a study and make recommendations regarding the regulation of adult safe houses. The study must:

- Survey operators of existing adult safe houses regarding operation and certain information.
- Identify and review standards recommended by national organizations or experts specializing in adult safe house service provision or shelter or housing for adult survivors of human trafficking.
- Obtain recommendations from adult survivors of human trafficking and law enforcement agencies regarding regulation of adult safe homes.
- Recommend regulations for adult safe houses in Florida based on, at a minimum, the information obtained by the committee.

The bill requires the DCF to, after the completion of the study, initiate rulemaking to establish minimum standards for certification of adult safe houses to serve survivors of any form of human trafficking, such as labor trafficking and sex trafficking. The rules must include minimum standards regarding certain topics.

After rules are adopted, all adult safe houses must be certified and adult safe houses in operation as of the rules' effective date are granted six months to become certified. Adult safe houses must gain recertification every two years. The DCF must inspect adult safe houses no less than annually to ensure compliance with the requirements. The DCF may subject the adult safe house to disciplinary action, including, but not limited to, requiring a corrective action plan; imposing administrative fines; or denying, suspending, or revoking the certification of the adult safe house.

The bill allows adult safe houses to give the DCF a list of the names of the human trafficking advocates who are employed or who volunteer at the adult safe house who may claim a confidential communication privilege.

The bill also requires the following:

- Age-appropriate educational programming for children to include information regarding the signs and dangers of, and how to report, human trafficking.
- Security for safe houses and safe foster homes to provide for, at a minimum, the detection of possible trafficking activity, coordination with law enforcement, and be part of the emergency response to search for absent or missing children. Appropriate security for a safe house requires either the employment of or a contract with at least one individual with law enforcement, investigative, or similar training or the execution of a contract or memorandum of understanding with a law enforcement agency to perform the security functions.

The bill requires residential treatment centers for children and adolescents under s. 394.875, F.S., and facilities maintained by child-caring agencies under s. 409.175, F.S., to display signs warning youth of the dangers of human trafficking and to encourage the reporting of individuals observed attempting to engage in human trafficking activity.

The bill also shortens the time that a public lodging establishment has to correct training deficiencies from 90 to 45 days and makes the establishment ineligible for any correction period for a second or subsequent violation of the training and awareness requirements if the violation occurred after July 1, 2023.

If approved by the Governor, or allowed to become law without the Governor's signature, these provisions take effect July 1, 2023.

Vote: Senate 34-0; House 119-0