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Proposed Committee Substitute by the Committee on Appropriations (Appropriations Subcommittee on Criminal and Civil Justice) A bill to be entitled

2 An act relating to clerks of the circuit court; 3 amending s. 28.246, F.S.; clarifying the 4 responsibility of an individual released from 5 incarceration regarding enrolling in a payment plan 6 for any outstanding court obligations; modifying the 7 manner of calculating a monthly payment amount under a 8 payment plan; requiring the clerk to establish all 9 terms of a payment plan; amending s. 28.35, F.S.; 10 conforming provisions to changes made by the act; 11 amending s. 28.36, F.S.; conforming a cross-reference; 12 requiring the corporation to establish and manage a 13 contingency reserve within the Clerks of the Court 14 Trust Fund for specified purposes; prescribing 15 reporting requirements; specifying circumstances under 16 which moneys held in reserve may be used; prescribing procedures for the release of such funds; amending s. 17 18 28.37, F.S.; modifying a provision regarding state 19 court system funding; defining terms; conforming a 20 cross-reference; revising provisions governing the transfer of certain funds from the Clerks of the Court 21 22 Trust Fund to the General Revenue Fund by the 23 Department of Revenue; amending s. 28.42, F.S.; 24 requiring the clerks to develop a uniform payment plan 25 form by a specified date; prescribing requirements for 26 the form; requiring the clerks to use such form by a 27 specified date; amending ss. 318.15, 318.20, and

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28 322.245, F.S.; requiring orders and notifications for 29 certain traffic citations and suspensions to include 30 information regarding payment plans; amending s. 775.083, F.S.; designating the clerk as the entity 31 32 responsible for collecting payment of certain court 33 obligations; requiring a person ordered to pay such 34 obligations to contact the clerk in order to pay or establish a payment plan, unless otherwise provided; 35 36 providing effective dates.

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

40 Section 1. Subsection (4) of section 28.246, Florida 41 Statutes, is amended to read:

42 28.246 Payment of court-related fines or other monetary
43 penalties, fees, charges, and costs; partial payments;
44 distribution of funds.-

(4) (a) Each The clerk of the circuit court shall accept
partial payments for each case type for court-related fees,
service charges, court costs, and fines in accordance with the
terms of an established payment plan developed by the clerk.

49 (b) An individual seeking to defer payment of fees, service charges, court costs, or fines imposed by operation of law or 50 51 order of the court under any provision of general law shall 52 apply to the clerk for enrollment in a payment plan. The clerk shall enter into a payment plan with an individual who the court 53 54 determines is indigent for costs. It is the responsibility of an 55 individual who is released from incarceration and has 56 outstanding court obligations to contact the clerk within 30

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57 days after release to pay fees, service charges, court costs, 58 and fines in full, or to apply for enrollment in a payment plan. 59 A monthly payment amount, calculated based upon all fees and all 60 anticipated fees, service charges, court costs, and fines, is presumed to correspond to the person's ability to pay if the 61 62 amount does not exceed 2 percent of the person's annual net income, as defined in s. 27.52(1), divided by 12. The clerk 63 shall establish all terms of a payment plan and the court may 64 review the reasonableness of the payment plan. 65

Section 2. Effective upon this act becoming a law,
paragraph (f) of subsection (2) and paragraph (a) of subsection
(3) of section 28.35, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

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28.35 Florida Clerks of Court Operations Corporation.-

70 (2) The duties of the corporation shall include the 71 following:

(f) Approving the proposed budgets submitted by clerks of 72 73 the court pursuant to s. 28.36. The corporation must ensure that the total combined budgets of the clerks of the court do not 74 75 exceed the total estimated revenues from fees, service charges, court costs, and fines for court-related functions available for 76 77 court-related expenditures as determined by the most recent 78 Revenue Estimating Conference, plus the total of unspent budgeted funds for court-related functions carried forward by 79 80 the clerks of the court from the previous county fiscal year, 81 and plus the balance of funds remaining in the Clerks of the 82 Court Trust Fund after the transfer of funds to the General 83 Revenue Fund required pursuant to s. 28.37(4)(b), and plus any appropriations for court-related functions s. 28.37(3)(b). The 84 85 corporation may amend any individual clerk of the court budget

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to ensure compliance with this paragraph and must consider performance measures, workload performance standards, workload measures, and expense data before modifying the budget. As part of this process, the corporation shall:

90 1. Calculate the minimum amount of revenue necessary for 91 each clerk of the court to efficiently perform the list of 92 court-related functions specified in paragraph (3)(a). The 93 corporation shall apply the workload measures appropriate for 94 determining the individual level of review required to fund the 95 clerk's budget.

96 2. Prepare a cost comparison of similarly situated clerks 97 of the court, based on county population and numbers of filings, 98 using the standard list of court-related functions specified in 99 paragraph (3)(a).

3. Conduct an annual base budget review and an annual 100 101 budget exercise examining the total budget of each clerk of the court. The review shall examine revenues from all sources, 102 expenses of court-related functions, and expenses of noncourt-103 104 related functions as necessary to determine that court-related 105 revenues are not being used for noncourt-related purposes. The 106 review and exercise shall identify potential targeted budget 107 reductions in the percentage amount provided in Schedule VIII-B of the state's previous year's legislative budget instructions, 108 109 as referenced in s. 216.023(3), or an equivalent schedule or 110 instruction as may be adopted by the Legislature.

4. Identify those proposed budgets containing funding for
items not included on the standard list of court-related
functions specified in paragraph (3)(a).

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5. Identify those clerks projected to have court-related

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115 revenues insufficient to fund their anticipated court-related 116 expenditures.

6. Use revenue estimates based on the official estimate for 117 118 funds from fees, service charges, court costs, and fines for 119 court-related functions accruing to the clerks of the court made 120 by the Revenue Estimating Conference, as well as any unspent 121 budgeted funds for court-related functions carried forward by 122 the clerks of the court from the previous county fiscal year and 123 the balance of funds remaining in the Clerks of the Court Trust 124 Fund after the transfer of funds to the General Revenue Fund 125 required pursuant to s. 28.37(4)(b), plus any appropriations for 126 the purpose of funding court-related functions s. 28.37(3)(b).

127 7. Identify pay and benefit increases in any proposed clerk
128 budget, including, but not limited to, cost of living increases,
129 merit increases, and bonuses.

130 8. Identify increases in anticipated expenditures in any
131 clerk budget that exceeds the current year budget by more than 3
132 percent.

133 9. Identify the budget of any clerk which exceeds the
134 average budget of similarly situated clerks by more than 10
135 percent.

For the purposes of this paragraph, the term "unspent budgeted funds for court-related functions" means undisbursed funds included in the clerks of the courts budgets for court-related functions established pursuant to this section and s. 28.36.

(3) (a) The list of court-related functions that clerks may
fund from filing fees, service charges, <u>court</u> costs, and fines
is limited to those functions expressly authorized by law or

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144 court rule. Those functions include the following: case 145 maintenance; records management; court preparation and 146 attendance; processing the assignment, reopening, and reassignment of cases; processing of appeals; collection and 147 148 distribution of fines, fees, service charges, and court costs; 149 processing of bond forfeiture payments; data collection and 150 reporting; determinations of indigent status; and paying 151 reasonable administrative support costs to enable the clerk of 152 the court to carry out these court-related functions.

Section 3. Effective upon this act becoming a law, present subsections (3) and (4) of section 28.36, Florida Statutes, are redesignated as subsections (4) and (5), a new subsection (3) is added to that section, and subsection (1), paragraph (b) of subsection (2), and present subsection (4) of that section are amended, to read:

159 28.36 Budget procedure.—There is established a budget 160 procedure for the court-related functions of the clerks of the 161 court.

(1) Only those functions listed in s. 28.35(3)(a) may be
funded from fees, service charges, <u>court</u> costs, and fines
retained by the clerks of the court.

165 (2) Each proposed budget shall further conform to the 166 following requirements:

(b) The proposed budget must be balanced such that the total of the estimated revenues available equals or exceeds the total of the anticipated expenditures. Such revenues include revenue projected to be received from fees, service charges, <u>court</u> costs, and fines for court-related functions during the fiscal period covered by the budget, plus the total of unspent

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173 budgeted funds for court-related functions carried forward by 174 the clerk of the court from the previous county fiscal year and 175 plus the portion of the balance of funds remaining in the Clerks 176 of the Court Trust Fund after the transfer of funds to the 177 General Revenue Fund required pursuant to s. 28.37(4)(b) s. 178 28.37(3)(b) which has been allocated to each respective clerk of 179 the court by the Florida Clerks of Court Operations Corporation. 180 For the purposes of this paragraph, the term "unspent budgeted 181 funds for court-related functions" means undisbursed funds 182 included in the clerk of the courts' budget for court related 183 functions established pursuant to s. 28.35 and this section. The 184 anticipated expenditures must be itemized as required by the 185 corporation. 186 (3) (a) The Florida Clerks of Court Operations Corporation

187 shall establish and manage a reserve for contingencies within 188 the Clerks of the Court Trust Fund which must consist of an 189 amount not to exceed 16 percent of the total budget authority 190 for the clerks of court during the current county fiscal year, 191 to be carried forward at the end of the fiscal year. Funds to be 192 held in reserve include transfers of cumulative excess, as 193 provided in s. 28.37(4)(b), from the Clerks of the Court Trust 194 Fund and may also include revenues provided by law or moneys 195 appropriated by the Legislature.

196 (b) The corporation shall provide a reporting of the 197 balance and use of these funds during each county fiscal year as 198 part of the corporation's annual report submitted under s. 199 28.35(2)(h).

200 (c) The corporation may use the reserve to ensure the 201 clerks of court can perform the court-related functions as

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202 provided in s. 28.35(3)(a). Moneys in the Clerks of the Court 203 Trust Fund which are held in reserve may be used by the 204 corporation under the following circumstances: 205 1. To offset a current deficit between the revenue 206 available and the original budget authority. A deficit is deemed 207 to occur when the revenue available to the clerks of court falls 208 below the original revenue projection for that county fiscal 209 year. 210 2. To provide funding for an emergency, as defined in s. 252.34(4). The emergency must have been declared by the 211 212 Governor, pursuant to s. 252.36, or otherwise declared by law. 213 3. To provide funds in the development of the total aggregate budget of the clerks of court to ensure that a minimum 214 215 continuation budget is met. For purposes of this subparagraph, a 216 minimum continuation budget is the budget approved for the current county fiscal year or some lesser amount adopted by the 217 218 corporation. 219 (d) To use the reserve, the corporation must request a

220 <u>budget amendment pursuant to s. 216.292.</u>

221 (5) (4) The corporation may approve increases or decreases 222 to the previously authorized budgets approved for individual 223 clerks of the court pursuant to s. 28.35 for court-related 224 functions, if:

(a) The additional budget authority is necessary to pay the
cost of performing new or additional functions required by
changes in law or court rule; or

(b) The additional budget authority is necessary to pay the
cost of supporting increases in the number of judges or
magistrates authorized by the Legislature, or for increases in

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231 the use of hearing officers and senior judges assigned by the 232 courts.

233 Section 4. Effective upon this act becoming a law, section234 28.37, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

235 28.37 Fines, fees, service charges, and costs remitted to 236 the state.-

(1) Pursuant to s. 14(b), Art. V of the State Constitution,
selected salaries, costs, and expenses of the state courts
system and court-related functions shall be funded from a
portion of the revenues derived from statutory fines, fees,
service charges, and <u>court</u> costs collected by the clerks of the
court, and from adequate and appropriate supplemental funding
from state revenues as appropriated by the Legislature.

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(2) <u>DEFINITIONS.-As used in this section</u>, the term:

245 <u>(a) "Cumulative excess" means revenues derived from fines,</u> 246 <u>fees, service charges, and court costs collected by the clerks</u> 247 <u>of the court which are greater than the original revenue</u> 248 <u>projection.</u>

(b) "Original revenue projection" means the official estimate, as determined by the Revenue Estimating Conference, of revenues from fines, fees, service charges, and court costs available for court-related functions for the county fiscal year covered by the projection.

254 <u>(3) The Beginning November 1, 2013, that portion of all</u> 255 fines, fees, service charges, and costs collected by the clerks 256 of the court for the previous month which is in excess of one-257 twelfth of the clerks' total budget for the performance of 258 court-related functions <u>must</u> shall be remitted to the Department 259 of Revenue for deposit into the Clerks of the Court Trust Fund.

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Such collections do not include funding received for the operation of the Title IV-D child support collections and disbursement program. The clerk of the court shall remit the revenues collected during the previous month due to the state on or before the 10th day of each month.

265 (4) (a) (3) (a) Each year, no later than January 25, for the 266 previous county fiscal year, the clerks of court, in 267 consultation with the Florida Clerks of Court Operations 268 Corporation, shall remit to the Department of Revenue for 269 deposit in the Clerks of the Court Trust Fund the cumulative 270 excess of all fines, fees, service charges, and court costs 271 retained by the clerks of the court, plus any funds received by 272 the clerks of the court from the Clerks of the Court Trust Fund 273 under s. 28.36(4) s. 28.36(3), which exceed the amount needed to 274 meet their authorized budget amounts established under s. 28.35.

275 (b) No later than February 1, 2022, and each February 1 276 thereafter, the Department of Revenue shall transfer 50 percent of the cumulative excess of the original revenue projection from 277 278 the Clerks of the Court Trust Fund to the General Revenue Fund. 279 The remaining 50 percent in the Clerks of the Court Trust Fund 280 may be used in the development of the total combined budgets of 281 the clerks of the court as provided in s. 28.35(2)(f)6. However, 282 a minimum of 10 percent of the clerk-retained portion of the 283 cumulative excess amount must be held in reserve until such 284 funds reach an amount equal to at least 16 percent of the total 285 budget authority from the current county fiscal year, as 286 provided in s. 28.36(3)(a)

287 1. No later than February 1, 2020, the Department of
 288 Revenue shall transfer from the Clerks of the Court Trust Fund

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289	to the General Revenue Fund the sum of the cumulative excess of
290	all fines, fees, service charges, and costs submitted by the
291	clerks of court pursuant to subsection (2) and the cumulative
292	excess of all fines, fees, service charges, and costs remitted
293	by the clerks of court pursuant to paragraph (a) in excess of
294	\$10 million.
295	2. No later than February 1, 2021, the Department of
296	Revenue shall transfer from the Clerks of the Court Trust Fund
297	to the General Revenue Fund not less than 50 percent of the sum
298	of the cumulative excess of all fines, fees, service charges,
299	and costs submitted by the clerks of court pursuant to

300 subsection (2) and the cumulative excess of all fines, fees, 301 service charges, and costs remitted by the clerks of court 302 pursuant to paragraph (a); provided however, the balance 303 remaining in the Clerks of Courts Trust Fund after such transfer 304 may not be more than \$20 million.

305 3. No later than February 1, 2022, the Department of Revenue shall transfer from the Clerks of the Court Trust Fund 306 307 to the General Revenue Fund not less than 50 percent of the sum of the cumulative excess of all fines, fees, service charges, 308 and costs submitted by the clerks of court pursuant to 309 subsection (2) and the cumulative excess of all fines, fees, 310 311 service charges, and costs remitted by the clerks of court 312 pursuant to paragraph (a); provided however, the balance 313 remaining in the Clerks of Courts Trust Fund after such transfer 314 may not be more than \$20 million.

315 4. No later than February 1, 2023, and each February 1
 316 thereafter, the Department of Revenue shall transfer from the
 317 Clerks of the Court Trust Fund to the General Revenue Fund the

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318 cumulative excess of all fines, fees, service charges, and costs 319 submitted by the clerks of court pursuant to subsection (2) and 320 the cumulative excess of all fines, fees, service charges, and 321 costs remitted by the clerks of court pursuant to paragraph (a).

322 (5) (4) The Department of Revenue shall collect any funds 323 that the Florida Clerks of Court Operations Corporation 324 determines upon investigation were due but not remitted to the 325 Department of Revenue. The corporation shall notify the clerk of 326 the court and the Department of Revenue of the amount due to the 327 Department of Revenue. The clerk of the court shall remit the 328 amount due no later than the 10th day of the month following the 329 month in which notice is provided by the corporation to the 330 clerk of the court.

331 (6) (5) Ten percent of all court-related fines collected by 332 the clerk, except for penalties or fines distributed to counties 333 or municipalities under s. 316.0083(1)(b)3. or s. 318.18(15)(a), 334 <u>must shall</u> be deposited into the fine and forfeiture fund to be 335 used exclusively for clerk court-related functions, as provided 336 in s. 28.35(3)(a).

337 Section 5. Section 28.42, Florida Statutes, is amended to 338 read:

339 28.42 Manual of filing fees, charges, costs, and fines; 340 payment plan form.-

341 (1) The clerks of court, through their association and in 342 consultation with the Office of the State Courts Administrator, 343 shall prepare and disseminate a manual of filing fees, service 344 charges, costs, and fines imposed pursuant to state law, for 345 each type of action and offense, and classified as mandatory or 346 discretionary. The manual also shall classify the fee, charge,

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347 cost, or fine as court-related revenue or noncourt-related revenue. The clerks, through their association, shall 348 disseminate this manual to the chief judge, state attorney, 349 350 public defender, and court administrator in each circuit and to 351 the clerk of the court in each county. The clerks, through their 352 association and in consultation with the Office of the State 353 Courts Administrator, shall at a minimum update and disseminate 354 this manual on July 1 of each year.

355 (2) By October 1, 2021, the clerks of court, through the 356 Florida Clerks of Court Operations Corporation, shall develop a 357 uniform payment plan form for use by persons seeking to 358 establish a payment plan in accordance with s. 28.246(4). The 359 form must inform the person of the minimum payment due each 360 month, the term of the plan, acceptable payment methods, and the 361 circumstances under which a case may be sent to collections for 362 nonpayment.

363 <u>(3) By January 1, 2022, each clerk of court shall use the</u> 364 <u>uniform payment plan form developed pursuant to subsection (2)</u> 365 when establishing payment plans.

366 Section 6. Paragraph (a) of subsection (1) of section 367 318.15, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

368 318.15 Failure to comply with civil penalty or to appear; 369 penalty.-

(1) (a) If a person fails to comply with the civil penalties provided in s. 318.18 within the time period specified in s. 318.14(4), fails to enter into or comply with the terms of a penalty payment plan with the clerk of the court in accordance with ss. 318.14 and 28.246, fails to attend driver improvement school, or fails to appear at a scheduled hearing, the clerk of

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376 the court must shall notify the Department of Highway Safety and 377 Motor Vehicles of such failure within 10 days after such failure. Upon receipt of such notice, the department must shall 378 379 immediately issue an order suspending the driver license and 380 privilege to drive of such person effective 20 days after the 381 date the order of suspension is mailed in accordance with s. 382 322.251(1), (2), and (6). The order also must inform the person 383 that he or she may contact the clerk of the court to establish a 384 payment plan pursuant to s. 28.246(4) to make partial payments 385 for court-related fines, fees, service charges, and court costs. 386 Any such suspension of the driving privilege which has not been 387 reinstated, including a similar suspension imposed outside of 388 this state Florida, must shall remain on the records of the 389 department for a period of 7 years from the date imposed and 390 must shall be removed from the records after the expiration of 7 391 years from the date it is imposed. The department may not accept the resubmission of such suspension. 392

393 Section 7. Section 318.20, Florida Statutes, is amended to 394 read:

395 318.20 Notification; duties of department.-The department 396 shall prepare a notification form to be appended to, or 397 incorporated as a part of, the Florida uniform traffic citation 398 issued in accordance with s. 316.650. The notification form must 399 shall contain language informing persons charged with 400 infractions to which this chapter applies of the procedures 401 available to them under this chapter. Such notification form 402 must shall contain a statement that, if the official determines that no infraction has been committed, no costs or penalties may 403 404 shall be imposed and any costs or penalties that which have been

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405 paid <u>will shall</u> be returned. <u>Additionally, the notification form</u> 406 <u>must include information on paying the civil penalty to the</u> 407 <u>clerk of the court and the ability to establish a payment plan</u> 408 <u>pursuant to s. 28.246(4).</u> A uniform traffic citation that is 409 produced electronically must also include the information 410 required by this section.

411 Section 8. Subsections (1) and (3) and paragraph (a) of 412 subsection (5) of section 322.245, Florida Statutes, are amended 413 to read:

414 322.245 Suspension of license upon failure of person 415 charged with specified offense under chapter 316, chapter 320, 416 or this chapter to comply with directives ordered by traffic 417 court or upon failure to pay child support in non-IV-D cases as 418 provided in chapter 61 or failure to pay any financial 419 obligation in any other criminal case.-

420 (1) If a person charged with a violation of any of the 421 criminal offenses enumerated in s. 318.17 or with the commission 422 of any offense constituting a misdemeanor under chapter 320 or 423 this chapter fails to comply with all of the directives of the 424 court within the time allotted by the court, the clerk of the 425 traffic court must provide shall mail to the person, either 426 electronically or by mail sent to at the address specified on 427 the uniform traffic citation, a notice of such failure, 42.8 notifying him or her that, if he or she does not comply with the 429 directives of the court within 30 days after the date of the 430 notice and pay a delinquency fee of up to \$25 to the clerk, from 431 which the clerk shall remit \$10 to the Department of Revenue for 432 deposit into the General Revenue Fund, his or her driver license will be suspended. The notice must shall be sent mailed no later 433

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434 than 5 days after such failure. The delinquency fee may be 435 retained by the office of the clerk to defray the operating 436 costs of the office.

437 (3) If the person fails to comply with the directives of 438 the court within the 30-day period, or, in non-IV-D cases, fails 439 to comply with the requirements of s. 61.13016 within the period specified in that statute, the depository or the clerk of the 440 court must shall electronically notify the department of such 441 442 failure within 10 days. Upon electronic receipt of the notice, 443 the department shall immediately issue an order suspending the person's driver license and privilege to drive effective 20 days 444 445 after the date the order of suspension is mailed in accordance with s. 322.251(1), (2), and (6). The order of suspension must 446 447 also contain information specifying that the person may contact 448 the clerk of the court to establish a payment plan pursuant to 449 s. 28.246(4) to make partial payments for fines, fees, service 450 charges, and court costs.

(5) (a) When the department receives notice from a clerk of 451 452 the court that a person licensed to operate a motor vehicle in 453 this state under the provisions of this chapter has failed to 454 pay financial obligations for any criminal offense other than 455 those specified in subsection (1), in full or in part under a 456 payment plan pursuant to s. 28.246(4), the department must shall 457 suspend the license of the person named in the notice. The 458 department shall mail an order of suspension in accordance with 459 s. 322.251(1), (2), and (6), which must also contain information 460 specifying that the person may contact the clerk of the court to 461 establish a payment plan pursuant to s. 28.246(4) to make partial payments for fines, fees, service charges, and court 462

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463 costs.

464 Section 9. Present subsection (3) of section 775.083, 465 Florida Statutes, is redesignated as subsection (4), and a new 466 subsection (3) is added to that section, to read: 467 775.083 Fines.-

468 (3) The clerk of the court of each county is the entity 469 responsible for collecting payment of fines, fees, service 470 charges, and court costs. Unless otherwise designated by the 471 court, a person who has been ordered to pay court obligations 472 under this section shall immediately contact the clerk to pay 473 fines, fees, service charges, and court costs in full, or to 474 apply for enrollment in a payment plan, pursuant to s.

475 28.246(4).

Section 10. Except as otherwise expressly provided in this act and except for this section, which shall take effect upon this act becoming a law, this act shall take effect October 1, 2021.