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LEGISLATIVE ACTION

Senate

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House

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Floor: 11/AD/2R

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04/25/2014 11:41 AM

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Senator Sobel moved the following:

Senate Amendment (with title amendment)

Delete lines 2171 - 2262

and insert:

(1) CHILD PROTECTIVE INVESTIGATION PROFESSIONAL STAFF REQUIREMENTS.-The department is responsible for recruitment of qualified professional staff to serve as child protective investigators and child protective investigation supervisors. The department shall make every effort to recruit and hire persons qualified by their education and experience to perform social work functions. The department's efforts shall be guided



12 by the goal that by July 1, 2019, at least half of all child
13 protective investigators and supervisors will have a bachelor's
14 degree or a master's degree in social work from a college or
15 university social work program accredited by the Council on
16 Social Work Education. The department, in collaboration with the
17 lead agencies, subcontracted provider organizations, the Florida
18 Institute for Child Welfare created pursuant to s. 1004.615, and
19 other partners in the child welfare system, shall develop a
20 protocol for screening candidates for child protective positions
21 which reflects the preferences specified in paragraphs (a)-(f).
22 The following persons shall be given preference in the
23 recruitment of qualified professional staff, but the preferences
24 serve only as guidance and do not limit the department's
25 discretion to select the best available candidates:

26 (a) Individuals with baccalaureate degrees in social work
27 and child protective investigation supervisors with master's
28 degrees in social work from a college or university social work
29 program accredited by the Council on Social Work Education.

30 (b) Individuals with baccalaureate or master's degrees in
31 psychology, sociology, counseling, special education, education,
32 human development, child development, family development,
33 marriage and family therapy, and nursing.

34 (c) Individuals with baccalaureate degrees who have a
35 combination of directly relevant work and volunteer experience,
36 preferably in a public service field related to children's
37 services, demonstrating critical thinking skills, formal
38 assessment processes, communication skills, problem solving, and
39 empathy; a commitment to helping children and families; a
40 capacity to work as part of a team; an interest in continuous



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41 development of skills and knowledge; and personal strength and
42 resilience to manage competing demands and handle workplace
43 stresses.

44 (2) SPECIALIZED TRAINING.—All child protective
45 investigators and child protective investigation supervisors
46 employed by the department or a sheriff's office must complete
47 specialized training either focused on serving a specific
48 population, including, but not limited to, medically fragile
49 children, sexually exploited children, children under 3 years of
50 age, or families with a history of domestic violence, mental
51 illness, or substance abuse, or focused on performing certain
52 aspects of child protection practice, including, but not limited
53 to, investigation techniques and analysis of family dynamics.
54 The specialized training may be used to fulfill continuing
55 education requirements under s. 402.40(3)(e). Individuals hired
56 before July 1, 2014, shall complete the specialized training by
57 June 30, 2016, and individuals hired on or after July 1, 2014,
58 shall complete the specialized training within 2 years after
59 hire. An individual may receive specialized training in multiple
60 areas.

61 (3) REPORT.—By each October 1, the department shall submit
62 a report on the educational qualifications, turnover, and
63 working conditions of the child protective investigators and
64 supervisors to the Governor, the President of the Senate, and
65 the Speaker of the House of Representatives.

66 (4) ATTORNEYS EMPLOYED BY THE DEPARTMENT TO HANDLE CHILD
67 WELFARE CASES.—Attorneys hired on or after July 1, 2014, whose
68 primary responsibility is representing the department in child
69 welfare cases shall, within the first 6 months of employment,



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70 receive training in:

71 (a) The dependency court process, including the attorney's
72 role in preparing and reviewing documents prepared for
73 dependency court for accuracy and completeness;

74 (b) Preparing and presenting child welfare cases, including
75 at least 1 week shadowing an experienced children's legal
76 services attorney preparing and presenting cases;

77 (c) Safety assessment, safety decisionmaking tools, and
78 safety plans;

79 (d) Developing information presented by investigators and
80 case managers to support decisionmaking in the best interest of
81 children; and

82 (e) The experiences and techniques of case managers and
83 investigators, including shadowing an experienced child
84 protective investigator and an experienced case manager for at
85 least 8 hours.

86 Section 24. Section 402.403, Florida Statutes, is created
87 to read:

88 402.403 Child Protection and Child Welfare Personnel
89 Tuition Exemption Program.—

90 (1) There is established within the department the Child
91 Protection and Child Welfare Personnel Tuition Exemption Program
92 for the purpose of recruiting and retaining high-performing
93 individuals who are employed as child protection and child
94 welfare personnel. For purposes of this section, "child
95 protection and child welfare personnel" includes child
96 protective investigators and child protective investigation
97 supervisors employed by the department and case managers and
98 case manager supervisors employed by a community-based care lead



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99 agency or a subcontractor of a community-based care lead agency
100 who do not possess a master's degree in social work.

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102 ===== T I T L E A M E N D M E N T =====

103 And the title is amended as follows:

104 Delete lines 99 - 102

105 and insert:

106 specializations; creating s. 402.402, F.S.; providing
107 preferences for education and work experience for
108 child protection and child welfare personnel;
109 requiring specialized training for specified
110 individuals; requiring a report; providing training