

ENROLLED
CS/HB 843

2008 Legislature

1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to the Family Readiness Program; amending
3 s. 250.5206, F.S.; expanding purpose, eligibility, and
4 annual report provisions of the Family Readiness Program
5 within the Department of Military Affairs; providing an
6 effective date.

7
8 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

9
10 Section 1. Section 250.5206, Florida Statutes, is amended
11 to read:

12 250.5206 Family Readiness Program.--The Department of
13 Military Affairs shall establish the ~~a state~~ Family Readiness
14 Program headed by a program director and based on the United
15 States Department of Defense National Guard and Reserve Family
16 Readiness Strategic Plan 2004-2005 initiative.

17 (1) PROGRAM PURPOSE.--The purpose of the program is ~~shall~~
18 ~~be~~ to provide need-based financial assistance to eligible
19 ~~families of~~ servicemembers of the Florida National Guard and
20 United States Reserve Forces, including the Coast Guard
21 Reserves, who are on active duty serving in the Global War on
22 Terrorism and who are federally deployed or participating in
23 state operations for homeland defense, and eligible families of
24 such servicemembers.

25 (2) FUNDING.--Implementation of the program is subject to
26 appropriations expressly provided for this purpose.

27 (3) ELIGIBLE SERVICES.--Program funds may be used in
28 emergency situations to purchase critically needed services,

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29 including, but not limited to, reasonable living expenses,
30 housing, vehicles, equipment or renovations necessary to meet
31 disability needs, and health care.

32 (4) ELIGIBILITY.--

33 (a) The following persons are eligible to receive
34 financial assistance from the Family Readiness Program:

35 1. Florida residents who are members of the Florida
36 National Guard and United States Reserve Forces, including the
37 Coast Guard Reserves, who are on active duty serving in the
38 Global War on Terrorism and who are federally deployed or
39 participating in state operations for homeland defense; and

40 2. Florida residents who are designated as beneficiaries
41 on the United States Department of Defense Form 93, or who are
42 otherwise dependents, of a servicemember eligible under
43 subparagraph 1. and who are family members of such
44 servicemember.

45 (b) An eligible person may request financial assistance
46 from the Family Readiness Program for 120 days following
47 termination of the eligible servicemember's military orders for
48 qualifying service and return to home of record. Eligible
49 ~~recipients shall include persons designated as beneficiaries on~~
50 ~~the United States Department of Defense Form 93, or who are~~
51 ~~otherwise dependents of eligible servicemembers, and who are~~
52 ~~residents of the State of Florida. The period of eligibility to~~
53 ~~request assistance from the fund continues for 120 days~~
54 ~~following termination of the service member's military orders~~
55 ~~for qualifying service and return to home of record.~~

56 (5) REQUESTS FOR ASSISTANCE; REVIEW; AWARDS.--Requests for

ENROLLED

CS/HB 843

2008 Legislature

57 assistance shall be validated and assessed at the local level by
58 a federal Family Center Support Specialist stationed at a state
59 armory or at a reserve facility by a designated official.
60 Recommendations subsequent to assessment and validation shall be
61 forwarded to the program director, who shall review the
62 recommendations for eligibility, appropriateness, and
63 sufficiency of documentation. The Adjutant General or his or her
64 designee shall receive the recommendations from the program
65 director and is authorized to award funds pursuant to
66 subsections (3) and (4).

67 (6) AUDITS.--The inspector general of the department shall
68 conduct a semiannual review and an annual audit of the program.

69 (7) ANNUAL REPORT.-- The department shall maintain
70 sufficient data to provide an annual report to the Governor and
71 the Legislature on the servicemembers and families served under
72 the program, the types of services provided, and the allocation
73 of funds spent.

74 (8) RULES.--The department is authorized to adopt rules
75 necessary to implement this program, including procedures for
76 applying for assistance, qualifying services, and criteria for
77 eligibility.

78 Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2008.