

1 A bill to be entitled
 2 An act relating to missing persons with special needs;
 3 amending s. 937.041, F.S.; expanding a project for
 4 missing persons with special needs to all centers for
 5 autism and related disabilities at state universities;
 6 revising requirements for personal devices used in the
 7 project; providing an effective date.

8
 9 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

10
 11 Section 1. Section 937.041, Florida Statutes, is amended
 12 to read:

13 937.041 Missing persons with special needs pilot
 14 projects.—

15 (1)~~(a)~~ There is created a statewide pilot project ~~in~~
 16 ~~Alachua, Baker, Columbia, Hamilton, and Suwannee Counties,~~ to be
 17 known as "Project Leo," through a center for autism and related
 18 disabilities established under section 1004.55. Each center that
 19 opts to join the project shall distribute ~~to provide~~ personal
 20 devices to aid search-and-rescue efforts for persons with
 21 special needs in the case of elopement.

22 ~~(b) There is created an additional pilot project in Palm~~
 23 ~~Beach County to provide personal devices to aid search-and-~~
 24 ~~rescue efforts for persons with special needs in the case of~~
 25 ~~elopement.~~

26 ~~(c) There is created an additional pilot project in~~
27 ~~Hillsborough County to provide personal devices to aid search-~~
28 ~~and-rescue efforts for persons with special needs in the case of~~
29 ~~elopement.~~

30 (2)(a)1. Participants for the ~~pilot~~ project ~~specified in~~
31 ~~paragraph (1)(a)~~ shall be selected based on criteria developed
32 by the Center for Autism and Related Disabilities based on the
33 specific needs of each center's service area counties prescribed
34 under s. 1004.55 at the University of Florida.

35 ~~2. Participants for the pilot project specified in~~
36 ~~paragraph (1)(b) shall be selected based on criteria developed~~
37 ~~by the Center for Autism and Related Disabilities at Florida~~
38 ~~Atlantic University.~~

39 ~~3. Participants for the pilot project specified in~~
40 ~~paragraph (1)(c) shall be selected based on criteria developed~~
41 ~~by the Center for Autism and Related Disabilities at the~~
42 ~~University of South Florida.~~

43 (b) Criteria for participation in the project ~~pilot~~
44 ~~projects~~ must include, at a minimum, the person's risk of
45 elopement. The qualifying participants shall be selected on a
46 first-come, first-served basis by the respective centers to the
47 extent of available funding within their existing resources. The
48 ~~Each~~ project must be voluntary and free of charge to
49 participants.

50 (3) Under the ~~each~~ ~~pilot~~ project, personal devices to aid

51 search-and-rescue efforts ~~which are attachable to clothing or~~
52 ~~otherwise worn~~ shall be provided by the respective center to the
53 sheriff's offices of the participating counties. The devices
54 shall be distributed to project participants by the county
55 sheriff's offices in conjunction with the respective center. The
56 respective center shall fund any costs associated with
57 monitoring the devices.

58 ~~(4) Each center shall submit a preliminary report by~~
59 ~~December 1, 2016, and a final report by December 15, 2017, to~~
60 ~~the Governor, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of~~
61 ~~the House of Representatives describing the implementation and~~
62 ~~operation of its pilot project. At a minimum, each report must~~
63 ~~include the criteria used to select participants, the number of~~
64 ~~participants, the nature of the participants' special needs, the~~
65 ~~number of participants who elope, the amount of time taken to~~
66 ~~rescue such participants following elopement, and the outcome of~~
67 ~~any rescue attempts. Each final report shall also provide~~
68 ~~recommendations for modification or continued implementation of~~
69 ~~the project.~~

70 (4)(5) The ~~Each~~ project shall operate to the extent of
71 available funding within the respective center's existing
72 resources.

73 (5)(6) This section expires June 30, 2019 ~~2018~~.

74 Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2018.