

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 program
7 eligibility standards; creating s. 414.315, F.S.;
8 requiring the Department of Children and Families to
9 impose a resource limit for households receiving food
10 assistance, subject to federal approval; requiring
11 legislative authorization for expanding resource
12 eligibility under certain circumstances; providing
13 applicability; creating s. 414.393, F.S.; requiring
14 the department to implement asset verification to
15 verify eligibility for public assistance; amending s.
16 445.004, F.S.; requiring CareerSource Florida, Inc.,
17 to include certain data relating to the performance
18 outcomes of local workforce development boards and
19 associated pilot programs in an annual report to the
20 Governor and Legislature; providing legislative
21 findings; providing definitions; requiring
22 CareerSource Florida, Inc., to contract with a vendor
23 to develop a pilot program to increase employment
24 among certain persons receiving temporary cash
25 assistance by a specified date; providing criteria for

26 | selecting a vendor; providing criteria for selecting
27 | local workforce boards to conduct the pilot program;
28 | requiring CareerSource Florida, Inc., to submit a
29 | comprehensive report on the outcome of the pilot
30 | program to the Governor and Legislature by a specified
31 | date; providing appropriations; providing an effective
32 | date.
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34 | Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:
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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
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
65 to 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
80 to read:

81 414.393 Applicant asset verification.—Upon federal
82 approval 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
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,
92 Inc., shall submit to the Governor, the President of the Senate,
93 the 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,
97 participant statistics and employment outcomes, by program, for
98 individuals subject to mandatory work requirements due to
99 receipt of temporary cash assistance or food assistance under
100 chapter 414, 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
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
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. CareerSource Florida, Inc. shall ensure that the
153 pilot program refers victims of domestic violence to, and
154 consults with, the local certified domestic violence center to
155 ensure individual responsibility plans address safety issues and
156 do not place the victim at further risk of physical or emotional
157 abuse.

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

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

174 (c) CareerSource Florida, Inc., in consultation with the
175 department, shall select at least three local workforce boards

176 to conduct the pilot program based on a board's:

177 1. Commitment to effectively serve the target population.

178 2. Established record of innovation in the delivery of
179 workforce services, preferably to the target population.

180 3. Existing strong community partnerships, including
181 partnerships with nonprofit entities and community colleges, to
182 provide workforce services.

183 4. Commitment to implement the program for the target
184 population while continuing to serve other Temporary Cash
185 Assistance Program mandatory work registrants.

186 (d) The local workforce boards selected for the pilot
187 program shall contract with vendors to implement the program.

188 1. The local workforce board shall give preference to
189 vendors with a demonstrated commitment to innovation in
190 providing workforce services or in serving populations with
191 significant barriers.

192 2. The local workforce boards shall require vendors to
193 receive training from certified domestic violence centers,
194 substance abuse treatment providers, mental health treatment
195 providers, and other community partners with demonstrated
196 expertise with the critical barriers.

197 (e) CareerSource Florida, Inc., shall submit a report to
198 the Governor, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of
199 the House of Representatives by December 15, 2021. The report
200 shall include the program design; participating entities;

201 participant demographics, including, but not limited to,
202 barriers identified; and the case management processes,
203 assessment processes, and services provided to participants, as
204 compared to those available under the local workforce board's
205 traditional workforce program. The report shall also include an
206 analysis of the effect of the program on participants' barriers
207 to employment, employment outcomes, household income, reliance
208 on public assistance, and other measures of household well-being
209 and self-sufficiency.

210 Section 6. For fiscal year 2018-2019, the sum of
211 \$3,342,525 in nonrecurring funds is appropriated from the
212 General Revenue Fund to the Department of Children and Families
213 to implement asset verification for the food assistance program
214 pursuant to s. 414.393, Florida Statutes, as created by this
215 act, and the sum of \$300,000 in nonrecurring funds is
216 appropriated from the General Revenue Fund to the Department of
217 Children and Families to perform the technology modifications
218 necessary to implement asset verification.

219 Section 7. For fiscal year 2018-2019, the sum of \$500,000
220 in nonrecurring funds is appropriated from the General Revenue
221 Fund to the Department of Economic Opportunity for distribution
222 to CareerSource Florida, Inc., to contract for development of a
223 program to serve temporary cash assistance work registrants with
224 significant barriers to employment pursuant to this act,
225 including, but not limited to, providing the initial program

226 | design, evaluation design, training curricula development and
227 | delivery of training, implementation oversight, development of
228 | informational materials for participants, and technical
229 | assistance; and for distribution to selected local workforce
230 | boards for startup expenses incurred by vendors implementing the
231 | program, including, but not limited to, information technology
232 | updates, program coordination, and staff training. Case
233 | management and direct services for all temporary cash assistance
234 | recipients shall be provided within current resources.

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