

26 read:

27 16.63 Dozier School for Boys and Okeechobee School Victim
 28 Compensation Program.-

29 (1) The Dozier School for Boys and Okeechobee School
 30 Victim Compensation Program is established within the Department
 31 of Legal Affairs. The purpose of the program is to compensate
 32 living persons who were confined to the Dozier School for Boys
 33 or the Okeechobee School at any time between 1940 and 1975 and
 34 who were subjected to mental, physical, or sexual abuse
 35 perpetrated by school personnel while they were so confined.

36 (2) The Department of Legal Affairs shall accept, review,
 37 and approve or deny applications for the payment of compensation
 38 claims under this section. Notice of the availability of such
 39 compensation must be given and any relevant forms made available
 40 for download on a page of the department's official website
 41 accessible through a direct link on the website's homepage,
 42 which link and page must be titled "The Dozier School for Boys
 43 and Okeechobee School Victim Compensation Program."

44 (3) An application for compensation under this section
 45 must be made by a living person who was confined to the Dozier
 46 School for Boys or the Okeechobee School between 1940 and 1975;
 47 the personal representative or estate of a decedent may not file
 48 an application for or receive compensation under this section.
 49 Such application must be made on a form approved by the
 50 department and include:

51 (a) The applicant's name, date of birth, mailing address,
52 phone number, and, if available, electronic mail address.

53 (b) The name of the school in which the applicant was
54 confined and the approximate dates of the applicant's
55 confinement.

56 (c) Reasonable proof submitted as attachments establishing
57 that the applicant was both:

58 1. Confined to the Dozier School for Boys or the
59 Okeechobee School between 1940 and 1975, which proof may include
60 school records submitted with a notarized certificate of
61 authenticity signed by the records custodian or certified court
62 records.

63 2. A victim of mental, physical, or sexual abuse
64 perpetrated by school personnel during the applicant's
65 confinement, which proof may include a notarized statement
66 signed by the applicant attesting to the abuse the applicant
67 suffered.

68 (d) A signed statement from the applicant acknowledging
69 that, by accepting compensation under this section, the
70 applicant waives any right to further compensation related to
71 the applicant's confinement at the Dozier School for Boys or the
72 Okeechobee School or any abuse suffered during such confinement.

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74 An application for compensation under this section must be
75 signed by the applicant under oath. A false statement in such

76 application, including in any attachment or exhibit submitted
 77 therewith, is subject to the penalty of perjury under s.
 78 837.012.

79 (4) Applications for compensation under this section must
 80 be submitted no later than December 31, 2024.

81 (5) Upon completed review of an application submitted
 82 under this section, the department shall either:

83 (a) Subject to appropriation, approve a one-time payment
 84 to an applicant whose application meets the criteria specified
 85 in this section. Each approved applicant shall receive an equal
 86 share of the funds appropriated for this purpose.

87 (b) Deny the payment of compensation under this section to
 88 an applicant whose application does not meet the criteria
 89 specified in this section.

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 91 Written notice of such approval or denial must be sent by
 92 certified mail, return receipt requested, to the mailing address
 93 provided by the applicant on the application form. An applicant
 94 whose application is rejected for providing insufficient
 95 information may submit a new application as provided in
 96 subsection (4).

97 (6) A person compensated under this section is ineligible
 98 for any further compensation related to the person's confinement
 99 at the Dozier School for Boys or the Okeechobee School or any
 100 abuse suffered during such confinement.

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101 (7) The department shall adopt by rule procedures and
102 forms necessary to administer this section.

103 Section 2. Pursuant to rules adopted by the State Board of
104 Education, the Commissioner of Education may award a standard
105 high school diploma to a person compensated pursuant to s.
106 16.63, Florida Statutes, who has not completed high school
107 graduation requirements.

108 Section 3. This act shall take effect July 1, 2024.