1	A bill to be entitled
2	An act relating to child welfare; amending s. 39.01,
3	F.S.; providing a definition; conforming cross-
4	references; amending s. 39.522, F.S.; providing
5	factors a court must consider when determining whether
6	a child should remain in his or her own home or be
7	placed in out-of-home care; amending s. 39.6011, F.S.;
8	requiring certain parties to a case plan to
9	communicate effectively; requiring the court to be
10	notified if ineffective communication takes place;
11	amending s. 39.701, F.S.; requiring a foster parent or
12	legal custodian to disclose to the court any
13	communication not in compliance with the case plan;
14	providing for agency and caregiver recommendations for
15	a change in visitation; requiring a court and citizen
16	review panel to determine whether certain parties
17	communicate effectively; providing factors a court
18	must consider when determining whether a child should
19	be returned to the custody of his or her parents;
20	amending s. 409.988, F.S.; authorizing a lead agency
21	to provide more than 35 percent of all child welfare
22	services under certain conditions; requiring a certain
23	group to review a request for an exemption from the
24	services threshold; providing membership requirements
25	for the group; amending ss. 39.302, 39.521, 39.6012,
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26	322.09, 394.495, 627.746, 934.255, and 960.065, F.S.;
27	conforming cross-references; providing an effective
28	date.
29	
30	Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:
31	
32	Section 1. Subsections (20) through (87) of section 39.01,
33	Florida Statutes, are renumbered as subsections (21) through
34	(88) respectively, subsection (10) and present subsection (37)
35	are amended, and a new subsection (20) is added to that section,
36	to read:
37	39.01 DefinitionsWhen used in this chapter, unless the
38	context otherwise requires:
39	(10) "Caregiver" means the parent, legal custodian,
40	permanent guardian, adult household member, or other person
41	responsible for a child's welfare as defined in this section
42	subsection (54).
43	(20) "Conditions for return" means the minimum conditions
44	that must exist with respect to a specific family's
45	circumstances, including, but not limited by, the home
46	environment, behavior, and safety resources, to allow for
47	reunification to occur with the use of an in-home safety plan.
48	(38) (37) "Institutional child abuse or neglect" means
49	situations of known or suspected child abuse or neglect in which
50	the person allegedly perpetrating the child abuse or neglect is
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an employee of a private school, public or private day care 51 52 center, residential home, institution, facility, or agency or 53 any other person at such institution responsible for the child's 54 care as defined in this section subsection (54). 55 Section 2. Subsection (3) of section 39.522, Florida 56 Statutes, is renumbered as subsection (4), and a new subsection 57 (3) is added to that section to read: 58 39.522 Postdisposition change of custody.-The court may 59 change the temporary legal custody or the conditions of 60 protective supervision at a postdisposition hearing, without the necessity of another adjudicatory hearing. 61 62 (3) In cases where the issue before the court is whether a child who has remained in his or her own home with an in-home 63 64 safety plan, or who has been reunited with a parent with an in-65 home safety plan, should remain in that placement or should be 66 placed in out-of-home care, the court shall place the child in 67 out-of-home care if the parent is unlikely, within a reasonable 68 amount of time, to achieve the full protective capacities needed 69 for the child to be reunified without an in-home safety plan and 70 for the court to end protective supervision without endangering 71 the child's safety, well-being, and physical, mental, and 72 emotional health. In making its determination, the court shall consider all of the following: 73 74 The circumstances that caused the child's dependency (a) 75 and other issues subsequently identified.

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76	(b) The length of time the child has been placed in his or
77	her own home with an in-home safety plan.
78	(c) The parent's current level of protective capacities.
79	(d) The increase in the parent's demonstrated level of
80	protective capacities since the child's placement in his or her
81	own home given the length of time the child has been placed
82	there.
83	
84	The court shall also evaluate the child's permanency goal and
85	shall change the permanency goal if doing so would be in the
86	best interest of the child.
87	Section 3. Paragraphs (b) through (d) of subsection (4)
88	are redesignated as paragraphs (c) through and (e),
89	respectively, and a new paragraph (b) is added to subsection (4)
90	of that section to read:
91	39.6011 Case plan development
92	(4) The case plan must describe:
93	(b) The responsibility of the parents and caregivers to
94	communicate effectively, which includes, but is not limited to,
95	refraining from harassing communication, to promote the safety,
96	well-being, and physical, mental, and emotional health of the
97	child. A parent or caregiver shall notify the court if
98	ineffective communication takes place;
99	Section 4. Paragraphs (a), (c), and (d) of subsection (2)
100	of section 39.701, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:
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39.701 Judicial review.-101 REVIEW HEARINGS FOR CHILDREN YOUNGER THAN 18 YEARS OF 102 (2)103 AGE.-104 Social study report for judicial review.-Before every (a) 105 judicial review hearing or citizen review panel hearing, the 106 social service agency shall make an investigation and social 107 study concerning all pertinent details relating to the child and 108 shall furnish to the court or citizen review panel a written report that includes, but is not limited to: 109 110 1. A description of the type of placement the child is in at the time of the hearing, including the safety of the child 111 112 and the continuing necessity for and appropriateness of the 113 placement. 114 2. Documentation of the diligent efforts made by all 115 parties to the case plan to comply with each applicable provision of the plan. 116 The amount of fees assessed and collected during the 117 3. 118 period of time being reported. 119 4. The services provided to the foster family or legal custodian in an effort to address the needs of the child as 120 121 indicated in the case plan. 122 5. A statement that either: The parent, though able to do so, did not comply 123 a. 124 substantially with the case plan, and the agency 125 recommendations;

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b. The parent did substantially comply with the case plan; or

128 c. The parent has partially complied with the case plan,
129 with a summary of additional progress needed and the agency
130 recommendations.

6. A statement from the foster parent or legal custodian providing any material evidence concerning the return of the child to the parent or parents, including, but not limited to, any communication that is not in compliance with the case plan.

135 7. A statement concerning the frequency, duration, and 136 results of the parent-child visitation, if any, and the agency 137 <u>and caregiver</u> recommendations for an expansion or restriction of 138 future visitation.

139 8. The number of times a child has been removed from his 140 or her home and placed elsewhere, the number and types of 141 placements that have occurred, and the reason for the changes in 142 placement.

9. The number of times a child's educational placement has
been changed, the number and types of educational placements
which have occurred, and the reason for any change in placement.

146 10. If the child has reached 13 years of age but is not 147 yet 18 years of age, a statement from the caregiver on the 148 progress the child has made in acquiring independent living 149 skills.

150

11. Copies of all medical, psychological, and educational

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151 records that support the terms of the case plan and that have 152 been produced concerning the parents or any caregiver since the 153 last judicial review hearing.

154 12. Copies of the child's current health, mental health, 155 and education records as identified in s. 39.6012.

156 Review determinations.-The court and any citizen (C) 157 review panel shall take into consideration the information 158 contained in the social services study and investigation and all 159 medical, psychological, and educational records that support the 160 terms of the case plan; testimony by the social services agency, the parent, the foster parent or legal custodian, the guardian 161 162 ad litem or surrogate parent for educational decisionmaking if one has been appointed for the child, and any other person 163 164 deemed appropriate; and any relevant and material evidence 165 submitted to the court, including written and oral reports to 166 the extent of their probative value. These reports and evidence 167 may be received by the court in its effort to determine the action to be taken with regard to the child and may be relied 168 upon to the extent of their probative value, even though not 169 170 competent in an adjudicatory hearing. In its deliberations, the 171 court and any citizen review panel shall seek to determine:

172 1. If the parent was advised of the right to receive
 173 assistance from any person or social service agency in the
 174 preparation of the case plan.

175

2. If the parent has been advised of the right to have

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176 counsel present at the judicial review or citizen review 177 hearings. If not so advised, the court or citizen review panel 178 shall advise the parent of such right.

3. If a guardian ad litem needs to be appointed for the child in a case in which a guardian ad litem has not previously been appointed or if there is a need to continue a guardian ad litem in a case in which a guardian ad litem has been appointed.

4. Who holds the rights to make educational decisions for the child. If appropriate, the court may refer the child to the district school superintendent for appointment of a surrogate parent or may itself appoint a surrogate parent under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and s. 39.0016.

188 5. The compliance or lack of compliance of all parties 189 with applicable items of the case plan, including the parents' 190 compliance with child support orders.

6. The compliance or lack of compliance with a visitation contract between the parent and the social service agency for contact with the child, including the frequency, duration, and results of the parent-child visitation and the reason for any noncompliance.

196 7. The frequency, kind, and duration of contacts among 197 siblings who have been separated during placement, as well as 198 any efforts undertaken to reunite separated siblings if doing so 199 is in the best interest of the child.

200

8. The compliance or lack of compliance of the parent in

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201 meeting specified financial obligations pertaining to the care 202 of the child, including the reason for failure to comply, if 203 applicable.

204 9. Whether the child is receiving safe and proper care 205 according to s. 39.6012, including, but not limited to, the 206 appropriateness of the child's current placement, including 207 whether the child is in a setting that is as family-like and as 208 close to the parent's home as possible, consistent with the child's best interests and special needs, and including 209 210 maintaining stability in the child's educational placement, as 211 documented by assurances from the community-based care provider 212 that:

a. The placement of the child takes into account the
appropriateness of the current educational setting and the
proximity to the school in which the child is enrolled at the
time of placement.

b. The community-based care agency has coordinated with appropriate local educational agencies to ensure that the child remains in the school in which the child is enrolled at the time of placement.

10. A projected date likely for the child's return home orother permanent placement.

11. When appropriate, the basis for the unwillingness or inability of the parent to become a party to a case plan. The court and the citizen review panel shall determine if the

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aacl	
226	efforts of the social service agency to secure party
227	participation in a case plan were sufficient.
228	12. For a child who has reached 13 years of age but is not
229	yet 18 years of age, the adequacy of the child's preparation for
230	adulthood and independent living. For a child who is 15 years of
231	age or older, the court shall determine if appropriate steps are
232	being taken for the child to obtain a driver license or
233	learner's driver license.
234	13. If amendments to the case plan are required.
235	Amendments to the case plan must be made under s. 39.6013.
236	14. Whether the parent and caregiver communicate
237	effectively to promote the safety, well-being, and physical,
238	mental, and emotional health of the child, which includes, but
239	is not limited to, refraining from harassing communication.
240	(d) Orders
241	1. Based upon the criteria set forth in paragraph (c) and
242	the recommended order of the citizen review panel, if any, the
243	court shall determine whether or not the social service agency
244	shall initiate proceedings to have a child declared a dependent
245	child, return the child to the parent, continue the child in
246	out-of-home care for a specified period of time, or initiate
247	termination of parental rights proceedings for subsequent
248	placement in an adoptive home. Amendments to the case plan must
249	be prepared as prescribed in s. 39.6013. If the court finds that
250	the prevention or reunification efforts of the department will
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allow the child to remain safely at home or be safely returned to the home, the court shall allow the child to remain in or return to the home after making a specific finding of fact that the reasons for the creation of the case plan have been remedied to the extent that the child's safety, well-being, and physical, mental, and emotional health will not be endangered.

257 2. The court shall return the child to the custody of the 258 parents at any time it determines that evidence has been 259 provided that either conditions for return have been met and an 260 in-home safety plan can be implemented or a parent has 261 they have substantially complied with the case plan and is 262 likely to complete the case plan in a reasonable amount of time, and if the court is satisfied that reunification will not be 263 264 detrimental to the child's safety, well-being, and physical, 265 mental, and emotional health.

3. If, in the opinion of the court, the social service agency has not complied with its obligations as specified in the written case plan, the court may find the social service agency in contempt, shall order the social service agency to submit its plans for compliance with the agreement, and shall require the social service agency to show why the child could not safely be returned to the home of the parents.

4. If, at any judicial review, the court finds that the
parents have failed to substantially comply with the case plan
to the degree that further reunification efforts are without

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276 merit and not in the best interest of the child, on its own 277 motion, the court may order the filing of a petition for 278 termination of parental rights, whether or not the time period 279 as contained in the case plan for substantial compliance has 280 expired.

281 5. Within 6 months after the date that the child was 282 placed in shelter care, the court shall conduct a judicial 283 review hearing to review the child's permanency goal as 284 identified in the case plan. At the hearing the court shall make findings regarding the likelihood of the child's reunification 285 286 with the parent or legal custodian. In making such findings, the 287 court shall consider the level of the parent or legal custodian's compliance with the case plan and demonstrated 288 289 change in protective capacities compared to that necessary to 290 achieve timely reunification within 12 months after the removal 291 of the child from the home. The court shall also consider the 292 frequency, duration, manner, and level of engagement of the parent or legal custodian's visitation with the child in 293 294 compliance with the case plan. If the court makes a written 295 finding that it is not likely that the child will be reunified 296 with the parent or legal custodian within 12 months after the 297 child was removed from the home, the department must file with the court, and serve on all parties, a motion to amend the case 298 plan under s. 39.6013 and declare that it will use concurrent 299 300 planning for the case plan. The department must file the motion

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within 10 business days after receiving the written finding of the court. The department must attach the proposed amended case plan to the motion. If concurrent planning is already being used, the case plan must document the efforts the department is taking to complete the concurrent goal.

306 The court may issue a protective order in assistance, 6. 307 or as a condition, of any other order made under this part. In 308 addition to the requirements included in the case plan, the protective order may set forth requirements relating to 309 reasonable conditions of behavior to be observed for a specified 310 period of time by a person or agency who is before the court; 311 312 and the order may require any person or agency to make periodic reports to the court containing such information as the court in 313 314 its discretion may prescribe.

315 Section 5. Paragraph (j) of subsection (1) of section 316 409.988, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

317

409.988 Lead agency duties; general provisions.-

318

(1) DUTIES.—A lead agency:

(j) May subcontract for the provision of services required by the contract with the lead agency and the department; however, the subcontracts must specify how the provider will contribute to the lead agency meeting the performance standards established pursuant to the child welfare results-oriented accountability system required by s. 409.997. The lead agency shall directly provide no more than 35 percent of all child

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326	welfare services provided <u>unless it can demonstrate a need,</u>
327	within the lead agency's geographic service area, to exceed this
328	threshold. The justification for need shall be reviewed by a
329	group comprised of the local community alliance, a
330	representative from another lead agency, and a representative
331	from a child welfare service provider from another geographic
332	area. The group shall recommend to the department whether the
333	department should approve or deny the request for an exemption
334	from the services threshold. If there is not a community
335	alliance operating in a lead agency's geographic service area,
336	the recommendation for approval or denial of the exemption shall
337	be made by representatives of local stakeholders, including at
338	least one representative from each of the following:
339	1. The department.
340	2. The county government.
341	3. The school district.
342	4. The county United Way.
343	5. The county sheriff's office.
344	6. The circuit court corresponding to the county.
345	7. The county children's board, if one exists.
346	8. Another lead agency.
347	9. A child welfare service provider from another
348	geographic service area.
349	
350	If a lead agency's geographic service area has more than one
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351	community alliance, county government, school district, United
352	Way, sheriff, circuit court, or county children's board, the
353	chair of each community alliance, county commission, school
354	board, United Way, or county children's board or the sheriff or
355	chief judge of the circuit court corresponding to each county in
356	the geographic service area shall select one person to serve as
357	the representative of such local stakeholder. Such persons shall
358	comprise the group that must recommend to the department whether
359	the department should approve or deny the request for exemption
360	from the services threshold. There must be representation in the
361	group from every county in the lead agency's geographic service
362	area, including counties that do not have a community alliance.
363	The department may adopt rules to administer this paragraph.
364	Section 6. Subsection (1) of section 39.302, Florida
365	Statutes, is amended to read:
366	39.302 Protective investigations of institutional child
367	abuse, abandonment, or neglect
368	(1) The department shall conduct a child protective
369	investigation of each report of institutional child abuse,
370	abandonment, or neglect. Upon receipt of a report that alleges
371	that an employee or agent of the department, or any other entity
372	or person covered by <u>s. 39.01</u> s. 39.01(37) or (54) , acting in an
373	official capacity, has committed an act of child abuse,
374	abandonment, or neglect, the department shall initiate a child
375	protective investigation within the timeframe established under
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376 s. 39.201(5) and notify the appropriate state attorney, law 377 enforcement agency, and licensing agency, which shall 378 immediately conduct a joint investigation, unless independent 379 investigations are more feasible. When conducting investigations 380 or having face-to-face interviews with the child, investigation 381 visits shall be unannounced unless it is determined by the 382 department or its agent that unannounced visits threaten the 383 safety of the child. If a facility is exempt from licensing, the 384 department shall inform the owner or operator of the facility of the report. Each agency conducting a joint investigation is 385 386 entitled to full access to the information gathered by the 387 department in the course of the investigation. A protective investigation must include an interview with the child's parent 388 389 or legal guardian. The department shall make a full written 390 report to the state attorney within 3 working days after making 391 the oral report. A criminal investigation shall be coordinated, 392 whenever possible, with the child protective investigation of 393 the department. Any interested person who has information 394 regarding the offenses described in this subsection may forward 395 a statement to the state attorney as to whether prosecution is 396 warranted and appropriate. Within 15 days after the completion 397 of the investigation, the state attorney shall report the findings to the department and shall include in the report a 398 determination of whether or not prosecution is justified and 399 appropriate in view of the circumstances of the specific case. 400

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401 Section 7. Paragraph (c) of subsection (1) of section 402 39.521, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

403

39.521 Disposition hearings; powers of disposition.-

404 (1) A disposition hearing shall be conducted by the court, 405 if the court finds that the facts alleged in the petition for 406 dependency were proven in the adjudicatory hearing, or if the 407 parents or legal custodians have consented to the finding of 408 dependency or admitted the allegations in the petition, have 409 failed to appear for the arraignment hearing after proper notice, or have not been located despite a diligent search 410 411 having been conducted.

(c) When any child is adjudicated by a court to be dependent, the court having jurisdiction of the child has the power by order to:

415 1. Require the parent and, when appropriate, the legal 416 quardian or the child to participate in treatment and services 417 identified as necessary. The court may require the person who has custody or who is requesting custody of the child to submit 418 419 to a mental health or substance abuse disorder assessment or 420 evaluation. The order may be made only upon good cause shown and 421 pursuant to notice and procedural requirements provided under 422 the Florida Rules of Juvenile Procedure. The mental health assessment or evaluation must be administered by a qualified 423 professional as defined in s. 39.01, and the substance abuse 424 425 assessment or evaluation must be administered by a qualified

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426 professional as defined in s. 397.311. The court may also 427 require such person to participate in and comply with treatment 428 and services identified as necessary, including, when 429 appropriate and available, participation in and compliance with 430 a mental health court program established under chapter 394 or a 431 treatment-based drug court program established under s. 397.334. 432 Adjudication of a child as dependent based upon evidence of harm 433 as defined in s. 39.01 s. 39.01(35)(g) demonstrates good cause, 434 and the court shall require the parent whose actions caused the 435 harm to submit to a substance abuse disorder assessment or 436 evaluation and to participate and comply with treatment and 437 services identified in the assessment or evaluation as being 438 necessary. In addition to supervision by the department, the 439 court, including the mental health court program or the 440 treatment-based drug court program, may oversee the progress and 441 compliance with treatment by a person who has custody or is 442 requesting custody of the child. The court may impose 443 appropriate available sanctions for noncompliance upon a person 444 who has custody or is requesting custody of the child or make a 445 finding of noncompliance for consideration in determining 446 whether an alternative placement of the child is in the child's 447 best interests. Any order entered under this subparagraph may be made only upon good cause shown. This subparagraph does not 448 authorize placement of a child with a person seeking custody of 449 450 the child, other than the child's parent or legal custodian, who

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451 requires mental health or substance abuse disorder treatment.

452 2. Require, if the court deems necessary, the parties to453 participate in dependency mediation.

454 Require placement of the child either under the 3. 455 protective supervision of an authorized agent of the department 456 in the home of one or both of the child's parents or in the home 457 of a relative of the child or another adult approved by the 458 court, or in the custody of the department. Protective 459 supervision continues until the court terminates it or until the child reaches the age of 18, whichever date is first. Protective 460 461 supervision shall be terminated by the court whenever the court 462 determines that permanency has been achieved for the child, 463 whether with a parent, another relative, or a legal custodian, 464 and that protective supervision is no longer needed. The 465 termination of supervision may be with or without retaining 466 jurisdiction, at the court's discretion, and shall in either 467 case be considered a permanency option for the child. The order 468 terminating supervision by the department must set forth the 469 powers of the custodian of the child and include the powers 470 ordinarily granted to a guardian of the person of a minor unless 471 otherwise specified. Upon the court's termination of supervision 472 by the department, further judicial reviews are not required if permanency has been established for the child. 473

474 4. Determine whether the child has a strong attachment to 475 the prospective permanent guardian and whether such guardian has

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476	a strong commitment to permanently caring for the child.
477	Section 8. Paragraph (c) of subsection (1) of section
478	39.6012, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:
479	39.6012 Case plan tasks; services
480	(1) The services to be provided to the parent and the
481	tasks that must be completed are subject to the following:
482	(c) If there is evidence of harm as defined in s. 39.01 s.
483	 39.01(35)(g) , the case plan must include as a required task for
484	the parent whose actions caused the harm that the parent submit
485	to a substance abuse disorder assessment or evaluation and
486	participate and comply with treatment and services identified in
487	the assessment or evaluation as being necessary.
488	Section 9. Subsection (4) of section 322.09, Florida
489	Statutes, is amended to read:
490	322.09 Application of minors; responsibility for
491	negligence or misconduct of minor
492	(4) Notwithstanding subsections (1) and (2), if a
493	caregiver of a minor who is under the age of 18 years and is in
494	out-of-home care as defined in <u>s. 39.01</u> s. 39.01(49) , an
495	authorized representative of a residential group home at which
496	such a minor resides, the caseworker at the agency at which the
497	state has placed the minor, or a guardian ad litem specifically
498	authorized by the minor's caregiver to sign for a learner's
499	driver license signs the minor's application for a learner's
500	driver license, that caregiver, group home representative,
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501 caseworker, or guardian ad litem does not assume any obligation 502 or become liable for any damages caused by the negligence or 503 willful misconduct of the minor by reason of having signed the 504 application. Before signing the application, the caseworker, 505 authorized group home representative, or guardian ad litem shall 506 notify the caregiver or other responsible party of his or her 507 intent to sign and verify the application.

508 Section 10. Paragraph (p) of subsection (4) of section 509 394.495, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

510 394.495 Child and adolescent mental health system of care; 511 programs and services.-

512 (4) The array of services may include, but is not limited 513 to:

514 (p) Trauma-informed services for children who have 515 suffered sexual exploitation as defined in <u>s. 39.01</u> s. 516 $\frac{39.01(77)(g)}{}$.

517 Section 11. Section 627.746, Florida Statutes, is amended 518 to read:

519 627.746 Coverage for minors who have a learner's driver 520 license; additional premium prohibited.—An insurer that issues 521 an insurance policy on a private passenger motor vehicle to a 522 named insured who is a caregiver of a minor who is under the age 523 of 18 years and is in out-of-home care as defined in <u>s. 39.01</u> s. 524 39.01(49) may not charge an additional premium for coverage of 525 the minor while the minor is operating the insured vehicle, for

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the period of time that the minor has a learner's driver 526 527 license, until such time as the minor obtains a driver license. 528 Section 12. Paragraph (c) of subsection (1) of section 934.255, Florida Statutes, is amended to read: 529 530 934.255 Subpoenas in investigations of sexual offenses.-(1) As used in this section, the term: 531 (c) "Sexual abuse of a child" means a criminal offense 532 based on any conduct described in s. 39.01 s. 39.01(71). 533 Section 13. Subsection (5) of section 960.065, Florida 534 535 Statutes, is amended to read: 536 960.065 Eligibility for awards.-537 (5) A person is not ineligible for an award pursuant to 538 paragraph (2) (a), paragraph (2) (b), or paragraph (2) (c) if that person is a victim of sexual exploitation of a child as defined 539 540 in s. 39.01 s. 39.01(77)(g). 541 Section 14. This act shall take effect October 1, 2019.

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