

By Representative C. Smith

1 A bill to be entitled
 2 An act relating to prevocational education and
 3 job placement programs; providing a short
 4 title; providing legislative findings;
 5 providing definitions; authorizing the
 6 Department of Labor and Employment Security to
 7 provide grants to counties to implement
 8 enhanced prevocational training and job
 9 placement programs for certain purposes;
 10 providing for grant applications; requiring a
 11 county plan in a grant application; requiring
 12 counties receiving grants to provide financial
 13 assistance to certain community-based
 14 organizations for certain purposes; specifying
 15 use of grant funds; specifying criteria for
 16 individual eligibility for prevocational
 17 training; providing for prevocational training
 18 and job placement for welfare recipients and
 19 incarcerated persons; providing limitations;
 20 prohibiting fees for program services;
 21 providing for coordination with local private
 22 sector businesses; requiring the department to
 23 monitor the effectiveness of prevocational
 24 training programs; authorizing the department
 25 to adopt rules; providing an effective date.

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

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 29 Section 1. Short title.--This act may be cited as the
 30 "Job Preparation and Retention Training act of 1999."

31 Section 2. Findings.--The Legislature finds that:

1 (1) Training programs carried out under the Job
2 Training Partnership Act, 29 U.S.C. 1501 et seq., that include
3 a prevocational component have had placement success rates
4 that are better than the success rates of programs under that
5 act that lack that component.

6 (2) A need exists for skills training to enable
7 individuals who are welfare recipients to make transitions
8 into unsubsidized employment that provides career potential
9 and enables the individuals to achieve economic
10 self-sufficiency.

11 (3) Current federal and state law do not adequately
12 address the tremendously deleterious effect of unfavorable
13 environmental and cultural factors on the ability of such
14 individuals to obtain and retain gainful employment.

15 (4) A need exists for a state commitment to the
16 development of prevocational training programs that focus on:

17 (a) Improving the job readiness of individuals who are
18 welfare recipients.

19 (b) Preparing the individuals psychologically and
20 attitudinally for employment.

21 (c) Teaching the individuals learning and other
22 appropriate skills.

23 (d) Placing the individuals in:

24 1. Permanent unsubsidized employment; or

25 2. Skill training centers and, on completion of the
26 skill training, in permanent unsubsidized employment.

27 (5) Community-based organizations:

28 (a) Have provided such prevocational training programs
29 to disadvantaged populations, with demonstrable success.

30 (b) Should receive additional state assistance to
31 enable the organizations to enhance the ability of the

1 organizations to provide the training programs in communities
2 with large populations of welfare recipients and enable the
3 organizations to provide the training programs to additional
4 welfare recipients.

5 Section 3. Definitions.--For purposes of this act:

6 (1) "Department" means the Department of Labor and
7 Employment Security.

8 (2) "Welfare recipient" means an individual receiving
9 assistance under a state program funded under part A of title
10 IV of the Social Security Act, 42 U.S.C. 601 et seq.

11 (3) "Welfare transition program" means a vocational
12 training program conducted by or at the direction of a county
13 as part of a state program described in subsection (2).

14 Section 4. Grants to counties.--

15 (1) GRANTS.--

16 (a) The department may make grants to counties to
17 enable the counties to assist community-based organizations in
18 implementing enhanced prevocational training programs for
19 eligible individuals.

20 (b) The department shall make the grants for periods
21 of 1 year.

22 (2) COUNTY PLANS.--To be eligible to receive a grant
23 under this section, a county shall submit an application to
24 the department at such time, in such manner, and containing
25 such information as the department may require. At a minimum,
26 the application shall contain:

27 (a) A county plan describing the prevocational
28 training programs to be carried out in the county with funds
29 made available through the grant.

30 (b) In particular, information describing the manner
31 in which the county will ensure that an appropriate

1 community-based organization in the county will carry out a
2 prevocational training program for incarcerated persons
3 described in section 5(2)(b)2., in accordance with section
4 5(2)(c)2.

5 (3) AWARD OF GRANTS.--In awarding grants under this
6 section, the department shall take into consideration the
7 needs of economically distressed urban and rural areas in the
8 counties, as determined by the department.

9 Section 5. Assistance to community-based
10 organizations.--

11 (1) ASSISTANCE.--

12 (a) A county that receives a grant under section 4
13 shall use the funds made available through the grant to
14 provide financial assistance to community-based organizations,
15 to enable the organizations to implement the prevocational
16 training programs referred to in section 4.

17 (b) The county shall make the assistance for periods
18 of 1 year.

19 (2) USE OF FUNDS.--

20 (a) A community-based organization that receives
21 financial assistance under this section shall use the
22 assistance to implement a prevocational training program,
23 through which the organization shall provide prevocational
24 training and placement services to eligible individuals.

25 (b) To be eligible to receive services through a
26 prevocational training program under this act, an individual
27 shall:

28 1. Be a welfare recipient who:

29 a. Is enrolled in a welfare transition program; or

30 b. Is eligible to be enrolled in, but has not

31 participated in, a welfare transition program; or

1 2. Be a person who is incarcerated in a state or local
2 prison, and will be released from the prison within a
3 reasonable period, as defined by rule by the department.

4 (c)1. An organization selected by a county to
5 implement a prevocational training program for eligible
6 individuals described in subparagraph (b)1. shall:

7 a. Provide prevocational training, through job
8 training centers, designed to:

9 (I) As quickly as practicable, enable the individuals
10 to overcome the effects of inadequate educational preparation
11 and unfavorable environmental and cultural factors, in order
12 to prepare the individuals for employment.

13 (II) Improve the job readiness of the individuals.

14 (III) Prepare the individuals psychologically and
15 attitudinally for employment.

16 (IV) Enable the individuals to develop: learning
17 skills; communication and computational skills; punctuality,
18 health and personal maintenance skills; job seeking skills,
19 including interviewing skills; basic literacy; skills required
20 for receipt of a secondary school diploma or its equivalent;
21 professionalism; and responsiveness for authority.

22 b. On completion of the prevocational training, place
23 the individuals in:

24 (I) Permanent unsubsidized employment; or

25 (II) Skill training centers that provide superior
26 skill training for positions that are quickly obtainable and,
27 on completion of the skill training, in permanent unsubsidized
28 employment.

29 2. An organization selected by a county to implement a
30 prevocational training program for eligible individuals
31 described in subparagraph (b)2. shall provide the

1 prevocational training described in sub-subparagraph 1.a. in
2 the state or local prison involved and provide the placement
3 services described in sub-sub-subparagraph 1.b.(II).

4 (d) The organization shall provide not less than 2
5 weeks and not more than 3 months of prevocational training to
6 an eligible individual through the program. The organization
7 shall not provide more than \$1200 in services under the
8 program to an eligible individual.

9 (e) No organization may charge a fee to an eligible
10 individual for services under the program if the individual is
11 a citizen or resident alien.

12 (f) A community-based organization providing placement
13 services under this subsection shall coordinate the services
14 with the efforts of local private sector businesses to create
15 jobs and employment opportunities.

16 (3) APPLICATIONS.--To be eligible to receive financial
17 assistance under this section, a community-based organization
18 shall submit an application to the county at such time, in
19 such manner, and containing such information as the department
20 may require.

21 Section 6. Monitoring.--

22 (1) The department shall monitor the effectiveness of
23 programs carried out under this act by collecting information
24 on:

25 (a) The percentage of program participants who are
26 placed in employment after participation in the program.

27 (b) The percentage of the participants who are
28 retained in employment after participation in the program.

29 (c) The economic impact of the employment of the
30 participants.

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