

By Senator Margolis

35-00728-11

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1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to education and training
3 opportunities for public employees; amending s.
4 110.1099, F.S.; providing certain educational
5 opportunities for specified local government
6 employees; amending s. 1009.265, F.S.; authorizing the
7 use of fee waivers for specified local government
8 employees; providing an effective date.
9

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

11
12 Section 1. Section 110.1099, Florida Statutes, is amended
13 to read:

14 110.1099 Education and training opportunities for state and
15 local government employees.-

16 (1) Education and training are an integral component in
17 improving the delivery of services to the public. Recognizing
18 that the application of productivity-enhancing technology and
19 practice demands continuous educational and training
20 opportunities, a state or local government employee may be
21 authorized, if space is available, to receive a voucher or
22 grant, for matriculation fees, to attend work-related courses at
23 public community colleges, public career centers, or public
24 universities. The department may implement ~~the provisions of~~
25 this section from funds appropriated to the department for this
26 purpose. If ~~In the event~~ insufficient funds are appropriated to
27 the department, each state or local government agency may
28 supplement these funds to support the training and education
29 needs of its employees from funds appropriated to the agency.

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30 (2) The department, in conjunction with the state and local
31 government agencies, shall request that public universities
32 provide evening and weekend programs for state and local
33 government employees. When evening and weekend training and
34 educational programs are not available, a state or local
35 government ~~an~~ employee may be authorized to take paid time off
36 during his or her regular working hours for training and career
37 development, ~~as provided in s. 110.105(1)~~, if such training
38 benefits the employer as determined by that employee's agency
39 head.

40 (3) A state or local government ~~An~~ employee who exhibits
41 superior aptitude and performance may be authorized by that
42 employee's agency head to take a paid educational leave of
43 absence for up to 1 academic year at a time, for specific
44 approved work-related education and training. That employee must
45 enter into a contract to return to state or local government
46 employment for a period of time equal to the length of the leave
47 of absence or refund salary and benefits paid during his or her
48 educational leave of absence.

49 (4) As a precondition to approving a state or local
50 government ~~an~~ employee's training request, the state or local
51 government ~~an~~ agency ~~or the judicial branch~~ may require the ~~an~~
52 employee to enter into an agreement that requires the employee
53 to reimburse the agency ~~or judicial branch~~ for the registration
54 fee or similar expense for any training or training series when
55 the cost of the fee or similar expense exceeds \$1,000 if the
56 employee voluntarily terminates employment or is discharged for
57 cause from the agency ~~or judicial branch~~ within a specified
58 period of time not to exceed 4 years after the conclusion of the

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59 training. This subsection does not apply to any training program
60 that a state or local government ~~an agency or the judicial~~
61 ~~branch~~ requires an employee to attend. A state or local
62 government ~~An agency or the judicial branch~~ may pay the
63 outstanding balance then due and owing on behalf of a state or
64 local government employee under this subsection in connection
65 with the recruitment and hiring of that ~~such~~ state employee.

66 (5) As used in this section, the term:

67 (a) "State employee" means an employee of the executive or
68 judicial branch of state government, except for a person
69 employed by a state university.

70 (b) "Local government employee" means a full-time employee
71 of a county or municipality who is a law enforcement officer as
72 defined in s. 943.10(1), a correctional officer as defined in s.
73 943.10(2), a firefighter as defined in s. 633.30(1), or an
74 emergency medical technician or paramedic as defined in s.
75 401.23.

76 (6)~~(5)~~ The Department of Management Services, in
77 consultation with the state and local government agencies and,
78 to the extent applicable, with Florida's public community
79 colleges, public career centers, and public universities, shall
80 adopt rules to administer this section.

81 Section 2. Section 1009.265, Florida Statutes, is amended
82 to read:

83 1009.265 ~~State employee~~ Fee waivers.—

84 (1) As a benefit to the employers ~~employer~~ and employees of
85 ~~the state and local government~~, subject to approval by an
86 employee's agency head or the equivalent, each state university
87 and community college shall waive tuition and fees for state and

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88 local government employees to enroll for up to 6 credit hours of
89 courses per term only if space is available ~~on a space-available~~
90 ~~basis.~~

91 (2) The Chief Financial Officer, in cooperation with the
92 community colleges and state universities, shall identify and
93 implement ways to ease the administrative burden to community
94 colleges and state universities, including, but not limited to,
95 providing easier access to verify state and local government
96 employment.

97 (3) From funds appropriated by the Legislature for
98 administrative costs to implement this section, community
99 colleges and state universities shall be reimbursed on a pro
100 rata basis according to the cost assessment data developed by
101 the Department of Education.

102 (4) The Auditor General shall include a review of the cost
103 assessment data in conjunction with his or her audit
104 responsibilities for community colleges, state universities, and
105 the Department of Education.

106 (5) As used in ~~For purposes of~~ this section, the term:

107 (a) "State employee" ~~means an employee~~ ~~employees of the~~
108 ~~state include employees~~ of the executive, legislative, or ~~and~~
109 judicial branch ~~branches~~ of state government, except for a
110 person ~~persons~~ employed by a state university.

111 (b) "Local government employee" means a full-time employee
112 of a county or municipality who is a law enforcement officer as
113 defined in s. 943.10(1), a correctional officer as defined in s.
114 943.10(2), a firefighter as defined in s. 633.30(1), or an
115 emergency medical technician or paramedic as defined in s.
116 401.23.

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Section 3. This act shall take effect July 1, 2011.