

1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to economic self-sufficiency; amending
3 s. 414.065, F.S.; providing that a participant has
4 good cause for noncompliance with work requirements
5 for a specified time period under certain
6 circumstances; amending s. 414.105, F.S.; providing
7 requirements for staff members of local workforce
8 development boards when interviewing participants;
9 amending s. 414.455, F.S.; requiring certain persons
10 to participate in an employment and training program;
11 amending s. 445.009, F.S.; requiring benefit
12 management and career planning using a specified tool
13 as part of the state's one-stop delivery system;
14 amending s. 445.011, F.S.; requiring the Department of
15 Commerce to develop certain training; conforming
16 provisions to changes made by the act; amending s.
17 445.017, F.S.; requiring a local workforce development
18 board to administer an intake survey; amending s.
19 445.024, F.S.; authorizing certain participants to
20 participate in certain programs or courses for a
21 specified number of hours per week; authorizing the
22 Department of Commerce to suspend certain work
23 requirements under certain circumstances; requiring
24 the department to issue notice to participants under
25 certain circumstances; amending s. 445.028, F.S.;

26 requiring the Department of Children and Families to
 27 administer an exit survey; creating s. 445.0281, F.S.;
 28 providing voluntary case management services to
 29 certain persons for specified purposes; providing
 30 requirements for such case management services and
 31 case managers; amending s. 445.035, F.S.; requiring
 32 CareerSource Florida, Inc., in collaboration with
 33 other entities, to develop standardized intake and
 34 exit surveys for specified purposes; specifying when
 35 such surveys must be administered; providing
 36 requirements for such surveys; requiring completed
 37 surveys to be submitted to CareerSource Florida, Inc.,
 38 and disseminated quarterly to certain departments;
 39 requiring the Department of Commerce, in consultation
 40 with other entities, to prepare and submit an annual
 41 report to the Legislature; providing requirements for
 42 such report; creating s. 1002.935, F.S.; creating the
 43 School Readiness Plus Program within the Department of
 44 Education; providing requirements for the program;
 45 providing eligibility requirements to receive a
 46 subsidy under the program; requiring early learning
 47 coalitions to administer the program and provide
 48 participants access to a specified tool; prohibiting
 49 early learning coalitions from spending more than a
 50 certain percentage on administrative costs of the

51 program in a fiscal year; providing for the
 52 calculation of the amount of the subsidy; providing
 53 requirements for parents to receive a subsidy;
 54 providing an appropriation; providing an effective
 55 date.

56
 57 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

58
 59 Section 1. Subsection (1) of section 414.065, Florida
 60 Statutes, is amended to read:

61 414.065 Noncompliance with work requirements.—

62 (1) PENALTIES FOR NONPARTICIPATION IN WORK REQUIREMENTS
 63 AND FAILURE TO COMPLY WITH ALTERNATIVE REQUIREMENT PLANS.—The
 64 department shall establish procedures for administering
 65 penalties for nonparticipation in work requirements and failure
 66 to comply with the alternative requirement plan. If an
 67 individual in a family receiving temporary cash assistance fails
 68 to engage in work activities required in accordance with s.
 69 445.024, the following penalties shall apply. Before ~~Prior to~~
 70 the imposition of a sanction, the participant must ~~shall~~ be
 71 notified orally or in writing that the participant is subject to
 72 sanction and that action will be taken to impose the sanction
 73 unless the participant complies with the work activity
 74 requirements. The participant must ~~shall~~ be counseled as to the
 75 consequences of noncompliance and, if appropriate, ~~shall be~~

76 referred for services that could assist the participant to fully
 77 comply with program requirements. If the participant has good
 78 cause for noncompliance or demonstrates satisfactory compliance,
 79 the sanction ~~may shall~~ not be imposed. If the requirements of s.
 80 445.024(2)(a)1. are suspended pursuant to s. 445.024(2)(a)2., a
 81 participant in noncompliance because of such suspension is
 82 considered to have good cause for noncompliance for up to 6
 83 weeks after the change in the participant's work requirements.
 84 If the participant has subsequently obtained employment, the
 85 participant must shall be counseled regarding the transitional
 86 benefits that may be available and provided information about
 87 how to access such benefits. The department shall administer
 88 sanctions related to food assistance consistent with federal
 89 regulations.

90 (a)1. First noncompliance: temporary cash assistance is
 91 ~~shall be~~ terminated for the family for a minimum of 10 days or
 92 until the individual who failed to comply does so.

93 2. Second noncompliance: temporary cash assistance is
 94 ~~shall be~~ terminated for the family for 1 month or until the
 95 individual who failed to comply does so, whichever is later.
 96 Upon meeting this requirement, temporary cash assistance must
 97 ~~shall~~ be reinstated to the date of compliance or the first day
 98 of the month following the penalty period, whichever is later.

99 3. Third noncompliance: temporary cash assistance is shall
 100 ~~be~~ terminated for the family for 3 months or until the

101 individual who failed to comply does so, whichever is later. The
102 individual must ~~shall be required to~~ comply with the required
103 work activity upon completion of the 3-month penalty period,
104 before reinstatement of temporary cash assistance. Upon meeting
105 this requirement, temporary cash assistance must ~~shall~~ be
106 reinstated to the date of compliance or the first day of the
107 month following the penalty period, whichever is later.

108 (b) If a participant receiving temporary cash assistance
109 who is otherwise exempted from noncompliance penalties fails to
110 comply with the alternative requirement plan required in
111 accordance with this section, the penalties provided in
112 paragraph (a) ~~shall~~ apply.

113
114 If a participant fully complies with work activity requirements
115 for at least 6 months, the participant must ~~shall~~ be reinstated
116 as being in full compliance with program requirements for
117 purpose of sanctions imposed under this section.

118 Section 2. Subsection (10) of section 414.105, Florida
119 Statutes, is amended to read:

120 414.105 Time limitations of temporary cash assistance.—
121 Except as otherwise provided in this section, an applicant or
122 current participant shall receive temporary cash assistance for
123 no more than a lifetime cumulative total of 48 months, unless
124 otherwise provided by law.

125 (10) A member of the staff of the local workforce

126 development board shall interview and assess the employment
 127 prospects and barriers of each participant who is within 6
 128 months of reaching the 48-month time limit. The staff member
 129 shall do all of the following:

130 (a) Administer the exit survey required under s. 445.035.

131 (b) Use a tool to demonstrate future financial impacts of
 132 the participant's change in income and benefits over time.

133 (c) Assist the participant in identifying actions
 134 necessary to become employed before reaching the benefit time
 135 limit for temporary cash assistance.

136 (d) and, If appropriate, shall refer the participant for
 137 services that could facilitate employment, including, but not
 138 limited to, transitional benefits and services.

139 Section 3. Section 414.455, Florida Statutes, is amended
 140 to read:

141 414.455 Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program;
 142 legislative authorization; mandatory participation in employment
 143 and training programs.-

144 (1) Notwithstanding s. 414.45, and unless expressly
 145 required by federal law, the department must ~~shall~~ obtain
 146 specific authorization from the Legislature before seeking,
 147 applying for, accepting, or renewing any waiver of work
 148 requirements established by the Supplemental Nutrition
 149 Assistance Program under 7 U.S.C. s. 2015(o).

150 (2) Unless prohibited by the Federal Government, the

151 department must require a person who is receiving food
152 assistance; who is 18 to 59 years of age, inclusive; who does
153 not have children under the age of 18 in his or her home; who
154 does not qualify for an exemption; and who is determined by the
155 department to be eligible, to participate in an employment and
156 training program.

157 Section 4. Paragraph (k) of subsection (1) of section
158 445.009, Florida Statutes, is redesignated as paragraph (l), and
159 a new paragraph (k) is added to that subsection, to read:

160 445.009 One-stop delivery system.—

161 (1) The one-stop delivery system is the state's primary
162 customer-service strategy for offering every Floridian access,
163 through service sites or telephone or computer networks, to the
164 following services:

165 (k) Benefit management and career planning using a tool to
166 demonstrate future financial impacts of the participant's change
167 in income and benefits over time.

168 Section 5. Subsections (1) and (5) of section 445.011,
169 Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

170 445.011 Consumer-first workforce system.—

171 (1) The department, in consultation with the state board,
172 the Department of Education, and the Department of Children and
173 Families, shall implement, subject to legislative appropriation,
174 an automated consumer-first workforce system that improves
175 coordination among required one-stop partners and is necessary

176 for the efficient and effective operation and management of the
177 workforce development system. This system must ~~shall~~ include,
178 but is ~~need~~ not ~~be~~ limited to, the following:

179 (a) An integrated management system for the one-stop
180 service delivery system, which includes, at a minimum, common
181 registration and intake for required one-stop partners,
182 screening for needs and benefits, benefit management and career
183 planning using a tool to demonstrate future financial impacts of
184 the participant's change in income and benefits over time, case
185 management, training benefits management, service and training
186 provider management, performance reporting, executive
187 information and reporting, and customer-satisfaction tracking
188 and reporting.

189 1. The system should report current budgeting,
190 expenditure, and performance information for assessing
191 performance related to outcomes, service delivery, and financial
192 administration for workforce programs pursuant to s. 445.004(5)
193 and (9).

194 2. The system should include auditable systems and
195 controls to ensure financial integrity and valid and reliable
196 performance information.

197 3. The system should support service integration and case
198 management across programs and agencies by providing for case
199 tracking for participants in workforce programs, participants
200 who receive benefits pursuant to public assistance programs

201 under chapter 414, and participants in welfare transition
 202 programs under this chapter.

203 (b) An automated job-matching information system that is
 204 accessible to employers, job seekers, and other users via the
 205 Internet, and that includes, at a minimum, all of the following:

206 1. Skill match information, including skill gap analysis;
 207 resume creation; job order creation; skill tests; job search by
 208 area, employer type, and employer name; and training provider
 209 linkage. ~~;~~

210 2. Job market information based on surveys, including
 211 local, state, regional, national, and international occupational
 212 and job availability information. ~~;~~ ~~and~~

213 3. Service provider information, including education and
 214 training providers, child care facilities and related
 215 information, health and social service agencies, and other
 216 providers of services that would be useful to job seekers.

217 (5) The department shall develop training for required
 218 one-stop partners on the use of the consumer-first workforce
 219 system, best practices for the use of a tool demonstrating
 220 future financial impacts of the participant's change in income
 221 and benefits over time, the different case management methods,
 222 the availability of welfare transition services, and how to
 223 prequalify individuals for workforce programs.

224 Section 6. Subsection (4) of section 445.017, Florida
 225 Statutes, is amended to read:

226 445.017 Diversion.—

227 (4) (a) The local workforce development board shall screen
 228 each family on a case-by-case basis for barriers to obtaining or
 229 retaining employment. The screening must ~~shall~~ identify barriers
 230 that, if corrected, may prevent the family from receiving
 231 temporary cash assistance on a regular basis. At the time of
 232 screening, the local workforce development board shall
 233 administer the intake survey required under s. 445.035(2).

234 (b) Assistance to overcome a barrier to employment is not
 235 limited to cash, but may include vouchers or other in-kind
 236 benefits.

237 Section 7. Subsection (2) of section 445.024, Florida
 238 Statutes, is amended to read:

239 445.024 Work requirements.—

240 (2) WORK ACTIVITY REQUIREMENTS.—Each individual who is not
 241 otherwise exempt from work activity requirements must
 242 participate in a work activity for the maximum number of hours
 243 allowable under federal law; however, a participant may not be
 244 required to work more than 40 hours per week. The maximum number
 245 of hours each month that a family may be required to participate
 246 in community service or work experience programs is the number
 247 of hours that would result from dividing the family's monthly
 248 amount for temporary cash assistance and food assistance by the
 249 applicable minimum wage. However, the maximum hours required per
 250 week for community service or work experience may not exceed 40

251 hours.

252 (a)1. A participant who has not earned a high school
253 diploma or its equivalent may participate in adult general
254 education, as defined in s. 1004.02(3), or a high school
255 equivalency examination preparation, as defined in s.
256 1004.02(16). A participant must participate in such program or
257 course for at least 20 hours per week in order to satisfy the
258 participant's work activity requirement.

259 2. If the state's TANF work participation rate, as
260 provided by federal law, does not exceed the federal minimum
261 work participation rate by 10 percentage points in any month,
262 the requirements of this subsection may be suspended by the
263 department until the work participation rate exceeds the federal
264 minimum work participation rate by 10 percentage points for at
265 least 3 consecutive months.

266 3. If the requirements of this subsection are suspended,
267 the department must issue notice to the affected participants of
268 the changed work requirements within 5 days after the change in
269 such work requirements.

270 (b)-(a) A participant in a work activity may also be
271 required to enroll in and attend a course of instruction
272 designed to increase literacy skills to a level necessary for
273 obtaining or retaining employment if the instruction plus the
274 work activity does not require more than 40 hours per week.

275 (c)-(b) Program funds may be used, as available, to support

276 the efforts of a participant who meets the work activity
277 requirements and who wishes to enroll in or continue enrollment
278 in an adult general education program or other training
279 programs.

280 Section 8. Subsections (1) and (2) of section 445.028,
281 Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

282 445.028 Transitional benefits and services.—In cooperation
283 with the department, the Department of Children and Families
284 shall develop procedures to ensure that families leaving the
285 temporary cash assistance program receive transitional benefits
286 and services that will assist the family in moving toward self-
287 sufficiency. At a minimum, such procedures must include, but are
288 not limited to, the following:

289 (1) Each recipient of cash assistance who is determined
290 ineligible for cash assistance for a reason other than a work
291 activity sanction must ~~shall~~ be contacted by the workforce
292 system case manager and provided information about the
293 availability of transitional benefits and services. Such contact
294 must include the administration of the exit survey required
295 under s. 445.035(2) and ~~shall~~ be attempted before ~~prior to~~
296 closure of the case management file.

297 (2) Each recipient of temporary cash assistance who is
298 determined ineligible for cash assistance due to noncompliance
299 with the work activity requirements must ~~shall~~ be contacted and
300 provided information in accordance with s. 414.065(1). Such

301 contact must include the administration of the exit survey
302 required under s. 445.035(2).

303 Section 9. Section 445.0281, Florida Statutes, is created
304 to read:

305 445.0281 Transitional case management.—Each recipient of
306 cash assistance who is determined ineligible for cash assistance
307 for a reason other than noncompliance with work activity
308 requirements is eligible for voluntary case management services
309 administered by the local workforce development board. Case
310 management services must be available to support families who
311 transition to economic self-sufficiency and to mitigate
312 dependency on cash assistance. Case management services must
313 include, but are not limited to, career planning, job search
314 assistance, resume building, basic financial planning,
315 connection to support services, and benefits management using a
316 tool to demonstrate future financial impacts of the
317 participant's change in income and benefits over time, as
318 applicable. Case managers must connect recipients to other
319 transitional benefits as needed.

320 Section 10. Section 445.035, Florida Statutes, is amended
321 to read:

322 445.035 Data collection and reporting.—

323 (1) The Department of Children and Families and the state
324 board shall collect data necessary to administer this chapter
325 and make the reports required under federal law to the United

326 States Department of Health and Human Services and the United
327 States Department of Agriculture.

328 (2) CareerSource Florida, Inc., in collaboration with the
329 department, the Department of Children and Families, and the
330 local workforce development boards, shall develop standardized
331 intake and exit surveys for the purpose of collecting and
332 aggregating data to monitor program effectiveness, inform
333 program improvements, and allocate resources.

334 (a) The intake survey must be administered by the local
335 workforce development boards during the required diversion
336 screening process under s. 445.017. The intake survey must be
337 administered to each new recipient of temporary cash assistance
338 under chapter 414 who has not otherwise completed the survey.

339 (b) The intake survey must, at a minimum, collect
340 qualitative or quantitative data, as applicable, relating to all
341 of the following:

342 1. The recipient's perceived individual barriers to
343 employment.

344 2. The reasons cited by the recipient for his or her
345 separation from employment in the previous 12 months.

346 3. The recipient's stated goals for employment or
347 professional development.

348 4. The recipient's highest level of education or
349 credentials attained or training received at the time of
350 enrollment.

351 5. The recipient's awareness of welfare transition
352 services.

353 (c) The exit survey must be administered by the local
354 workforce development boards to recipients of temporary cash
355 assistance under chapter 414 as recipients prepare to transition
356 off of temporary cash assistance. Based on a recipient's
357 circumstances, the exit survey must be administered to the
358 recipient at one of the following points of contact:

359 1. The recipient is approaching the statutory time
360 limitation for temporary cash assistance and is interviewed
361 pursuant to s. 414.105(10); or

362 2. At such time when the recipient becomes ineligible for
363 cash assistance and is contacted pursuant to s. 445.028.

364 (d) The exit survey must, at a minimum, collect data
365 relating to all of the following:

366 1. The recipient's enrollment in other public benefits
367 programs at the time of exit.

368 2. Whether the recipient has a long-term career plan.

369 3. The recipient's credentials or education attained or
370 training received during enrollment.

371 4. Barriers to the recipient's employment which were
372 addressed during enrollment.

373 5. Any remaining barriers to the recipient's employment.

374 (e) The completed surveys must be submitted to
375 CareerSource Florida, Inc., and anonymized data must be

376 disseminated quarterly to the department and the Department of
377 Children and Families.

378 (f) The department, in consultation with CareerSource
379 Florida, Inc., and the Department of Children and Families,
380 shall prepare and submit to the President of the Senate and the
381 Speaker of the House of Representatives a report by January 1 of
382 each year. The report must include, at a minimum, the results of
383 the intake and exit surveys, an analysis of the barriers to
384 employment experienced by the survey respondents, and any
385 recommendations for legislative and administrative changes to
386 mitigate such barriers and improve the effective use of
387 transitional benefits.

388 Section 11. Section 1002.935, Florida Statutes, is created
389 to read:

390 1002.935 School Readiness Plus Program.—The School
391 Readiness Plus Program is created within the Department of
392 Education to support the continued school readiness and child
393 care needs of working families with children. The program is
394 contingent upon a legislative appropriation and is provided on a
395 first-come, first-served basis.

396 (1)(a) A child who is determined to be ineligible for
397 school readiness program funds due to family income during the
398 annual eligibility redetermination process pursuant to s.
399 1002.87(6) is eligible for a subsidy under this section if the
400 family income is between 85 percent and 100 percent, inclusive,

401 of the state median income.

402 (b)1. The early learning coalitions established in s.
403 1002.83 shall administer the School Readiness Plus Program and
404 provide participants with access to the benefit management and
405 career planning tool described in s. 445.009(1)(k).

406 2. The early learning coalitions must spend the minimum
407 amount of funds necessary for the efficient and effective
408 administration of the School Readiness Plus Program. The early
409 learning coalitions may not use more than 5 percent of the funds
410 allowed for the program for administrative costs in a fiscal
411 year.

412 (2)(a) The amount of the subsidy is a percentage of the
413 early learning coalition's approved school readiness program
414 provider reimbursement rates as calculated pursuant to s.
415 1002.84(17). An early learning coalition shall consider family
416 income and a required parent copayment that increases in
417 relation to the family income when establishing the percentage
418 for the amount of the subsidy for the program.

419 (b) The amount of the subsidy and parent copayment must be
420 sufficient to allow the family to access eligible school
421 readiness providers pursuant to s. 1002.88 and enable the parent
422 to achieve self-sufficiency.

423 (3) For a parent to receive a subsidy under the program,
424 he or she must:

425 (a) Provide any documentation necessary to verify the

426 parent's eligibility to receive the subsidy.

427 (b) Be responsible for the payment of all child care
 428 expenses in excess of the amount of the subsidy.

429 Section 12. For the 2024-2025 fiscal year, the sum of
 430 \$23,076,259 in nonrecurring funds is appropriated from the
 431 General Revenue Fund to the Department of Education to implement
 432 the School Readiness Plus Program established in s. 1002.935,
 433 Florida Statutes, as created by this act. The funds shall be
 434 placed in reserve. The Department of Education is authorized
 435 pursuant to chapter 216, Florida Statutes, to submit budget
 436 amendments requesting the release of the funds. The release of
 437 funds is contingent upon the submission of an allocation plan
 438 developed by the Department of Education in collaboration with
 439 the early learning coalitions established under s. 1002.83,
 440 Florida Statutes.

441 Section 13. This act shall take effect July 1, 2024.