

CS/HB 1083

2015

1 A bill to be entitled  
2 An act relating to employment opportunities for  
3 persons with disabilities; creating s. 445.08, F.S.;  
4 providing legislative findings and purpose; providing  
5 definitions; requiring specified state agencies and  
6 organizations to develop and implement an interagency  
7 cooperative agreement for certain purposes; providing  
8 requirements; providing an effective date.  
9

10 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:  
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12 Section 1. Section 445.08, Florida Statutes, is created to  
13 read:

14 445.08 Employment opportunities for persons with  
15 disabilities; interagency cooperative agreements.-

16 (1) The Legislature finds that persons with disabilities  
17 are confronted by unique employment barriers that inhibit their  
18 opportunities in the labor force and that employment of such  
19 persons is the most direct and cost-effective means to help them  
20 achieve independence and self-fulfillment. Therefore, the  
21 Legislature finds that employment for persons with disabilities  
22 should be prioritized and a means to support such employment  
23 should be encouraged. The purpose of this section is to require  
24 a collaborative effort by state agencies and organizations to  
25 determine the barriers to achieving better employment outcomes  
26 for persons with disabilities and to act collaboratively to

27 eliminate such barriers.

28 (2) For purposes of this section, the term:

29 (a) "Employment" means a person with disabilities is  
 30 performing an activity or service in return for minimum wage or  
 31 greater paid by an employer, is fully integrated in the  
 32 community workforce, and is working towards maximum self-  
 33 sufficiency. The term includes integrated employment designed to  
 34 provide jobs for a persons with disabilities in workplace  
 35 settings where the majority of persons employed are not persons  
 36 with disabilities, supported employment as defined in s.  
 37 393.063(38), customized employment designed to personalize the  
 38 employment relationship between a person with disabilities and  
 39 his or her employer in a way that meets both of their needs, and  
 40 suitable gainful employment as defined in s. 440.491(1)(g).

41 (b) "Employment outcome" has the same meaning as in s.  
 42 413.20(9).

43 (3)(a) The following state agencies and organizations  
 44 shall develop and implement an interagency cooperative agreement  
 45 to provide the framework, including their roles and  
 46 responsibilities, for a long-term commitment to improving  
 47 employment outcomes for persons with disabilities in this state:

48 1. The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation of the  
 49 Department of Education.

50 2. The Division of Blind Services of the Department of  
 51 Education.

52 3. The Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student

53 Services of the Department of Education.

54 4. The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Program of the  
 55 Department of Children and Families.

56 5. The Agency for Persons with Disabilities.

57 6. The Department of Economic Opportunity.

58 7. Workforce Florida, Inc.

59 8. The Florida Developmental Disabilities Council.

60 9. The Florida Association of Rehabilitation Facilities,  
 61 Inc.

62 (b) The interagency cooperative agreement shall:

63 1. Establish a commitment among the leadership of each  
 64 agency and organization to maximize resources and to coordinate  
 65 with other agencies and organizations to improve employment  
 66 outcomes for persons with disabilities.

67 2. Develop strategic goals and benchmarks to assist each  
 68 agency and organization in implementing the agreement.

69 3. Identify financing and contracting methods that will  
 70 prioritize employment for persons with disabilities.

71 4. Identify how training opportunities may be better  
 72 utilized by employees of each agency and organization to ensure  
 73 effectiveness of supported employment services as defined in s.  
 74 413.20(23).

75 5. Ensure collaboration between each agency and  
 76 organization during the development of supported employment  
 77 services when persons with disabilities are served by multiple  
 78 agencies and organizations to achieve their employment goals.

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79           6. Promote the innovation of supported employment  
80 services.

81           7. Identify accountability measures to ensure  
82 sustainability of agreement initiatives.

83           Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2015.