

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
 15 and 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 to receive a voucher or grant, for matriculation
 22 fees, to attend work-related courses at public community
 23 colleges, public career centers, or public universities. The
 24 department may implement ~~the provisions of~~ this section from
 25 funds appropriated to the department for this purpose. If ~~In the~~
 26 ~~event~~ insufficient funds are appropriated to the department,
 27 each state or local government agency may supplement these funds
 28 to support the training and education needs of its employees

29 | from funds appropriated to the agency.

30 | (2) The department, in conjunction with the state and
31 | local government agencies, shall request that public
32 | universities provide evening and weekend programs for state and
33 | local government employees. When evening and weekend training
34 | and 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
 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

85 of ~~the~~ state and local government, subject to approval by an
 86 employee's agency head or the equivalent, each state university
 87 and Florida College System institution shall waive tuition and
 88 fees for state and local government employees to enroll for up
 89 to 6 credit hours of courses per term on a space-available
 90 basis.

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

97 (3) From funds appropriated by the Legislature for
 98 administrative costs to implement this section, Florida College
 99 System institutions and state universities shall be reimbursed
 100 on a pro rata basis according to the cost assessment data
 101 developed by 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 Florida College System institutions, state
 105 universities, and 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

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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.

117 | Section 3. This act shall take effect July 1, 2012.