

By Senator Baxley

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1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to the Florida Guide to a Healthy
3 Marriage; creating s. 741.0307, F.S.; creating the
4 Marriage Education Committee within the Department of
5 Children and Families for the purpose of creating the
6 Florida Guide to a Healthy Marriage; providing for
7 committee operation; providing for appointment of
8 committee members and terms of office; requiring the
9 committee to submit the completed guide to the
10 Governor and the Legislature; providing for committee
11 termination; providing for periodic reconstitution of
12 the committee to review and update the guide;
13 providing requirements for filling vacancies;
14 providing requirements for the guide's content;
15 requiring the committee to oversee the design and
16 layout of the guide and obtain private funds to cover
17 associated costs; authorizing the committee to obtain
18 private funds for the costs of printing and
19 distributing copies of the guide; authorizing the
20 committee to distribute printed copies of the guide
21 under certain circumstances; requiring clerks of court
22 to post an electronic copy of the guide on the court's
23 website and provide printed copies to applicants for
24 marriage licenses under certain circumstances;
25 encouraging clerks of court to provide a list of
26 certain course providers and websites where certain
27 classes are available; providing for periodic review
28 and revision of the guide; requiring the committee to
29 periodically submit a report to the Governor and the

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30 Legislature detailing its revisions to the guide and
31 recommendations for further updates; amending s.
32 741.04, F.S.; prohibiting the issuance of a marriage
33 license until petitioners verify that both parties
34 have obtained and read the Florida Guide to a Healthy
35 Marriage or some other presentation of similar
36 information; providing an effective date.
37

38 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:
39

40 Section 1. Section 741.0307, Florida Statutes, is created
41 to read:

42 741.0307 Marriage Education Committee; Florida Guide to a
43 Healthy Marriage.-

44 (1) There is created within the Department of Children and
45 Families, for administrative purposes only, the Marriage
46 Education Committee for the sole purpose of creating the Florida
47 Guide to a Healthy Marriage. Except as otherwise provided in
48 this section, the committee shall operate in a manner consistent
49 with s. 20.052. The committee shall consist of six marriage
50 education and family advocates, two of whom shall be appointed
51 by the Governor, two of whom shall be appointed by the President
52 of the Senate, and two of whom shall be appointed by the Speaker
53 of the House of Representatives. The committee shall be
54 appointed by September 1, 2020, and the appointees shall each
55 serve a 1-year term or until such time as the Florida Guide to a
56 Healthy Marriage has been created, whichever is earlier. The
57 committee shall submit the completed guide to the Governor, the
58 President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of

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59 Representatives and terminates with the submission of the guide.
60 The committee shall subsequently be reconstituted once every 10
61 years after July 1, 2020, to review and update the contents of
62 the guide. The Governor, the President of the Senate, and the
63 Speaker of the House of Representatives shall each appoint two
64 members to the reconstituted committee. A vacancy on the
65 committee shall be filled for the unexpired portion of the term
66 in the same manner as the original appointment.

67 (2) The Florida Guide to a Healthy Marriage shall include,
68 but is not limited to:

69 (a) Resources regarding conflict management, communication
70 skills, family expectations, financial responsibilities and
71 management, domestic violence resources, and parenting
72 responsibilities.

73 (b) Current information from marriage education and family
74 advocates to assist in forming and maintaining a long-term
75 marital relationship.

76 (c) Information regarding premarital education, marriage
77 enrichment education, and resources that are available to help
78 restore a marriage that is potentially moving toward
79 dissolution.

80 (d) Contact information and website links to additional
81 resources and local professional and community services to
82 further assist a marital relationship.

83 (3) The Marriage Education Committee shall oversee the
84 design and layout of the guide. The committee shall raise funds
85 from private sources to cover the costs of the design and
86 layout. The committee may raise funds from private sources to
87 cover the costs of printing and distributing copies of the

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88 guide. If adequate funds are not raised to cover the costs of
89 printing and distribution, the committee will not be required to
90 print or distribute copies of the guide.

91 (4) The clerk of the circuit court in each judicial circuit
92 shall post an electronic copy of the guide on its website.
93 Additionally, if the Marriage Education Committee provides
94 printed copies of the guide to the office of the clerk of the
95 circuit court, the clerk shall make the guide available to
96 marriage license applicants. The clerk of the circuit court is
97 encouraged to provide a list of course providers and sites where
98 marriage and relationship skill-building classes are available.

99 (5) The Marriage Education Committee shall review the guide
100 and provide a report to the Governor, the President of the
101 Senate, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives every 10
102 years, or as soon thereafter as practicable, detailing changes
103 made to the guide and recommending further updates.

104 Section 2. Paragraph (c) is added to subsection (2) of
105 section 741.04, Florida Statutes, to read:

106 741.04 Issuance of marriage license.—

107 (2) A county court judge or clerk of the circuit court may
108 not issue a license to marry until the parties to the marriage
109 file with the county court judge or clerk of the court a written
110 and signed affidavit, made and subscribed before a person
111 authorized by law to administer an oath, which provides:

112 (c) A statement that verifies that both parties have
113 obtained and read or otherwise accessed the information
114 contained in the Florida Guide to a Healthy Marriage, as created
115 under s. 741.0307, or some other presentation of information
116 regarding conflict management, communication skills, family

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117 expectations, financial responsibilities and management,
118 domestic violence resources, and parenting responsibilities.

119 Section 3. This act shall take effect July 1, 2020.