

By Senator Steube

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1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to family self-sufficiency; amending
3 ss. 414.14 and 414.175, F.S.; authorizing changes to
4 public assistance policy and federal food assistance
5 waivers to conform to federal law and simplify
6 administration unless such changes increase income or
7 resource eligibility standards for the program;
8 creating s. 414.315, F.S.; requiring the Department of
9 Children and Families to impose a resource limit for
10 households receiving food assistance, subject to
11 federal approval; requiring legislative authorization
12 for expanding resource eligibility under certain
13 circumstances; providing applicability; creating s.
14 414.393, F.S.; requiring the department to implement
15 asset verification to verify eligibility for public
16 assistance; amending s. 445.004, F.S.; requiring
17 CareerSource Florida, Inc., to include certain data
18 relating to the performance outcomes of local
19 workforce development boards and associated pilot
20 programs in an annual report to the Governor and
21 Legislature; providing legislative findings; providing
22 definitions; requiring CareerSource Florida, Inc., to
23 contract with a vendor to develop a pilot program to
24 increase employment among certain persons receiving
25 temporary cash assistance by a specified date;
26 providing criteria for selecting a vendor; providing
27 criteria for selecting local workforce boards to
28 conduct the pilot program; requiring CareerSource
29 Florida, Inc., to submit a report on the outcome of

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30 the pilot program to the Governor and Legislature by a
31 specified date; providing appropriations; providing an
32 effective date.
33

34 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:
35

36 Section 1. Section 414.14, Florida Statutes, is amended to
37 read:

38 414.14 Public assistance policy simplification.—To the
39 extent possible, the department shall align the requirements for
40 eligibility under this chapter with the food assistance program
41 and medical assistance eligibility policies and procedures to
42 simplify the budgeting process and reduce errors. If the
43 department determines that s. 414.075, relating to resources, or
44 s. 414.085, relating to income, is inconsistent with federal law
45 governing the food assistance program or medical assistance, and
46 that conformance to federal law would simplify administration of
47 the Temporary Cash Assistance Program or reduce errors without
48 materially increasing the cost of the program to the state, the
49 secretary of the department may propose a change in the resource
50 or income requirements of the program by rule, providing that
51 such change does not increase income or resource eligibility
52 standards for the program.

53 Section 2. Subsection (2) of section 414.175, Florida
54 Statutes, is amended to read:

55 414.175 Review of existing waivers.—

56 (2) The department shall review federal law, including
57 revisions to federal food assistance program requirements. If
58 the department determines that federal food assistance waivers

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59 will further the goals of this chapter, including simplification
60 of program policies or program administration, the department
61 may obtain waivers if this can be accomplished within available
62 resources, providing that such waiver does not increase income
63 or resource eligibility standards for the program.

64 Section 3. Section 414.315, Florida Statutes, is created to
65 read:

66 414.315 Food assistance program resource eligibility
67 standards.—

68 (1) Subject to federal approval, the department shall
69 impose a resource limit of \$5,000 for all households that
70 receive food assistance.

71 (2) Unless expressly required by federal law, the
72 department shall obtain specific authorization from the
73 Legislature before seeking, applying for, accepting, or renewing
74 any waiver for food assistance which expands resource
75 eligibility beyond the limits established in subsection (1).

76 (3) This section does not apply to those households that
77 are federally required to be categorically eligible for food
78 assistance under 7 C.F.R. s. 273.2.

79 Section 4. Section 414.393, Florida Statutes, is created to
80 read:

81 414.393 Applicant asset verification.—Upon federal approval
82 to implement the resource eligibility standards in s.
83 414.315(1), the department shall implement asset verification
84 for the purpose of determining eligibility for the food
85 assistance programs.

86 Section 5. Paragraphs (c) and (d) are added to subsection
87 (7) of section 445.004, Florida Statutes, and subsection (13) is

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88 added to that section, to read:

89 445.004 CareerSource Florida, Inc.; creation; purpose;
90 membership; duties and powers.—

91 (7) By December 1 of each year, CareerSource Florida, Inc.,
92 shall submit to the Governor, the President of the Senate, the
93 Speaker of the House of Representatives, the Senate Minority
94 Leader, and the House Minority Leader a complete and detailed
95 annual report setting forth:

96 (c) For each local workforce development board, participant
97 statistics, and employment outcomes, by program, for individuals
98 subject to mandatory work requirements due to receipt of
99 temporary cash assistance or food assistance under chapter 414,
100 including:

101 1. Individuals served.

102 2. Services received.

103 3. Activities in which individuals participated.

104 4. Types of employment secured.

105 5. Individuals securing employment but remaining in each
106 program.

107 6. Individuals exiting programs due to employment.

108 7. Employment status at 3 months, 6 months, and 12 months
109 after individuals exit the program, for the immediate past 3
110 years.

111 (d) Interim outcomes of any pilot program implemented by a
112 local workforce development board selected pursuant to
113 subsection (13).

114 (13) The Legislature finds that some mandatory work
115 registrants in the Temporary Cash Assistance Program face
116 significant barriers to employment, which must be addressed with

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117 services beyond those offered under a traditional workforce
118 program. To address this problem, CareerSource Florida, Inc., in
119 consultation with the department, shall implement a pilot
120 program to increase unsubsidized employment and earned income
121 among such registrants while reducing their reliance on public
122 assistance. The pilot program may not serve registrants who are
123 assessed as work ready or who do not face significant barriers
124 to employment.

125 (a) For the purposes of this subsection, "significant
126 barriers to employment" means at least one critical barrier or
127 three or more stand-alone barriers.

128 1. "Critical barriers" include substance abuse, mental
129 illness, physical or mental disability, domestic violence,
130 homelessness, and a criminal record affecting employment.

131 2. "Stand-alone barriers" include significant job skill
132 deficiencies; significant soft-skill deficiencies, such as
133 communication, time management, and problem-solving skills;
134 child welfare system involvement; and a negative or nonexistent
135 employment history.

136 (b) CareerSource Florida, Inc., in consultation with the
137 department, shall contract with a vendor by October 31, 2018, to
138 develop the pilot program according to the following guidelines:

139 1. The vendor must have expertise in the design and
140 development of workforce programs.

141 2. The program design shall be based on the best available
142 research and shall include, at a minimum:

143 a. A comprehensive assessment to identify significant
144 barriers to employment, which shall be updated on an ongoing
145 basis. Such an assessment may collect information about the

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146 registrant's educational attainment, level of literacy and
147 numeracy, basic skills, work experience, receipt of public
148 benefits, and other indicators of significant barriers.

149 b. An individual responsibility plan based on the
150 assessment, which includes a comprehensive service strategy to
151 address barriers to employment, whether sequentially or
152 simultaneously.

153 c. Intensive case management, including, but not limited
154 to, ongoing one-on-one guidance, motivation, and support for
155 registrants by assessing their needs and barriers, identifying
156 resources, and advising on career and training opportunities.
157 Intensive case management also includes collaborative work with
158 community partners to provide comprehensive services to
159 registrants which are designed to address their barriers and
160 achieve program goals.

161 3. The program may include other elements to address
162 significant barriers, such as a combination of job search
163 assistance, basic skills training, vocational education,
164 strategies that connect registrants to relevant career
165 opportunities by supporting their efforts to obtain educational
166 certificates or industry certification, and transitional
167 employment subsidies to achieve the desired improvements in
168 employment and earnings.

169 (c) CareerSource Florida, Inc., in consultation with the
170 department, shall select at least three local workforce boards
171 to conduct the pilot program based on a board's:

172 1. Commitment to effectively serve the target population.
173 2. Established record of innovation in the delivery of
174 workforce services, preferably to the target population.

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175 3. Existing strong community partnerships, including
176 partnerships with nonprofit entities and community colleges, to
177 provide workforce services.

178 4. Commitment to implement the program for the target
179 population while continuing to serve other Temporary Cash
180 Assistance Program mandatory work registrants.

181 (d) The local workforce boards selected for the pilot
182 program shall contract with vendors to implement the program.
183 The local workforce board shall give preference to vendors with
184 a demonstrated commitment to innovation in providing workforce
185 services or in serving populations with significant barriers.

186 (e) CareerSource Florida, Inc., shall submit a report to
187 the Governor, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of
188 the House of Representatives by December 15, 2021. The report
189 shall include the program design; participating entities;
190 participant demographics, including, but not limited to,
191 barriers identified; and the case management processes,
192 assessment processes, and services provided to participants, as
193 compared to those available under the local workforce board's
194 traditional workforce program. The report shall also include an
195 analysis of the effect of the program on participants' barriers
196 to employment, employment outcomes, household income, reliance
197 on public assistance, and other measures of household well-being
198 and self-sufficiency.

199 Section 6. For fiscal year 2018-2019, the sum of \$3,342,525
200 in nonrecurring funds is appropriated from the General Revenue
201 Fund to the Department of Children and Families to implement
202 asset verification for the food assistance program pursuant to
203 s. 414.393, Florida Statutes, as created by this act, and the

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204 sum of \$300,000 in nonrecurring funds is appropriated from the
205 General Revenue Fund to the Department of Children and Families
206 to perform the technology modifications necessary to implement
207 asset verification.

208 Section 7. For fiscal year 2018-2019, the sum of \$500,000
209 in nonrecurring funds is appropriated from the General Revenue
210 Fund to the Department of Economic Opportunity for distribution
211 to CareerSource Florida, Inc., to contract for development of a
212 program to serve temporary cash assistance work registrants with
213 significant barriers to employment pursuant to this act,
214 including, but not limited to, providing the initial program
215 design, evaluation design, training curricula development and
216 delivery of training, implementation oversight, development of
217 informational materials for participants, and technical
218 assistance; and for distribution to selected local workforce
219 boards for startup expenses incurred by vendors implementing the
220 program, including, but not limited to, information technology
221 updates, program coordination, and staff training. Case
222 management and direct services for all temporary cash assistance
223 recipients shall be provided within current resources.

224 Section 8. This act shall take effect July 1, 2018.