

By Senator Burgess

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1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to disability claim coordinators;
3 creating s. 381.029, F.S.; defining the terms
4 "department" and "disability claim coordinator";
5 authorizing counties to request the Department of
6 Health to assign disability claim coordinators to
7 their respective county health departments; providing
8 that the counties are responsible for such
9 coordinators' employment terms, duty assignments, and
10 salaries and benefits; requiring the department to
11 certify disability claim coordinators if they meet
12 certain qualifications; requiring disability claim
13 coordinators to complete certain initial and annual
14 training; providing requirements for such training;
15 providing duties for disability claim coordinators;
16 authorizing the department to adopt rules; providing
17 an effective date.

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19 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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21 Section 1. Section 381.029, Florida Statutes, is created to
22 read:

23 381.029 Disability Claim Coordinators.-

24 (1) As used in this section, the term:

25 (a) "Department" means the Department of Health.

26 (b) "Disability claim coordinator" means a person certified
27 by the department to assist residents seeking state or federal
28 disability benefits.

29 (2) Counties may request the department to assign

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30 disability claim coordinators to their respective county health
31 departments to assist residents seeking state or federal
32 disability benefits. A county that requests assignment of a
33 disability claim coordinator is responsible for determining the
34 employment terms, assigning duties, and paying the salary and
35 benefits for the position.

36 (3) The department shall certify as a disability claim
37 coordinator an individual who meets the qualifications
38 prescribed by the department in rule. Disability claim
39 coordinators must complete initial and annual training approved
40 by the department. The training must include, at a minimum,
41 coverage of all state and federal laws and rules related to
42 disability benefits, including eligibility requirements,
43 eligible benefits, and the application and appeals processes for
44 disability determinations and benefit claims.

45 (4) A disability claim coordinator shall do all of the
46 following:

47 (a) Meet, interview, counsel, and obtain information from
48 clients who are seeking state or federal benefits for
49 disabilities and assist them in preparing or submitting claims
50 for such benefits.

51 (b) Provide accurate and current information related to the
52 eligibility requirements and application for and administration
53 of state and federal disability benefits.

54 (c) Review disability determinations, coordinate with the
55 claims examiners to ensure that the determinations accurately
56 reflect the clients' medical conditions and comply with state
57 and federal laws and rules, and initiate corrective action or
58 appellate review if deemed appropriate in the disability claim

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59 coordinator's professional judgment.

60 (d) Assist in preparing and perfecting claims appeals and
61 provide representation at related hearings.

62 (e) Coordinate with the department's Division of Disability
63 Determinations, including the area office responsible for the
64 county; local field offices for the Social Security
65 Administration; local regional offices for the United States
66 Department of Veterans Affairs; any local organizations that
67 assist residents in applying for disability benefits; and any
68 other state or federal agencies responsible for processing or
69 providing disability benefits in this state.

70 (f) Link clients to additional resources available in their
71 communities.

72 (5) The department may adopt rules to implement this
73 section.

74 Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2021.