

By the Council for Lifelong Learning and Representatives
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1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to education and training
3 opportunities for state employees; amending s.
4 110.1099, F.S.; authorizing certain state
5 employees to enroll in tuition-free courses on
6 a space-available basis; providing a definition
7 for "work-related courses"; providing for
8 legislative and State Court System employees to
9 participate; clarifying language and deleting
10 obsolete provisions; providing an effective
11 date.
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13 WHEREAS, space-available tuition waivers have been
14 offered to Florida's state employees as an important benefit
15 to allow productive employees an opportunity to enhance their
16 education, and
17 WHEREAS, valued and valuable employees, and potential
18 employees, have always considered space-available tuition
19 waivers to be of tremendous benefit, and
20 WHEREAS, one of the most effective methods for
21 accomplishing tasks more efficiently is to provide access to
22 education and training, and
23 WHEREAS, with fewer employees handling more tasks,
24 education and training provide avenues to meet these
25 challenges, enhance performance, and reward outstanding
26 productivity, and
27 WHEREAS, the results of this benefit will be a more
28 educated, well-rounded, productive, driven, appreciative, and
29 efficient workforce, NOW, THEREFORE,
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31 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

1 Section 1. Section 110.1099, Florida Statutes, is
2 amended to read:

3 110.1099 Education and training opportunities for
4 state employees.--

5 (1)(a) Education and training are an integral
6 component in improving the delivery of services to the public.
7 Recognizing that the application of productivity-enhancing
8 technology and practice demands continuous educational and
9 training opportunities, a state employee may be authorized to
10 receive a voucher or grant, for matriculation fees, to attend
11 work-related courses at public community colleges, public
12 technical centers, or public universities. ~~Student credit
13 hours generated by state employee fee waivers shall be
14 fundable credit hours.~~The department may implement the
15 provisions of this paragraph ~~section~~ from funds appropriated
16 to the department for this purpose. In the event insufficient
17 funds are appropriated to the department, each state agency
18 may supplement these funds to support the training and
19 education needs of its employees from funds appropriated to
20 the agency.

21 (b) For purposes of this section, "work-related
22 courses" are defined as coursework including coursework that
23 leads to the award of a degree that is related to improving
24 the knowledge or skills needed by an employee to continue
25 employment for the State of Florida; to addressing staffing
26 needs due to turnover within the agency's workforce and
27 difficulty in attracting qualified applicants; or to improving
28 the quality and delivery of programs and services to the
29 public.~~For the 2001-2002 fiscal year only and notwithstanding~~
30 ~~the provisions of paragraph (a), state employees may not be~~
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1 ~~authorized to receive fundable tuition waivers on a~~
2 ~~space-available basis. This paragraph expires July 1, 2002.~~

3 (c) A non-State-University-System state employee who
4 is academically eligible for admission may enroll for up to 6
5 credit hours per term to attend tuition-free work-related
6 courses on a space-available basis at a public community
7 college or public university subject to agency head approval.
8 The department shall certify that all requests for tuition
9 waivers are for work-related courses. Employees of the
10 Legislature and the State Court System are eligible for the
11 benefit provided in this paragraph.

12 (2) The department, in conjunction with the agencies,
13 shall request that public universities provide evening and
14 weekend programs for state employees. When evening and weekend
15 training and educational programs are not available, an
16 employee may be authorized to take paid time off during his or
17 her regular working hours for training and career development,
18 as provided in s. 110.105(1), if such training benefits the
19 employer as determined by that employee's agency head.

20 (3) An employee who exhibits superior aptitude and
21 performance may be authorized by that employee's agency head
22 to take a paid educational leave of absence for up to 1
23 academic year at a time, for specific approved work-related
24 education and training. That employee must enter into a
25 contract to return to state employment for a period of time
26 equal to the length of the leave of absence or refund salary
27 and benefits paid during his or her educational leave of
28 absence.

29 (4) As a precondition to approving an employee's
30 training request, an agency, the legislative branch, or the
31 judicial branch may require an employee to enter into an

1 agreement that requires the employee to reimburse the agency,
2 the legislative branch, or the judicial branch for the
3 registration fee or similar expense for any education training
4 or training series when the cumulative cost of the fee or
5 similar expense exceeds \$1,000 if the employee voluntarily
6 terminates employment or is discharged for cause from the
7 agency, the legislative branch, or the judicial branch within
8 a specified period of time not to exceed 4 years after the
9 conclusion of the training. This subsection does not apply to
10 any training program that an agency, the legislative branch,
11 or the judicial branch requires an employee to attend. ~~An~~
12 ~~agency or the judicial branch may pay the outstanding balance~~
13 ~~then due and owing on behalf of a state employee under this~~
14 ~~subsection in connection with recruitment and hiring of such~~
15 ~~state employee.~~

16 (5) The Department of Management Services, in
17 consultation with the agencies and, to the extent applicable,
18 with Florida's public community colleges, public technical
19 centers, and public universities, shall adopt rules to
20 administer this section.

21 Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2002.
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