



26 | authorizing lead agencies to provide intensive family  
 27 | reunification services that combine child welfare and  
 28 | mental health services to certain families; amending  
 29 | s. 409.996, F.S.; authorizing the department and  
 30 | certain lead agencies to create and implement a  
 31 | program to more effectively provide case management  
 32 | services to specified children; providing criteria for  
 33 | selecting judicial circuits for implementation of the  
 34 | program; specifying requirements of the program;  
 35 | requiring a report to the Legislature and Governor  
 36 | under specified conditions; creating s. 943.17297,  
 37 | F.S.; requiring the Criminal Justice Standards and  
 38 | Training Commission to incorporate training for  
 39 | specified purposes; requiring law enforcement officers  
 40 | to complete such training as part of either basic  
 41 | recruit training or continuing training or education  
 42 | by a specified date; providing an effective date.

44 | Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

46 | Section 1. This act may be cited as "Jordan's Law."

47 | Section 2. Section 25.385, Florida Statutes, is amended to  
 48 | read:

49 | 25.385 Standards for instruction of circuit and county  
 50 | court judges ~~in handling domestic violence cases.~~—

51 (1) The Florida Court Educational Council shall establish  
 52 standards for instruction of circuit and county court judges who  
 53 have responsibility for domestic violence cases, and the council  
 54 shall provide such instruction on a periodic and timely basis.

55 ~~(2) As used in this subsection, section:~~

56 ~~(a) the term "domestic violence" has the meaning set forth~~  
 57 ~~in s. 741.28.~~

58 ~~(b) "Family or household member" has the meaning set forth~~  
 59 ~~in s. 741.28.~~

60 (2) The Florida Court Educational Council shall establish  
 61 standards for instruction of circuit and county court judges who  
 62 have responsibility for dependency cases regarding the  
 63 recognition of and responses to head trauma and brain injury in  
 64 a child under 6 years of age. The council shall provide such  
 65 instruction on a periodic and timely basis.

66 Section 3. Section 39.0142, Florida Statutes, is created  
 67 to read:

68 39.0142 Notifying law enforcement officers of parent or  
 69 caregiver names.—The Department of Law Enforcement shall provide  
 70 information to a law enforcement officer stating whether a  
 71 person is a parent or caregiver who is currently the subject of  
 72 a child protective investigation for alleged child abuse,  
 73 abandonment, or neglect or is a parent or caregiver of a child  
 74 who has been allowed to return to or remain in the home under  
 75 judicial supervision after an adjudication of dependency. This

76 information shall be provided via a Florida Crime Information  
77 Center query into the department's child protection database.

78 (1) If a law enforcement officer has an interaction with a  
79 parent or caregiver as described in this section and the  
80 interaction results in the officer having concern about a  
81 child's health, safety, or well-being, the officer shall report  
82 relevant details of the interaction to the central abuse hotline  
83 immediately after the interaction even if the requirements of s.  
84 39.201, relating to a person having actual knowledge or  
85 suspicion of abuse, abandonment, or neglect, are not met.

86 (2) The central abuse hotline shall provide any relevant  
87 information to:

88 (a) The child protective investigator, if the parent or  
89 caregiver is the subject of a child protective investigation; or

90 (b) The child's case manager and the attorney representing  
91 the department, if the parent or caregiver has a child under  
92 judicial supervision after an adjudication of dependency.

93 Section 4. Paragraph (b) of subsection (2) of section  
94 39.8296, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

95 39.8296 Statewide Guardian Ad Litem Office; legislative  
96 findings and intent; creation; appointment of executive  
97 director; duties of office.—

98 (2) STATEWIDE GUARDIAN AD LITEM OFFICE.—There is created a  
99 Statewide Guardian Ad Litem Office within the Justice  
100 Administrative Commission. The Justice Administrative Commission

101 shall provide administrative support and service to the office  
102 to the extent requested by the executive director within the  
103 available resources of the commission. The Statewide Guardian Ad  
104 Litem Office shall not be subject to control, supervision, or  
105 direction by the Justice Administrative Commission in the  
106 performance of its duties, but the employees of the office shall  
107 be governed by the classification plan and salary and benefits  
108 plan approved by the Justice Administrative Commission.

109 (b) The Statewide Guardian Ad Litem Office shall, within  
110 available resources, have oversight responsibilities for and  
111 provide technical assistance to all guardian ad litem and  
112 attorney ad litem programs located within the judicial circuits.

113 1. The office shall identify the resources required to  
114 implement methods of collecting, reporting, and tracking  
115 reliable and consistent case data.

116 2. The office shall review the current guardian ad litem  
117 programs in Florida and other states.

118 3. The office, in consultation with local guardian ad  
119 litem offices, shall develop statewide performance measures and  
120 standards.

121 4. The office shall develop a guardian ad litem training  
122 program, which shall include, but not be limited to, training on  
123 the recognition of and responses to head trauma and brain injury  
124 in a child under 6 years of age. The office shall establish a  
125 curriculum committee to develop the training program specified

126 in this subparagraph. The curriculum committee shall include,  
127 but not be limited to, dependency judges, directors of circuit  
128 guardian ad litem programs, active certified guardians ad litem,  
129 a mental health professional who specializes in the treatment of  
130 children, a member of a child advocacy group, a representative  
131 of the Florida Coalition Against Domestic Violence, and a social  
132 worker experienced in working with victims and perpetrators of  
133 child abuse.

134 5. The office shall review the various methods of funding  
135 guardian ad litem programs, shall maximize the use of those  
136 funding sources to the extent possible, and shall review the  
137 kinds of services being provided by circuit guardian ad litem  
138 programs.

139 6. The office shall determine the feasibility or  
140 desirability of new concepts of organization, administration,  
141 financing, or service delivery designed to preserve the civil  
142 and constitutional rights and fulfill other needs of dependent  
143 children.

144 7. In an effort to promote normalcy and establish trust  
145 between a court-appointed volunteer guardian ad litem and a  
146 child alleged to be abused, abandoned, or neglected under this  
147 chapter, a guardian ad litem may transport a child. However, a  
148 guardian ad litem volunteer may not be required or directed by  
149 the program or a court to transport a child.

150 8. The office shall submit to the Governor, the President

151 of the Senate, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and  
152 the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court an interim report  
153 describing the progress of the office in meeting the goals as  
154 described in this section. The office shall submit to the  
155 Governor, the President of the Senate, the Speaker of the House  
156 of Representatives, and the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court a  
157 proposed plan including alternatives for meeting the state's  
158 guardian ad litem and attorney ad litem needs. This plan may  
159 include recommendations for less than the entire state, may  
160 include a phase-in system, and shall include estimates of the  
161 cost of each of the alternatives. Each year the office shall  
162 provide a status report and provide further recommendations to  
163 address the need for guardian ad litem services and related  
164 issues.

165 Section 5. Subsections (2) and (4) of section 402.402,  
166 Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

167 402.402 Child protection and child welfare personnel;  
168 attorneys employed by the department.—

169 (2) SPECIALIZED TRAINING.—All child protective  
170 investigators and child protective investigation supervisors  
171 employed by the department or a sheriff's office must complete  
172 the following specialized training:

173 (a) Training on the recognition of and responses to head  
174 trauma and brain injury in a child under 6 years of age.

175 (b) Training that is either focused on serving a specific

176 population, including, but not limited to, medically fragile  
177 children, sexually exploited children, children under 3 years of  
178 age, or families with a history of domestic violence, mental  
179 illness, or substance abuse, or focused on performing certain  
180 aspects of child protection practice, including, but not limited  
181 to, investigation techniques and analysis of family dynamics.  
182 The specialized training may be used to fulfill continuing  
183 education requirements under s. 402.40(3)(e). Individuals hired  
184 before July 1, 2014, shall complete the specialized training by  
185 June 30, 2016, and individuals hired on or after July 1, 2014,  
186 shall complete the specialized training within 2 years after  
187 hire. An individual may receive specialized training in multiple  
188 areas.

189 (4) ATTORNEYS EMPLOYED BY THE DEPARTMENT TO HANDLE CHILD  
190 WELFARE CASES.—Attorneys hired on or after July 1, 2014, whose  
191 primary responsibility is representing the department in child  
192 welfare cases shall, within the first 6 months of employment,  
193 receive training in all of the following:

194 (a) The dependency court process, including the attorney's  
195 role in preparing and reviewing documents prepared for  
196 dependency court for accuracy and completeness.~~†~~

197 (b) Preparing and presenting child welfare cases,  
198 including at least 1 week shadowing an experienced children's  
199 legal services attorney preparing and presenting cases.~~†~~

200 (c) Safety assessment, safety decisionmaking tools, and



201 safety plans.~~†~~

202 (d) Developing information presented by investigators and  
203 case managers to support decisionmaking in the best interest of  
204 children.~~†~~~~and~~

205 (e) The experiences and techniques of case managers and  
206 investigators, including shadowing an experienced child  
207 protective investigator and an experienced case manager for at  
208 least 8 hours.

209 (f) The recognition of and responses to head trauma and  
210 brain injury in a child under 6 years of age.

211 Section 6. Paragraph (f) of subsection (1) and subsection  
212 (3) of section 409.988, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

213 409.988 Lead agency duties; general provisions.—

214 (1) DUTIES.—A lead agency:

215 (f) Shall ensure that all individuals providing care for  
216 dependent children receive appropriate training and meet the  
217 minimum employment standards established by the department.  
218 Appropriate training shall include, but is not limited to,  
219 training on the recognition of and responses to head trauma and  
220 brain injury in a child under 6 years of age.

221 (3) SERVICES.—A lead agency must provide dependent  
222 children with services that are supported by research or that  
223 are recognized as best practices in the child welfare field. The  
224 agency shall give priority to the use of services that are  
225 evidence-based and trauma-informed and may also provide other

226 innovative services, including, but not limited to, family-  
227 centered and cognitive-behavioral interventions designed to  
228 mitigate out-of-home placements and intensive family  
229 reunification services that combine child welfare and mental  
230 health services for families with dependent children under 6  
231 years of age.

232 Section 7. Subsection (24) is added to section 409.996,  
233 Florida Statutes, to read:

234 409.996 Duties of the Department of Children and  
235 Families.—The department shall contract for the delivery,  
236 administration, or management of care for children in the child  
237 protection and child welfare system. In doing so, the department  
238 retains responsibility for the quality of contracted services  
239 and programs and shall ensure that services are delivered in  
240 accordance with applicable federal and state statutes and  
241 regulations.

242 (24) The department in collaboration with the lead  
243 agencies serving the judicial circuits selected in paragraph (a)  
244 may create and implement a program to more effectively provide  
245 case management services for dependent children under 6 years of  
246 age.

247 (a) If the program is created, the department shall select  
248 up to three judicial circuits in which to develop and implement  
249 a program under this subsection, with priority given to a  
250 circuit that has a high removal rate, significant case

251 management turnover rate, and the highest numbers of children in  
252 out-of-home care or a significant increase in the number of  
253 children in out-of-home care over the last 3 fiscal years.

254 (b) If the program is created, it shall:

255 1. Include caseloads for dependency case managers  
256 comprised solely of children who are under 6 years of age,  
257 except as provided in paragraph (c). The maximum caseload for a  
258 case manager shall be no more than 15 children if possible.

259 2. Include case managers who are trained specifically in:

260 a. Critical child development for children under 6 years  
261 of age.

262 b. Specific practices of child care for children under 6  
263 years of age.

264 c. The scope of community resources available to children  
265 under 6 years of age.

266 d. Working with a parent or caregiver and assisting him or  
267 her in developing the skills necessary to care for the health,  
268 safety, and well-being of a child under 6 years of age.

269 (c) If a child being served through the program has a  
270 dependent sibling, the sibling may be assigned to the same case  
271 manager as the child being served through the program; however,  
272 each sibling counts toward the case manager's maximum caseload  
273 as provided under paragraph (b).

274 (d) If the program is created, the department shall  
275 evaluate the permanency, safety, and well-being of children

276 being served through the program and submit a report to the  
277 Governor, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the  
278 House of Representatives by October 1, 2024, detailing its  
279 findings.

280 Section 8. Section 943.17297, Florida Statutes, is created  
281 to read:

282 943.17297 Training in the recognition of and responses to  
283 head trauma and brain injury.—The commission shall establish  
284 standards for the instruction of law enforcement officers in the  
285 subject of recognition of and responses to head trauma and brain  
286 injury in a child from under 6 years of age to aid an officer in  
287 the detection of head trauma and brain injury due to child  
288 abuse. Each law enforcement officer must successfully complete  
289 the training as part of the basic recruit training for a law  
290 enforcement officer, as required under s. 943.13(9), or as a  
291 part of continuing training or education required under s.  
292 943.135(1) before July 1, 2021.

293 Section 9. This act shall take effect July 1, 2019.