

1   A bill to be entitled  
 2           An act relating to background screenings and  
 3           certifications; amending s. 420.621, F.S.; defining  
 4           the term "person with lived experience"; creating s.  
 5           420.6241, F.S.; providing legislative intent;  
 6           providing qualifications for a person seeking  
 7           certification as a person with lived experience;  
 8           requiring continuum of care lead agencies to submit  
 9           certain information to the Department of Children and  
 10          Families for purposes of background screening;  
 11          providing duties of the department; prescribing  
 12          screening requirements; specifying disqualifying  
 13          offenses for a person applying for certification;  
 14          authorizing a person who does not meet background  
 15          screening requirements to apply to the department for  
 16          an exemption from disqualification; requiring the  
 17          department to accept or reject such application within  
 18          a specified time; amending s. 435.04, F.S.; specifying  
 19          additional disqualifying offenses under the background  
 20          screening requirements for certain persons; amending  
 21          s. 435.07, F.S.; revising requirements for exemptions  
 22          from disqualification from employment; amending s.  
 23          943.0438, F.S.; revising the effective date of a  
 24          requirement that independent sanctioning authorities  
 25          conduct level 2 background screenings of current and

26 prospective athletic coaches; amending s. 456.0135,  
 27 F.S.; expanding certain background screening  
 28 requirements to apply to additional health care  
 29 practitioners; providing applicability; requiring  
 30 specified health care practitioners licensed before a  
 31 specified date to comply with certain background  
 32 screening requirements upon their next licensure  
 33 renewal that takes place on or after a specified date;  
 34 prohibiting the Department of Health from renewing  
 35 specified health care practitioner licenses under  
 36 certain circumstances beginning on a specified date;  
 37 amending ss. 457.105, 463.006, 465.007, 465.0075,  
 38 466.006, 466.0067, 466.007, 467.011, 468.1185,  
 39 468.1215, 468.1695, 468.209, 468.213, 468.355,  
 40 468.358, 468.509, 468.513, 468.803, 478.45, 483.815,  
 41 483.901, 483.914, 484.007, 484.045, 486.031, 486.102,  
 42 490.005, 490.0051, 490.006, 491.0045, 491.0046,  
 43 491.005, and 491.006, F.S.; revising licensure,  
 44 registration, or certification requirements, as  
 45 applicable, for acupuncturists; optometrists;  
 46 pharmacists; pharmacist licenses by endorsement;  
 47 dentists; health access dental licenses; dental  
 48 hygienists; midwives; speech-language pathologists and  
 49 audiologists; speech-language pathology assistants and  
 50 audiology assistants; nursing home administrators;

51 occupational therapists and occupational therapy  
52 assistants; occupational therapist and occupational  
53 therapy assistant licenses by endorsement; respiratory  
54 therapists; respiratory therapist licenses by  
55 endorsement; dietitian/nutritionists;  
56 dietitian/nutritionist licenses by endorsement;  
57 practitioners of orthotics, prosthetics, or  
58 pedorthics; electrologists; clinical laboratory  
59 personnel; medical physicists; genetic counselors;  
60 opticians; hearing aid specialists; physical  
61 therapists; physical therapist assistants;  
62 psychologists and school psychologists; provisional  
63 licenses for psychologists; psychologist and school  
64 psychologist licenses by endorsement; intern  
65 registrations for clinical social work, marriage and  
66 family therapy, and mental health counseling;  
67 provisional licenses for clinical social workers,  
68 marriage and family therapists, and mental health  
69 counselors; clinical social workers, marriage and  
70 family therapists, and mental health counselors; and  
71 clinical social worker, marriage and family therapist,  
72 and mental health counselor licenses by endorsement,  
73 respectively, to include background screening  
74 requirements; making conforming and technical changes;  
75 amending ss. 468.505 and 491.003, F.S.; conforming

76 cross-references; providing an appropriation;  
 77 providing effective dates.

78

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

80

81 Section 1. Effective July 1, 2024, present subsection (6)  
 82 of section 420.621, Florida Statutes, is redesignated as  
 83 subsection (7), and a new subsection (6) is added to that  
 84 section, to read:

85 420.621 Definitions.—As used in ss. 420.621-420.628, the  
 86 term:

87 (6) "Person with lived experience" means any person with  
 88 current or past experience of homelessness, as defined in 24  
 89 C.F.R. s. 578.3, including persons who have accessed or sought  
 90 homeless services while fleeing domestic violence.

91 Section 2. Effective July 1, 2024, section 420.6241,  
 92 Florida Statutes, is created to read:

93 420.6241 Persons with lived experience.—

94 (1) LEGISLATIVE INTENT.—The Legislature finds that the  
 95 ability to provide adequate homeless services is limited due to  
 96 a shortage of professionals and paraprofessionals in the field.  
 97 Persons with lived experience of homelessness are uniquely  
 98 qualified to provide effective support services because they  
 99 share common life experiences with the persons they assist. A  
 100 person with lived experience may have a criminal history that

101 prevents him or her from meeting background screening  
102 requirements.

103 (2) QUALIFICATIONS.—A person may seek certification as a  
104 person with lived experience if he or she has received homeless  
105 services. A continuum of care lead agency serving the homeless  
106 must include documentation of the homeless services such person  
107 received when requesting a background check of the applicant.

108 (3) DUTIES OF THE DEPARTMENT.—The department shall ensure  
109 that an applicant's background screening required to achieve  
110 certification is conducted as provided in subsection (4).

111 (4) BACKGROUND SCREENING.—

112 (a) The background screening conducted under this  
113 subsection must ensure that the qualified applicant has not,  
114 during the preceding 3 years, been arrested for and is not  
115 awaiting final disposition of, has not been found guilty of,  
116 regardless of adjudication, or entered a plea of nolo contendere  
117 or guilty to, or has not been adjudicated delinquent and the  
118 record has been sealed or expunged for, any felony.

119 (b) The background screening conducted under this  
120 subsection must ensure that the qualified applicant has not been  
121 arrested for and is not awaiting final disposition of, has not  
122 been found guilty of, regardless of adjudication, or entered a  
123 plea of nolo contendere or guilty to, or has not been  
124 adjudicated delinquent and the record has been sealed or  
125 expunged for, any offense prohibited under any of the following

- 126 state laws or similar laws of another jurisdiction:
- 127 1. Section 393.135, relating to sexual misconduct with
- 128 certain developmentally disabled clients and reporting of such
- 129 sexual misconduct.
- 130 2. Section 394.4593, relating to sexual misconduct with
- 131 certain mental health patients and reporting of such sexual
- 132 misconduct.
- 133 3. Section 409.920, relating to Medicaid provider fraud,
- 134 if the offense is a felony of the first or second degree.
- 135 4. Section 415.111, relating to criminal penalties for
- 136 abuse, neglect, or exploitation of vulnerable adults.
- 137 5. Any offense that constitutes domestic violence, as
- 138 defined in s. 741.28.
- 139 6. Section 777.04, relating to attempts, solicitation, and
- 140 conspiracy to commit an offense listed in this paragraph.
- 141 7. Section 782.04, relating to murder.
- 142 8. Section 782.07, relating to manslaughter, aggravated
- 143 manslaughter of an elderly person or a disabled adult,
- 144 aggravated manslaughter of a child, or aggravated manslaughter
- 145 of an officer, a firefighter, an emergency medical technician,
- 146 or a paramedic.
- 147 9. Section 782.071, relating to vehicular homicide.
- 148 10. Section 782.09, relating to killing of an unborn child
- 149 by injury to the mother.
- 150 11. Chapter 784, relating to assault, battery, and

- 151 culpable negligence, if the offense is a felony.
- 152 12. Section 787.01, relating to kidnapping.
- 153 13. Section 787.02, relating to false imprisonment.
- 154 14. Section 787.025, relating to luring or enticing a  
155 child.
- 156 15. Section 787.04(2), relating to leading, taking,  
157 enticing, or removing a minor beyond the state limits, or  
158 concealing the location of a minor, with criminal intent pending  
159 custody proceedings.
- 160 16. Section 787.04(3), relating to leading, taking,  
161 enticing, or removing a minor beyond the state limits, or  
162 concealing the location of a minor, with criminal intent pending  
163 dependency proceedings or proceedings concerning alleged abuse  
164 or neglect of a minor.
- 165 17. Section 790.115(1), relating to exhibiting firearms or  
166 weapons within 1,000 feet of a school.
- 167 18. Section 790.115(2)(b), relating to possessing an  
168 electric weapon or device, a destructive device, or any other  
169 weapon on school property.
- 170 19. Section 794.011, relating to sexual battery.
- 171 20. Former s. 794.041, relating to prohibited acts of  
172 persons in familial or custodial authority.
- 173 21. Section 794.05, relating to unlawful sexual activity  
174 with certain minors.
- 175 22. Section 794.08, relating to female genital mutilation.

176        23. Section 796.07, relating to procuring another to  
177 commit prostitution, except for those offenses expunged pursuant  
178 to s. 943.0583.

179        24. Section 798.02, relating to lewd and lascivious  
180 behavior.

181        25. Chapter 800, relating to lewdness and indecent  
182 exposure.

183        26. Section 806.01, relating to arson.

184        27. Section 810.02, relating to burglary, if the offense  
185 is a felony of the first degree.

186        28. Section 810.14, relating to voyeurism, if the offense  
187 is a felony.

188        29. Section 810.145, relating to video voyeurism, if the  
189 offense is a felony.

190        30. Section 812.13, relating to robbery.

191        31. Section 812.131, relating to robbery by sudden  
192 snatching.

193        32. Section 812.133, relating to carjacking.

194        33. Section 812.135, relating to home-invasion robbery.

195        34. Section 817.034, relating to communications fraud, if  
196 the offense is a felony of the first degree.

197        35. Section 817.234, relating to false and fraudulent  
198 insurance claims, if the offense is a felony of the first or  
199 second degree.

200        36. Section 817.50, relating to fraudulently obtaining



- 201 goods or services from a health care provider and false reports  
 202 of a communicable disease.
- 203 37. Section 817.505, relating to patient brokering.
- 204 38. Section 817.568, relating to fraudulent use of  
 205 personal identification, if the offense is a felony of the first  
 206 or second degree.
- 207 39. Section 825.102, relating to abuse, aggravated abuse,  
 208 or neglect of an elderly person or a disabled adult.
- 209 40. Section 825.1025, relating to lewd or lascivious  
 210 offenses committed upon or in the presence of an elderly person  
 211 or a disabled person.
- 212 41. Section 825.103, relating to exploitation of an  
 213 elderly person or a disabled adult, if the offense is a felony.
- 214 42. Section 826.04, relating to incest.
- 215 43. Section 827.03, relating to child abuse, aggravated  
 216 child abuse, or neglect of a child.
- 217 44. Section 827.04, relating to contributing to the  
 218 delinquency or dependency of a child.
- 219 45. Former s. 827.05, relating to negligent treatment of  
 220 children.
- 221 46. Section 827.071, relating to sexual performance by a  
 222 child.
- 223 47. Section 831.30, relating to fraud in obtaining  
 224 medicinal drugs.
- 225 48. Section 831.31, relating to the sale, manufacture,

226 delivery, or possession with intent to sell, manufacture, or  
227 deliver any counterfeit controlled substance, if the offense is  
228 a felony.

229 49. Section 843.01, relating to resisting arrest with  
230 violence.

231 50. Section 843.025, relating to depriving a law  
232 enforcement, correctional, or correctional probation officer of  
233 the means of protection or communication.

234 51. Section 843.12, relating to aiding in an escape.

235 52. Section 843.13, relating to aiding in the escape of  
236 juvenile inmates of correctional institutions.

237 53. Chapter 847, relating to obscenity.

238 54. Section 874.05, relating to encouraging or recruiting  
239 another to join a criminal gang.

240 55. Chapter 893, relating to drug abuse prevention and  
241 control, if the offense is a felony of the second degree or  
242 greater severity.

243 56. Section 895.03, relating to racketeering and  
244 collection of unlawful debts.

245 57. Section 896.101, relating to the Florida Money  
246 Laundering Act.

247 58. Section 916.1075, relating to sexual misconduct with  
248 certain forensic clients and reporting of such sexual  
249 misconduct.

250 59. Section 944.35(3), relating to inflicting cruel or

251 inhuman treatment on an inmate, resulting in great bodily harm.

252 60. Section 944.40, relating to escape.

253 61. Section 944.46, relating to harboring, concealing, or  
254 aiding an escaped prisoner.

255 62. Section 944.47, relating to introduction of contraband  
256 into a correctional institution.

257 63. Section 985.701, relating to sexual misconduct in  
258 juvenile justice programs.

259 64. Section 985.711, relating to introduction of  
260 contraband into a detention facility.

261 (5) EXEMPTION REQUESTS.—An applicant who desires to become  
262 a certified person with lived experience but is disqualified  
263 under subsection (4) may apply to the department for an  
264 exemption from disqualification under s. 435.07, as applicable.  
265 The department shall accept or reject an application for  
266 exemption within 90 days after receiving the application from  
267 the applicant.

268 Section 3. Effective July 1, 2024, subsection (2) of  
269 section 435.04, Florida Statutes, as amended by section 2 of  
270 chapter 2023-220, Laws of Florida, is amended to read:

271 435.04 Level 2 screening standards.—

272 (2) The security background investigations under this  
273 section must ensure that persons subject to this section have  
274 not been arrested for and are awaiting final disposition of;~~;~~  
275 have not been found guilty of, regardless of adjudication, or

276 entered a plea of nolo contendere or guilty to it or have not  
277 been adjudicated delinquent and the record has not been sealed  
278 or expunged for, any offense prohibited under any of the  
279 following provisions of state law or similar law of another  
280 jurisdiction:

281 (a) Section 39.205, relating to the failure to report  
282 child abuse, abandonment, or neglect.

283 (b) Section 393.135, relating to sexual misconduct with  
284 certain developmentally disabled clients and reporting of such  
285 sexual misconduct.

286 (c) ~~(b)~~ Section 394.4593, relating to sexual misconduct  
287 with certain mental health patients and reporting of such sexual  
288 misconduct.

289 (d) Section 414.39, relating to fraud, if the offense was  
290 a felony.

291 (e) ~~(e)~~ Section 415.111, relating to adult abuse, neglect,  
292 or exploitation of aged persons or disabled adults.

293 (f) ~~(d)~~ Section 777.04, relating to attempts, solicitation,  
294 and conspiracy to commit an offense listed in this subsection.

295 (g) ~~(e)~~ Section 782.04, relating to murder.

296 (h) ~~(f)~~ Section 782.07, relating to manslaughter,  
297 aggravated manslaughter of an elderly person or disabled adult,  
298 or aggravated manslaughter of a child.

299 (i) ~~(g)~~ Section 782.071, relating to vehicular homicide.

300 (j) ~~(h)~~ Section 782.09, relating to killing of an unborn

301 child by injury to the mother.

302 (k)~~(i)~~ Chapter 784, relating to assault, battery, and  
303 culpable negligence, if the offense was a felony.

304 (l)~~(j)~~ Section 784.011, relating to assault, if the victim  
305 of the offense was a minor.

306 (m)~~(k)~~ Section 784.021, relating to aggravated assault.

307 (n)~~(l)~~ Section 784.03, relating to battery, if the victim  
308 of the offense was a minor.

309 (o)~~(m)~~ Section 784.045, relating to aggravated battery.

310 (p)~~(n)~~ Section 784.075, relating to battery on staff of a  
311 detention or commitment facility or on a juvenile probation  
312 officer.

313 (q)~~(o)~~ Section 787.01, relating to kidnapping.

314 (r)~~(p)~~ Section 787.02, relating to false imprisonment.

315 (s)~~(q)~~ Section 787.025, relating to luring or enticing a  
316 child.

317 (t)~~(r)~~ Section 787.04(2), relating to taking, enticing, or  
318 removing a child beyond the state limits with criminal intent  
319 pending custody proceedings.

320 (u)~~(s)~~ Section 787.04(3), relating to carrying a child  
321 beyond the state lines with criminal intent to avoid producing a  
322 child at a custody hearing or delivering the child to the  
323 designated person.

324 (v) Section 787.06, relating to human trafficking.

325 (w) Section 787.07, relating to human smuggling.

326        (x)~~(t)~~ Section 790.115(1), relating to exhibiting firearms  
 327 or weapons within 1,000 feet of a school.

328        (y)~~(u)~~ Section 790.115(2)(b), relating to possessing an  
 329 electric weapon or device, destructive device, or other weapon  
 330 on school property.

331        (z)~~(v)~~ Section 794.011, relating to sexual battery.

332        (aa)~~(w)~~ Former s. 794.041, relating to prohibited acts of  
 333 persons in familial or custodial authority.

334        (bb)~~(x)~~ Section 794.05, relating to unlawful sexual  
 335 activity with certain minors.

336        (cc)~~(y)~~ Section 794.08, relating to female genital  
 337 mutilation.

338        (dd)~~(z)~~ Chapter 796, relating to prostitution.

339        (ee)~~(aa)~~ Section 798.02, relating to lewd and lascivious  
 340 behavior.

341        (ff)~~(bb)~~ Chapter 800, relating to lewdness and indecent  
 342 exposure and offenses against students by authority figures.

343        (gg)~~(cc)~~ Section 806.01, relating to arson.

344        (hh)~~(dd)~~ Section 810.02, relating to burglary.

345        (ii)~~(ee)~~ Section 810.14, relating to voyeurism, if the  
 346 offense is a felony.

347        (jj)~~(ff)~~ Section 810.145, relating to video voyeurism, if  
 348 the offense is a felony.

349        (kk)~~(gg)~~ Chapter 812, relating to theft, robbery, and  
 350 related crimes, if the offense is a felony.

351 (ll)~~(hh)~~ Section 817.563, relating to fraudulent sale of  
 352 controlled substances, only if the offense was a felony.

353 (mm)~~(ii)~~ Section 825.102, relating to abuse, aggravated  
 354 abuse, or neglect of an elderly person or disabled adult.

355 (nn)~~(jj)~~ Section 825.1025, relating to lewd or lascivious  
 356 offenses committed upon or in the presence of an elderly person  
 357 or disabled adult.

358 (oo)~~(kk)~~ Section 825.103, relating to exploitation of an  
 359 elderly person or disabled adult, if the offense was a felony.

360 (pp)~~(ll)~~ Section 826.04, relating to incest.

361 (qq)~~(mm)~~ Section 827.03, relating to child abuse,  
 362 aggravated child abuse, or neglect of a child.

363 (rr)~~(nn)~~ Section 827.04, relating to contributing to the  
 364 delinquency or dependency of a child.

365 (ss)~~(oo)~~ Former s. 827.05, relating to negligent treatment  
 366 of children.

367 (tt)~~(pp)~~ Section 827.071, relating to sexual performance  
 368 by a child.

369 (uu) Section 831.311, relating to the unlawful sale,  
 370 manufacture, alteration, delivery, uttering, or possession of  
 371 counterfeit-resistant prescription blanks for controlled  
 372 substances.

373 (vv) Section 836.10, relating to written or electronic  
 374 threats to kill, do bodily injury, or conduct a mass shooting or  
 375 an act of terrorism.

376 (ww)~~(qq)~~ Section 843.01, relating to resisting arrest with  
 377 violence.

378 (xx)~~(rr)~~ Section 843.025, relating to depriving a law  
 379 enforcement, correctional, or correctional probation officer  
 380 means of protection or communication.

381 (yy)~~(ss)~~ Section 843.12, relating to aiding in an escape.

382 (zz)~~(tt)~~ Section 843.13, relating to aiding in the escape  
 383 of juvenile inmates in correctional institutions.

384 (aaa)~~(uu)~~ Chapter 847, relating to obscene literature.

385 (bbb) Section 859.01, relating to poisoning food or water.

386 (ccc) Section 873.01, relating to the prohibition on the  
 387 purchase or sale of human organs and tissue.

388 (ddd)~~(vv)~~ Section 874.05, relating to encouraging or  
 389 recruiting another to join a criminal gang.

390 (eee)~~(ww)~~ Chapter 893, relating to drug abuse prevention  
 391 and control, only if the offense was a felony or if any other  
 392 person involved in the offense was a minor.

393 (fff)~~(xx)~~ Section 916.1075, relating to sexual misconduct  
 394 with certain forensic clients and reporting of such sexual  
 395 misconduct.

396 (ggg)~~(yy)~~ Section 944.35(3), relating to inflicting cruel  
 397 or inhuman treatment on an inmate resulting in great bodily  
 398 harm.

399 (hhh)~~(zz)~~ Section 944.40, relating to escape.

400 (iii)~~(aaa)~~ Section 944.46, relating to harboring,



401 concealing, or aiding an escaped prisoner.

402 (jjj)~~(bbb)~~ Section 944.47, relating to introduction of  
 403 contraband into a correctional facility.

404 (kkk)~~(ccc)~~ Section 985.701, relating to sexual misconduct  
 405 in juvenile justice programs.

406 (lll)~~(ddd)~~ Section 985.711, relating to contraband  
 407 introduced into detention facilities.

408 Section 4. Effective July 1, 2024, subsection (1) of  
 409 section 435.07, Florida Statutes, as amended by section 3 of  
 410 chapter 2023-220, Laws of Florida, is amended to read:

411 435.07 Exemptions from disqualification.—Unless otherwise  
 412 provided by law, the provisions of this section apply to  
 413 exemptions from disqualification for disqualifying offenses  
 414 revealed pursuant to background screenings required under this  
 415 chapter, regardless of whether those disqualifying offenses are  
 416 listed in this chapter or other laws.

417 (1)(a) The head of the appropriate agency or qualified  
 418 entity may grant to any employee or person with an affiliation  
 419 otherwise disqualified from employment an exemption from  
 420 disqualification for:

421 1. Felonies for which at least 2 ~~3~~ years have elapsed  
 422 since the applicant for the exemption has completed or been  
 423 lawfully released from confinement, supervision, or nonmonetary  
 424 condition imposed by the court for the disqualifying felony;

425 2. Misdemeanors prohibited under any of the statutes cited

426 in this chapter or under similar statutes of other jurisdictions  
427 for which the applicant for the exemption has completed or been  
428 lawfully released from confinement, supervision, or nonmonetary  
429 condition imposed by the court;

430 3. Offenses that were felonies when committed but that are  
431 now misdemeanors and for which the applicant for the exemption  
432 has completed or been lawfully released from confinement,  
433 supervision, or nonmonetary condition imposed by the court; or

434 4. Findings of delinquency. For offenses that would be  
435 felonies if committed by an adult and the record has not been  
436 sealed or expunged, the exemption may not be granted until at  
437 least 3 years have elapsed since the applicant for the exemption  
438 has completed or been lawfully released from confinement,  
439 supervision, or nonmonetary condition imposed by the court for  
440 the disqualifying offense.

441 (b) A person applying for an exemption who was ordered to  
442 pay any amount for any fee, fine, fund, lien, ~~civil judgment,~~  
443 application, costs of prosecution, trust, or restitution as part  
444 of the judgment and sentence for any disqualifying felony or  
445 misdemeanor must pay the court-ordered amount in full before he  
446 or she is eligible for the exemption.

447  
448 For the purposes of this subsection, the term "felonies" means  
449 both felonies prohibited under any of the statutes cited in this  
450 chapter or under similar statutes of other jurisdictions.

451 Section 5. Effective July 1, 2024, paragraph (a) of  
 452 subsection (2) of section 943.0438, Florida Statutes, as amended  
 453 by section 5 of chapter 2023-220, Laws of Florida, is amended to  
 454 read:

455 943.0438 Athletic coaches for independent sanctioning  
 456 authorities.—

457 (2) An independent sanctioning authority shall:

458 (a) Effective January 1, 2025, conduct a level 2  
 459 background screening under s. 435.04 of each current and  
 460 prospective athletic coach. The authority may not delegate this  
 461 responsibility to an individual team and may not authorize any  
 462 person to act as an athletic coach unless a level 2 background  
 463 screening is conducted and does not result in disqualification  
 464 under paragraph (b).

465 Section 6. Subsection (1) of section 456.0135, Florida  
 466 Statutes, is amended to read:

467 456.0135 General background screening provisions.—

468 (1) An application for initial licensure received on or  
 469 after January 1, 2013, under chapter 458, chapter 459, chapter  
 470 460, chapter 461, chapter 462, chapter 463, chapter 464, s.  
 471 465.007, s. 465.0075, chapter 466, chapter 467, part I, part II,  
 472 part III, part V, part X ~~s. 465.022,~~ part XIII, or part XIV of  
 473 chapter 468, chapter 478, ~~or~~ chapter 480, chapter 483, chapter  
 474 484, chapter 486, chapter 490, or chapter 491 must ~~shall~~ include  
 475 fingerprints pursuant to procedures established by the

476 department through a vendor approved by the Department of Law  
477 Enforcement and fees imposed for the initial screening and  
478 retention of fingerprints. Fingerprints must be submitted  
479 electronically to the Department of Law Enforcement for state  
480 processing, and the Department of Law Enforcement shall forward  
481 the fingerprints to the Federal Bureau of Investigation for  
482 national processing. Each board, or the department if there is  
483 no board, must ~~shall~~ screen the results to determine whether ~~if~~  
484 an applicant meets licensure requirements. For any subsequent  
485 renewal of the applicant's license which ~~that~~ requires a  
486 national criminal history check, the department shall request  
487 the Department of Law Enforcement to forward the retained  
488 fingerprints of the applicant to the Federal Bureau of  
489 Investigation unless the fingerprints are enrolled in the  
490 national retained print arrest notification program.

491       Section 7. Beginning July 1, 2025, the amendments made by  
492 this act to s. 456.0135, Florida Statutes, apply to applicants  
493 seeking initial licensure in any of the health care professions  
494 specified in that section. To ensure that all health care  
495 practitioners practicing in the health care professions subject  
496 to the background screening requirements for initial licensure  
497 under s. 456.0135, Florida Statutes, as amended by this act, are  
498 screened, health care practitioners who were already licensed in  
499 such health care professions before July 1, 2025, must submit to  
500 background screening in accordance with s. 456.0135, Florida

501 Statutes, by their next licensure renewal that takes place on or  
 502 after July 1, 2025, notwithstanding the fact that s. 456.0135,  
 503 Florida Statutes, applies to initial licensure only. The  
 504 Department of Health may not renew the license of such a health  
 505 care practitioner after July 1, 2025, until he or she complies  
 506 with these background screening requirements.

507 Section 8. Subsection (2) of section 457.105, Florida  
 508 Statutes, as amended by SB 1600, 2024 Regular Session, is  
 509 amended to read:

510 457.105 Licensure qualifications and fees.—

511 (2) A person may become licensed to practice acupuncture  
 512 if the person applies to the department and meets all of the  
 513 following criteria:

514 (a) Is 21 years of age or older, has good moral character,  
 515 and has the ability to communicate in English, which is  
 516 demonstrated by having passed the national written examination  
 517 in English or, if such examination was passed in a foreign  
 518 language, by also having passed a nationally recognized English  
 519 proficiency examination.†

520 (b) Has completed 60 college credits from an accredited  
 521 postsecondary institution as a prerequisite to enrollment in an  
 522 authorized 3-year course of study in acupuncture and oriental  
 523 medicine, and has completed a 3-year course of study in  
 524 acupuncture and oriental medicine, and effective July 31, 2001,  
 525 a 4-year course of study in acupuncture and oriental medicine,

526 | which meets standards established by the board by rule, which  
 527 | standards include, but are not limited to, successful completion  
 528 | of academic courses in western anatomy, western physiology,  
 529 | western pathology, western biomedical terminology, first aid,  
 530 | and cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR). However, any person who  
 531 | enrolled in an authorized course of study in acupuncture before  
 532 | August 1, 1997, must have completed only a 2-year course of  
 533 | study which meets standards established by the board by rule,  
 534 | which standards must include, but are not limited to, successful  
 535 | completion of academic courses in western anatomy, western  
 536 | physiology, and western pathology.†

537 |       (c) Has successfully completed a board-approved national  
 538 | certification process, meets the requirements for licensure by  
 539 | endorsement under s. 456.0145, or passes an examination  
 540 | administered by the department, which examination tests the  
 541 | applicant's competency and knowledge of the practice of  
 542 | acupuncture and oriental medicine. At the request of any  
 543 | applicant, oriental nomenclature for the points must ~~shall~~ be  
 544 | used in the examination. The examination must ~~shall~~ include a  
 545 | practical examination of the knowledge and skills required to  
 546 | practice modern and traditional acupuncture and oriental  
 547 | medicine, covering diagnostic and treatment techniques and  
 548 | procedures.†~~and~~

549 |       (d) Pays the required fees set by the board by rule not to  
 550 | exceed the following amounts:

551           1. Examination fee: \$500 plus the actual per applicant  
 552 cost to the department for purchase of the written and practical  
 553 portions of the examination from a national organization  
 554 approved by the board.

555           2. Application fee: \$300.

556           3. Reexamination fee: \$500 plus the actual per applicant  
 557 cost to the department for purchase of the written and practical  
 558 portions of the examination from a national organization  
 559 approved by the board.

560           4. Initial biennial licensure fee: \$400, if licensed in  
 561 the first half of the biennium, and \$200, if licensed in the  
 562 second half of the biennium.

563           (e) Submits to background screening in accordance with s.  
 564 456.0135.

565           Section 9. Subsection (1) of section 463.006, Florida  
 566 Statutes, is amended to read:

567           463.006 Licensure and certification by examination.—

568           (1) Any person desiring to be a licensed practitioner  
 569 under ~~pursuant to~~ this chapter must apply to the department,  
 570 submit to background screening in accordance with s. 456.0135,  
 571 and ~~must~~ submit proof to the department that she or he meets all  
 572 of the following criteria:

573           (a) Has completed the application forms as required by the  
 574 board, remitted an application fee for certification not to  
 575 exceed \$250, remitted an examination fee for certification not

576 | to exceed \$250, and remitted an examination fee for licensure  
 577 | not to exceed \$325, all as set by the board.

578 | (b) Is at least 18 years of age.

579 | (c) Has graduated from an accredited school or college of  
 580 | optometry approved by rule of the board.

581 | (d) Is of good moral character.

582 | (e) Has successfully completed at least 110 hours of  
 583 | transcript-quality coursework and clinical training in general  
 584 | and ocular pharmacology as determined by the board, at an  
 585 | institution that:

586 | 1. Has facilities for both didactic and clinical  
 587 | instructions in pharmacology; and

588 | 2. Is accredited by a regional or professional accrediting  
 589 | organization that is recognized and approved by the Commission  
 590 | on Recognition of Postsecondary Accreditation or the United  
 591 | States Department of Education.

592 | (f) Has completed at least 1 year of supervised experience  
 593 | in differential diagnosis of eye disease or disorders as part of  
 594 | the optometric training or in a clinical setting as part of the  
 595 | optometric experience.

596 | Section 10. Subsection (1) of section 465.007, Florida  
 597 | Statutes, is amended to read:

598 | 465.007 Licensure by examination.—

599 | (1) Any person desiring to be licensed as a pharmacist  
 600 | shall apply to the department to take the licensure examination.



601 The department shall examine each applicant who the board  
602 certifies has met all of the following criteria:

603 (a) Completed the application form and remitted an  
604 examination fee set by the board not to exceed \$100 plus the  
605 actual per applicant cost to the department for purchase of  
606 portions of the examination from the National Association of  
607 Boards of Pharmacy or a similar national organization. The fees  
608 authorized under this section shall be established in sufficient  
609 amounts to cover administrative costs.

610 (b) Submitted to background screening in accordance with  
611 s. 456.0135.

612 (c)~~(b)~~ Submitted satisfactory proof that she or he is not  
613 less than 18 years of age and:

614 1. Is a recipient of a degree from a school or college of  
615 pharmacy accredited by an accrediting agency recognized and  
616 approved by the United States Office of Education; or

617 2. Is a graduate of a 4-year undergraduate pharmacy  
618 program of a school or college of pharmacy located outside the  
619 United States, has demonstrated proficiency in English by  
620 passing both the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL)  
621 and the Test of Spoken English (TSE), has passed the Foreign  
622 Pharmacy Graduate Equivalency Examination that is approved by  
623 rule of the board, and has completed a minimum of 500 hours in a  
624 supervised work activity program within this state under the  
625 supervision of a pharmacist licensed by the department, which

626 program is approved by the board.

627 (d)~~(e)~~ Submitted satisfactory proof that she or he has  
628 completed an internship program approved by the board. No such  
629 board-approved program shall exceed 2,080 hours, all of which  
630 may be obtained prior to graduation.

631 Section 11. Subsection (1) of section 465.0075, Florida  
632 Statutes, as amended by SB 1600, 2024 Regular Session, is  
633 amended to read:

634 465.0075 Licensure by endorsement; requirements; fee.—The  
635 department shall issue a license by endorsement to any applicant  
636 who, upon applying to the department, submitting to background  
637 screening in accordance with s. 456.0135, and remitting a  
638 nonrefundable fee set by the board in an amount not to exceed  
639 \$100, the board certifies has met the requirements for licensure  
640 by endorsement under s. 456.0145.

641 Section 12. Paragraph (b) of subsection (1) of section  
642 466.006, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

643 466.006 Examination of dentists.—

644 (1)

645 (b)1. Any person desiring to be licensed as a dentist  
646 shall apply to the department to take the licensure examinations  
647 and shall verify the information required on the application by  
648 oath. The application must ~~shall~~ include two recent photographs.  
649 There shall be an application fee set by the board not to exceed  
650 \$100 which shall be nonrefundable and. ~~There shall also be an~~

651 examination fee set by the board, ~~which shall~~ not to exceed \$425  
 652 plus the actual per applicant cost to the department for  
 653 purchase of some or all of the examination from the American  
 654 Board of Dental Examiners or its successor entity, if any,  
 655 provided the board finds the successor entity's clinical  
 656 examination complies with ~~the provisions of~~ this section. The  
 657 examination fee may be refunded ~~refundable~~ if the applicant is  
 658 found ineligible to take the examinations.

659 2. Applicants for licensure must also submit to background  
 660 screening in accordance with s. 456.0135.

661 Section 13. Section 466.0067, Florida Statutes, is amended  
 662 to read:

663 466.0067 Application for health access dental license.—The  
 664 Legislature finds that there is an important state interest in  
 665 attracting dentists to practice in underserved health access  
 666 settings in this state and further, that allowing out-of-state  
 667 dentists who meet certain criteria to practice in health access  
 668 settings without the supervision of a dentist licensed in this  
 669 state is substantially related to achieving this important state  
 670 interest. Therefore, notwithstanding the requirements of s.  
 671 466.006, the board shall grant a health access dental license to  
 672 practice dentistry in this state in health access settings as  
 673 defined in s. 466.003 to an applicant who meets all of the  
 674 following criteria:

675 (1) Files an appropriate application approved by the

676 board.†

677 (2) Pays an application license fee for a health access  
 678 dental license, laws-and-rule exam fee, and an initial licensure  
 679 fee. The fees specified in this subsection may not differ from  
 680 an applicant seeking licensure pursuant to s. 466.006.†

681 (3) Has submitted to background screening in accordance  
 682 with s. 456.0135 and has not been convicted of or pled nolo  
 683 contendere to, regardless of adjudication, any felony or  
 684 misdemeanor related to the practice of a health care  
 685 profession.†

686 (4) Submits proof of graduation from a dental school  
 687 accredited by the Commission on Dental Accreditation of the  
 688 American Dental Association or its successor agency.†

689 (5) Submits documentation that she or he has completed, or  
 690 will obtain before licensure, continuing education equivalent to  
 691 this state's requirement for dentists licensed under s. 466.006  
 692 for the last full reporting biennium before applying for a  
 693 health access dental license.†

694 (6) Submits proof of her or his successful completion of  
 695 parts I and II of the dental examination by the National Board  
 696 of Dental Examiners and a state or regional clinical dental  
 697 licensing examination that the board has determined effectively  
 698 measures the applicant's ability to practice safely.†

699 (7) Currently holds a valid, active dental license in good  
 700 standing which has not been revoked, suspended, restricted, or

701 otherwise disciplined from another of the United States, the  
 702 District of Columbia, or a United States territory.†

703 (8) Has never had a license revoked from another of the  
 704 United States, the District of Columbia, or a United States  
 705 territory.†

706 (9) Has never failed the examination specified in s.  
 707 466.006, unless the applicant was reexamined pursuant to s.  
 708 466.006 and received a license to practice dentistry in this  
 709 state.†

710 (10) Has not been reported to the National Practitioner  
 711 Data Bank, unless the applicant successfully appealed to have  
 712 his or her name removed from the data bank.†

713 (11) Submits proof that he or she has been engaged in the  
 714 active, clinical practice of dentistry providing direct patient  
 715 care for 5 years immediately preceding the date of application,  
 716 or in instances when the applicant has graduated from an  
 717 accredited dental school within the preceding 5 years, submits  
 718 proof of continuous clinical practice providing direct patient  
 719 care since graduation.† ~~and~~

720 (12) Has passed an examination covering the laws and rules  
 721 of the practice of dentistry in this state as described in s.  
 722 466.006(4)(a).

723 Section 14. Subsection (1) of section 466.007, Florida  
 724 Statutes, is amended to read:

725 466.007 Examination of dental hygienists.—

726           (1) (a) Any person desiring to be licensed as a dental  
727 hygienist shall apply to the department to take the licensure  
728 examinations and shall verify the information required on the  
729 application by oath. The application must ~~shall~~ include two  
730 recent photographs of the applicant. There shall be a  
731 nonrefundable application fee set by the board not to exceed  
732 \$100 and an examination fee set by the board ~~which shall~~ not to  
733 exceed ~~be more than~~ \$225. The examination fee may be refunded if  
734 the applicant is found ineligible to take the examinations.

735           (b) Applicants for licensure must also submit to  
736 background screening in accordance with s. 456.0135.

737           Section 15. Subsection (5) is added to section 467.011,  
738 Florida Statutes, to read:

739           467.011 Licensed midwives; qualifications; examination.—  
740 The department shall issue a license to practice midwifery to an  
741 applicant who meets all of the following criteria:

742           (5) Submits to background screening in accordance with s.  
743 456.0135.

744           Section 16. Subsection (2) of section 468.1185, Florida  
745 Statutes, is amended to read:

746           468.1185 Licensure.—

747           (2) The board shall certify for licensure any applicant  
748 who has met all of the following criteria:

749           (a) Satisfied the education and supervised clinical  
750 requirements of s. 468.1155.

751 (b) Satisfied the professional experience requirement of  
 752 s. 468.1165.

753 (c) Passed the licensure examination required by s.  
 754 468.1175.

755 (d) For an applicant for an audiologist license who has  
 756 obtained a doctoral degree in audiology, has satisfied the  
 757 education and supervised clinical requirements of paragraph (a)  
 758 and the professional experience requirements of paragraph (b).

759 (e) Submitted to background screening in accordance with  
 760 s. 456.0135.

761 Section 17. Subsections (1) and (2) of section 468.1215,  
 762 Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

763 468.1215 Speech-language pathology assistant and audiology  
 764 assistant; certification.—

765 (1) The department shall issue a certificate as a speech-  
 766 language pathology assistant to each applicant who the board  
 767 certifies has met all of the following criteria:

768 (a) Completed the application form and remitted the  
 769 required fees, including a nonrefundable application fee.

770 (b) Submitted to background screening in accordance with  
 771 s. 456.0135.

772 (c) ~~(b)~~ Earned a bachelor's degree from a college or  
 773 university accredited by a regional association of colleges and  
 774 schools recognized by the Department of Education which includes  
 775 at least 24 semester hours of coursework as approved by the

776 board at an institution accredited by an accrediting agency  
777 recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation.

778 (2) The department shall issue a certificate as an  
779 audiology assistant to each applicant who the board certifies  
780 has met all of the following criteria:

781 (a) Completed the application form and remitted the  
782 required fees, including a nonrefundable application fee.

783 (b) Submitted to background screening in accordance with  
784 s. 456.0135.

785 (c) ~~(b)~~ Earned a high school diploma or its equivalent.

786 Section 18. Present subsections (2), (3), and (4) of  
787 section 468.1695, Florida Statutes, are redesignated as  
788 subsections (3), (4), and (5), respectively, a new subsection  
789 (2) is added to that section, and present subsection (2) of that  
790 section is amended, to read:

791 468.1695 Licensure by examination.—

792 (2) Applicants for licensure must also submit to  
793 background screening in accordance with s. 456.0135.

794 (3) ~~(2)~~ The department shall examine each applicant who the  
795 board certifies has completed the application form, submitted to  
796 background screening, and remitted an examination fee set by the  
797 board not to exceed \$250 and who:

798 (a)1. Holds a baccalaureate degree from an accredited  
799 college or university and majored in health care administration,  
800 health services administration, or an equivalent major, or has



801 credit for at least 60 semester hours in subjects, as prescribed  
802 by rule of the board, which prepare the applicant for total  
803 management of a nursing home; and

804 2. Has fulfilled the requirements of a college-affiliated  
805 or university-affiliated internship in nursing home  
806 administration or of a 1,000-hour nursing home administrator-in-  
807 training program prescribed by the board; or

808 (b)1. Holds a baccalaureate degree from an accredited  
809 college or university; and

810 2.a. Has fulfilled the requirements of a 2,000-hour  
811 nursing home administrator-in-training program prescribed by the  
812 board; or

813 b. Has 1 year of management experience allowing for the  
814 application of executive duties and skills, including the  
815 staffing, budgeting, and directing of resident care, dietary,  
816 and bookkeeping departments within a skilled nursing facility,  
817 hospital, hospice, assisted living facility with a minimum of 60  
818 licensed beds, or geriatric residential treatment program and,  
819 if such experience is not in a skilled nursing facility, has  
820 fulfilled the requirements of a 1,000-hour nursing home  
821 administrator-in-training program prescribed by the board.

822 Section 19. Subsections (1) and (2) of section 468.209,  
823 Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

824 468.209 Requirements for licensure.—

825 (1) An applicant applying for a license as an occupational

826 therapist or as an occupational therapy assistant shall apply to  
827 the department on forms furnished by the department. The  
828 department shall license each applicant who the board certifies  
829 meets all of the following criteria:

830 (a) Has completed the file a written application form and  
831 remitted, accompanied by the application for licensure fee  
832 prescribed in s. 468.221.

833 (b) Has submitted to background screening in accordance  
834 with s. 456.0135., on forms provided by the department, showing  
835 to the satisfaction of the board that she or he:

836 (c)-(a) Is of good moral character.

837 (d)-(b) Has successfully completed the academic  
838 requirements of an educational program in occupational therapy  
839 recognized by the board, with concentration in biologic or  
840 physical science, psychology, and sociology, and with education  
841 in selected manual skills. Such a program shall be accredited by  
842 the American Occupational Therapy Association's Accreditation  
843 Council for Occupational Therapy Education, or its successor.

844 (e)-(c) Has successfully completed a period of supervised  
845 fieldwork experience at a recognized educational institution or  
846 a training program approved by the educational institution where  
847 she or he met the academic requirements. For an occupational  
848 therapist, a minimum of 6 months of supervised fieldwork  
849 experience is required. For an occupational therapy assistant, a  
850 minimum of 2 months of supervised fieldwork experience is

851 required.

852 (f)~~(d)~~ Has passed an examination conducted or adopted by  
853 the board as provided in s. 468.211.

854 (2) An applicant who has practiced as a state-licensed or  
855 American Occupational Therapy Association-certified occupational  
856 therapy assistant for 4 years and who, before January 24, 1988,  
857 completed a minimum of 24 weeks of supervised occupational-  
858 therapist-level fieldwork experience may take the examination to  
859 be licensed as an occupational therapist without meeting the  
860 educational requirements for occupational therapists made  
861 otherwise applicable under paragraph (1) (d) ~~(1) (b)~~.

862 Section 20. Subsection (3) is added to section 468.213,  
863 Florida Statutes, to read:

864 468.213 Licensure by endorsement.—

865 (3) Applicants for licensure by endorsement under s.  
866 456.0145 must submit to background screening in accordance with  
867 s. 456.0135.

868 Section 21. Section 468.355, Florida Statutes, is amended  
869 to read:

870 468.355 Licensure requirements.—To be eligible for  
871 licensure by the board, an applicant must be an active  
872 "certified respiratory therapist" or an active "registered  
873 respiratory therapist" as designated by the National Board for  
874 Respiratory Care, or its successor, and submit to background  
875 screening in accordance with s. 456.0135.

876 Section 22. Subsection (4) of section 468.358, Florida  
 877 Statutes, is amended to read:

878 468.358 Licensure by endorsement.—

879 (4) Applicants for licensure ~~shall not be granted~~ by  
 880 endorsement under as provided in this section must submit  
 881 ~~without the submission of~~ a proper application, remit and the  
 882 ~~payment of~~ the requisite application fee, and submit to  
 883 background screening in accordance with s. 456.0135 fees  
 884 ~~therefor.~~

885 Section 23. Present subsections (2), (3), and (4) of  
 886 section 468.509, Florida Statutes, are redesignated as  
 887 subsections (3), (4), and (5), respectively, a new subsection  
 888 (2) is added to that section, and present subsection (2) of that  
 889 section is amended, to read:

890 468.509 Dietitian/nutritionist; requirements for  
 891 licensure.—

892 (2) Applicants for licensure must also submit to  
 893 background screening in accordance with s. 456.0135.

894 ~~(3)(2)~~ The department shall examine any applicant who the  
 895 board certifies has completed the application form, submitted to  
 896 background screening, and remitted the application and  
 897 examination fees specified in s. 468.508 and who:

898 (a)1. Possesses a baccalaureate or postbaccalaureate  
 899 degree with a major course of study in human nutrition, food and  
 900 nutrition, dietetics, or food management, or an equivalent major

901 course of study, from a school or program accredited, at the  
902 time of the applicant's graduation, by the appropriate  
903 accrediting agency recognized by the Commission on Recognition  
904 of Postsecondary Accreditation and the United States Department  
905 of Education; and

906 2. Has completed a preprofessional experience component of  
907 not less than 900 hours or has education or experience  
908 determined to be equivalent by the board; or

909 (b)1. Has an academic degree, from a foreign country, that  
910 has been validated by an accrediting agency approved by the  
911 United States Department of Education as equivalent to the  
912 baccalaureate or postbaccalaureate degree conferred by a  
913 regionally accredited college or university in the United  
914 States;

915 2. Has completed a major course of study in human  
916 nutrition, food and nutrition, dietetics, or food management;  
917 and

918 3. Has completed a preprofessional experience component of  
919 not less than 900 hours or has education or experience  
920 determined to be equivalent by the board.

921 Section 24. Section 468.513, Florida Statutes, as amended  
922 by SB 1600, 2024 Regular Session, is amended to read:

923 468.513 Dietitian/nutritionist; licensure by endorsement.—  
924 The department shall issue a license to practice dietetics and  
925 nutrition by endorsement to any applicant who submits to

926 background screening in accordance with s. 456.0135 and meets  
 927 the requirements for licensure by endorsement under s. 456.0145,  
 928 upon receipt of a completed application and the fee specified in  
 929 s. 468.508.

930 Section 25. Subsection (2) of section 468.803, Florida  
 931 Statutes, is amended to read:

932 468.803 License, registration, and examination  
 933 requirements.—

934 (2) An applicant for registration, examination, or  
 935 licensure must apply to the department on a form prescribed by  
 936 the board for consideration of board approval. Each initial  
 937 applicant shall submit fingerprints to the department in  
 938 accordance with s. 456.0135 and any other procedures specified  
 939 by the department for state and national criminal history checks  
 940 of the applicant. The board shall screen the results to  
 941 determine if an applicant meets licensure requirements. The  
 942 board shall consider for examination, registration, or licensure  
 943 each applicant whom the board verifies meets all of the  
 944 following criteria:

945 (a) Has submitted the completed application and completed  
 946 the fingerprinting requirements and has paid the applicable  
 947 application fee, not to exceed \$500. The application fee is  
 948 nonrefundable. ~~†~~

949 (b) Is of good moral character. ~~†~~

950 (c) Is 18 years of age or older. ~~†~~ ~~and~~

951 (d) Has completed the appropriate educational preparation.  
 952 Section 26. Subsection (1) of section 478.45, Florida  
 953 Statutes, is amended to read:

954 478.45 Requirements for licensure.—

955 (1) An applicant applying for licensure as an  
 956 electrologist shall apply to the department on forms furnished  
 957 by the department. The department shall license each applicant  
 958 who the board certifies meets all of the following criteria:

959 (a) Has completed the file a written application form and  
 960 remitted, accompanied by the application for licensure fee  
 961 prescribed in s. 478.55.

962 (b) Has submitted to background screening in accordance  
 963 with s. 456.0135., on a form provided by the board, showing to  
 964 the satisfaction of the board that the applicant:

965 (c)-(a) Is at least 18 years old.

966 (d)-(b) Is of good moral character.

967 (e)-(e) Possesses a high school diploma or a high school  
 968 equivalency diploma.

969 (f)-(d) Has not committed an act in any jurisdiction which  
 970 would constitute grounds for disciplining an electrologist in  
 971 this state.

972 (g)-(e) Has successfully completed the academic  
 973 requirements of an electrolysis training program, not to exceed  
 974 120 hours, and the practical application thereof as approved by  
 975 the board.

976 Section 27. Section 483.815, Florida Statutes, is amended  
977 to read:

978 483.815 Application for clinical laboratory personnel  
979 license.—An application for a clinical laboratory personnel  
980 license shall be made under oath on forms provided by the  
981 department and shall be accompanied by payment of fees as  
982 provided by this part. Applicants for licensure must also submit  
983 to background screening in accordance with s. 456.0135. A  
984 license may be issued authorizing the performance of procedures  
985 of one or more categories.

986 Section 28. Present paragraphs (b) through (k) of  
987 subsection (4) of section 483.901, Florida Statutes, are  
988 redesignated as paragraphs (c) through (l), respectively, a new  
989 paragraph (b) is added to that subsection, and paragraph (a) of  
990 that subsection is amended, to read:

991 483.901 Medical physicists; definitions; licensure.—

992 (4) LICENSE REQUIRED.—An individual may not engage in the  
993 practice of medical physics, including the specialties of  
994 diagnostic radiological physics, therapeutic radiological  
995 physics, medical nuclear radiological physics, or medical health  
996 physics, without a license issued by the department for the  
997 appropriate specialty.

998 (a) The department shall adopt rules to administer this  
999 section which specify license application and renewal fees,  
1000 continuing education requirements, background screening



1001 requirements, and standards for practicing medical physics. The  
 1002 department shall require a minimum of 24 hours per biennium of  
 1003 continuing education offered by an organization approved by the  
 1004 department. The department may adopt rules to specify continuing  
 1005 education requirements for persons who hold a license in more  
 1006 than one specialty.

1007 (b) Applicants for a medical physicist license must submit  
 1008 to background screening in accordance with s. 456.0135.

1009 Section 29. Subsections (2) and (3) of section 483.914,  
 1010 Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

1011 483.914 Licensure requirements.—

1012 (2) The department shall issue a license, valid for 2  
 1013 years, to each applicant who meets all of the following  
 1014 criteria:

1015 (a) Has completed an application.

1016 (b) Has submitted to background screening in accordance  
 1017 with s. 456.0135.

1018 (c)~~(b)~~ Is of good moral character.

1019 (d)~~(c)~~ Provides satisfactory documentation of having  
 1020 earned:

1021 1. A master's degree from a genetic counseling training  
 1022 program or its equivalent as determined by the Accreditation  
 1023 Council of Genetic Counseling or its successor or an equivalent  
 1024 entity; or

1025 2. A doctoral degree from a medical genetics training

1026 program accredited by the American Board of Medical Genetics and  
1027 Genomics or the Canadian College of Medical Geneticists.

1028 (e)~~(d)~~ Has passed the examination for certification as:

1029 1. A genetic counselor by the American Board of Genetic  
1030 Counseling, Inc., the American Board of Medical Genetics and  
1031 Genomics, or the Canadian Association of Genetic Counsellors; or

1032 2. A medical or clinical geneticist by the American Board  
1033 of Medical Genetics and Genomics or the Canadian College of  
1034 Medical Geneticists.

1035 (3) The department may issue a temporary license for up to  
1036 2 years to an applicant who meets all requirements for licensure  
1037 except for the certification examination requirement imposed  
1038 under paragraph (2)(e) ~~(2)(d)~~ and is eligible to sit for that  
1039 certification examination.

1040 Section 30. Present paragraphs (b), (c), and (d) of  
1041 subsection (1) of section 484.007, Florida Statutes, as amended  
1042 by SB 1600, 2024 Regular Session, are redesignated as paragraphs  
1043 (c), (d), and (e), respectively, and a new paragraph (b) is  
1044 added to that subsection, to read:

1045 484.007 Licensure of opticians; permitting of optical  
1046 establishments.—

1047 (1) Any person desiring to practice opticianry shall apply  
1048 to the department, upon forms prescribed by it, to take a  
1049 licensure examination. The department shall examine each  
1050 applicant who the board certifies meets all of the following

1051 criteria:

1052 (b) Submits to background screening in accordance with s.

1053 456.0135.

1054 Section 31. Subsection (2) of section 484.045, Florida

1055 Statutes, is amended to read:

1056 484.045 Licensure by examination.—

1057 (2) The department shall license each applicant who the

1058 board certifies meets all of the following criteria:

1059 (a) Has completed the application form and remitted the

1060 required fees.

1061 (b) Has submitted to background screening in accordance

1062 with s. 456.0135.

1063 (c)~~(b)~~ Is of good moral character.

1064 (d)~~(e)~~ Is 18 years of age or older.

1065 (e)~~(d)~~ Is a graduate of an accredited high school or its

1066 equivalent.

1067 (f)1.~~(e)1.~~ Has met the requirements of the training

1068 program; or

1069 2.a. Has a valid, current license as a hearing aid

1070 specialist or its equivalent from another state and has been

1071 actively practicing in such capacity for at least 12 months; or

1072 b. Is currently certified by the National Board for

1073 Certification in Hearing Instrument Sciences and has been

1074 actively practicing for at least 12 months.

1075 (g)~~(f)~~ Has passed an examination, as prescribed by board

1076 rule.

1077 (h)~~(g)~~ Has demonstrated, in a manner designated by rule of  
 1078 the board, knowledge of state laws and rules relating to the  
 1079 fitting and dispensing of prescription hearing aids.

1080 Section 32. Subsection (1) of section 486.031, Florida  
 1081 Statutes, as amended by SB 1600 and SB 7016, 2024 Regular  
 1082 Session, is amended to read:

1083 486.031 Physical therapist; licensing requirements;  
 1084 exemption.—

1085 (1) To be eligible for licensing as a physical therapist,  
 1086 an applicant must meet all of the following criteria:

1087 (a) Be at least 18 years old.†

1088 (b) Be of good moral character.†~~and~~

1089 (c)1. Have graduated from a school of physical therapy  
 1090 which has been approved for the educational preparation of  
 1091 physical therapists by the appropriate accrediting agency  
 1092 recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation, or  
 1093 its successor or the United States Department of Education at  
 1094 the time of her or his graduation and have passed, to the  
 1095 satisfaction of the board, the American Registry Examination  
 1096 before 1971 or a national examination approved by the board to  
 1097 determine her or his fitness for practice as a physical  
 1098 therapist under this chapter;

1099 2. Have received a diploma from a program in physical  
 1100 therapy in a foreign country and have educational credentials

1101 deemed equivalent to those required for the educational  
1102 preparation of physical therapists in this country, as  
1103 recognized by the appropriate agency as identified by the board,  
1104 and have passed to the satisfaction of the board an examination  
1105 to determine her or his fitness for practice as a physical  
1106 therapist under this chapter; or

1107 3. Be entitled to licensure by endorsement or without  
1108 examination as provided in s. 486.081.

1109 (d) Have submitted to background screening in accordance  
1110 with s. 456.0135.

1111 Section 33. Subsection (1) of section 486.102, Florida  
1112 Statutes, as amended by SB 1600 and SB 7016, 2024 Regular  
1113 Session, is amended to read:

1114 486.102 Physical therapist assistant; licensing  
1115 requirements; exemption.—

1116 (1) To be eligible for licensing by the board as a  
1117 physical therapist assistant, an applicant must meet all of the  
1118 following criteria:

1119 (a) Be at least 18 years old.~~;~~

1120 (b) Be of good moral character.~~;~~~~and~~

1121 (c)1. Have graduated from a school providing a course of  
1122 at least 2 years for physical therapist assistants, which has  
1123 been approved for the educational preparation of physical  
1124 therapist assistants by the appropriate accrediting agency  
1125 recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation or

1126 | its successor or the United States Department of Education, at  
 1127 | the time of her or his graduation and have passed to the  
 1128 | satisfaction of the board an examination to determine her or his  
 1129 | fitness for practice as a physical therapist assistant under  
 1130 | this chapter;

1131 |         2. Have graduated from a school providing a course for  
 1132 | physical therapist assistants in a foreign country and have  
 1133 | educational credentials deemed equivalent to those required for  
 1134 | the educational preparation of physical therapist assistants in  
 1135 | this country, as recognized by the appropriate agency as  
 1136 | identified by the board, and passed to the satisfaction of the  
 1137 | board an examination to determine her or his fitness for  
 1138 | practice as a physical therapist assistant under this chapter;

1139 |         3. Be entitled to licensure by endorsement as provided in  
 1140 | s. 486.107; or

1141 |         4. Have been enrolled between July 1, 2014, and July 1,  
 1142 | 2016, in a physical therapist assistant school in this state  
 1143 | which was accredited at the time of enrollment; and

1144 |             a. Have graduated ~~or be eligible to graduate from such~~  
 1145 | ~~school no later than July 1, 2018;~~ and

1146 |             b. Have passed to the satisfaction of the board an  
 1147 | examination to determine his or her fitness for practice as a  
 1148 | physical therapist assistant as provided in s. 486.104.

1149 |             (d) Have submitted to background screening in accordance  
 1150 | with s. 456.0135.

1151 Section 34. Present paragraphs (b), (c), and (d) of  
 1152 subsection (1) of section 490.005, Florida Statutes, are  
 1153 redesignated as paragraphs (c), (d), and (e), respectively, a  
 1154 new paragraph (b) is added to that subsection, and subsection  
 1155 (2) of that section is amended, to read:

1156 490.005 Licensure by examination.—

1157 (1) Any person desiring to be licensed as a psychologist  
 1158 shall apply to the department to take the licensure examination.  
 1159 The department shall license each applicant whom the board  
 1160 certifies has met all of the following requirements:

1161 (b) Submitted to background screening in accordance with  
 1162 s. 456.0135.

1163 (2) Any person desiring to be licensed as a school  
 1164 psychologist shall apply to the department to take the licensure  
 1165 examination. The department shall license each applicant who the  
 1166 department certifies has met all of the following requirements:

1167 (a) Satisfactorily completed the application form and  
 1168 submitted a nonrefundable application fee not to exceed \$250 and  
 1169 an examination fee sufficient to cover the per applicant cost to  
 1170 the department for development, purchase, and administration of  
 1171 the examination, but not to exceed \$250 as set by department  
 1172 rule.

1173 (b) Submitted to background screening in accordance with  
 1174 s. 456.0135.

1175 (c)-(b) Submitted satisfactory proof to the department that

1176 | the applicant:

1177 |         1. Has received a doctorate, specialist, or equivalent  
 1178 | degree from a program primarily psychological in nature and has  
 1179 | completed 60 semester hours or 90 quarter hours of graduate  
 1180 | study, in areas related to school psychology as defined by rule  
 1181 | of the department, from a college or university which at the  
 1182 | time the applicant was enrolled and graduated was accredited by  
 1183 | an accrediting agency recognized and approved by the Council for  
 1184 | Higher Education Accreditation or its successor organization or  
 1185 | from an institution that is a member in good standing with the  
 1186 | Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada.

1187 |         2. Has had a minimum of 3 years of experience in school  
 1188 | psychology, 2 years of which must be supervised by an individual  
 1189 | who is a licensed school psychologist or who has otherwise  
 1190 | qualified as a school psychologist supervisor, by education and  
 1191 | experience, as set forth by rule of the department. A doctoral  
 1192 | internship may be applied toward the supervision requirement.

1193 |         3. Has passed an examination provided by the department.

1194 |         Section 35. Present paragraphs (b) and (c) of subsection  
 1195 | (1) of section 490.0051, Florida Statutes, are redesignated as  
 1196 | paragraphs (c) and (d), respectively, and a new paragraph (b) is  
 1197 | added to that subsection, to read:

1198 |             490.0051 Provisional licensure; requirements.—

1199 |             (1) The department shall issue a provisional psychology  
 1200 | license to each applicant whom the board certifies has met all



1201 of the following criteria:

1202 (b) Submitted to background screening in accordance with  
 1203 s. 456.0135.

1204 Section 36. Subsection (1) of section 490.006, Florida  
 1205 Statutes, as amended by SB 1600, 2024 Regular Session, is  
 1206 amended to read:

1207 490.006 Licensure by endorsement.—

1208 (1) The department shall license a person as a  
 1209 psychologist or school psychologist who, upon applying to the  
 1210 department, submitting to background screening in accordance  
 1211 with s. 456.0135, and remitting the appropriate fee,  
 1212 demonstrates to the department or, in the case of psychologists,  
 1213 to the board that the applicant meets the requirements for  
 1214 licensure by endorsement under s. 456.0145.

1215 Section 37. Subsections (1), (2), (4), and (6) of section  
 1216 491.0045, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

1217 491.0045 Intern registration; requirements.—

1218 (1) An individual who has not satisfied the postgraduate  
 1219 or post-master's level experience requirements, as specified in  
 1220 s. 491.005(1)(d), (3)(d), or (4)(d) ~~s. 491.005(1)(c), (3)(c), or~~  
 1221 ~~(4)(c),~~ must register as an intern in the profession for which  
 1222 he or she is seeking licensure before commencing the post-  
 1223 master's experience requirement or an individual who intends to  
 1224 satisfy part of the required graduate-level practicum,  
 1225 internship, or field experience, outside the academic arena for

1226 any profession, and must register as an intern in the profession  
1227 for which he or she is seeking licensure before commencing the  
1228 practicum, internship, or field experience.

1229 (2) The department shall register as a clinical social  
1230 worker intern, marriage and family therapist intern, or mental  
1231 health counselor intern each applicant who the board certifies  
1232 has met all of the following criteria:

1233 (a) Completed the application form and remitted a  
1234 nonrefundable application fee not to exceed \$200, as set by  
1235 board rule. ~~†~~

1236 (b) Submitted to background screening in accordance with  
1237 s. 456.0135.

1238 (c) ~~(b)~~1. Completed the education requirements as specified  
1239 in s. 491.005(1)(d), (3)(d), or (4)(d) ~~s. 491.005(1)(e), (3)(e),~~  
1240 ~~or (4)(e)~~ for the profession for which he or she is applying for  
1241 licensure, if needed; and

1242 2. Submitted an acceptable supervision plan, as determined  
1243 by the board, for meeting the practicum, internship, or field  
1244 work required for licensure that was not satisfied in his or her  
1245 graduate program.

1246 (d) ~~(e)~~ Identified a qualified supervisor.

1247 (4) An individual who fails to comply with this section  
1248 may not be granted a license under this chapter, and any time  
1249 spent by the individual completing the experience requirement as  
1250 specified in s. 491.005(1)(d), (3)(d), or (4)(d) ~~s.~~

1251 ~~491.005(1)(e), (3)(e), or (4)(e)~~ before registering as an intern  
 1252 does not count toward completion of the requirement.

1253 (6) Any registration issued after March 31, 2017, expires  
 1254 60 months after the date it is issued. The board may make a one-  
 1255 time exception to the requirements of this subsection in  
 1256 emergency or hardship cases, as defined by board rule, if the  
 1257 candidate has passed the theory and practice examination  
 1258 described in s. 491.005(1)(e), (3)(e), and (4)(e) ~~s.~~  
 1259 ~~491.005(1)(d), (3)(d), and (4)(d)~~.

1260 Section 38. Subsection (2) of section 491.0046, Florida  
 1261 Statutes, is amended to read:

1262 491.0046 Provisional license; requirements.—

1263 (2) The department shall issue a provisional clinical  
 1264 social worker license, provisional marriage and family therapist  
 1265 license, or provisional mental health counselor license to each  
 1266 applicant who the board certifies has met all of the following  
 1267 criteria:

1268 (a) Completed the application form and remitted a  
 1269 nonrefundable application fee not to exceed \$100, as set by  
 1270 board rule. ~~;~~ ~~and~~

1271 (b) Submitted to background screening in accordance with  
 1272 s. 456.0135.

1273 (c) ~~(b)~~ Earned a graduate degree in social work, a graduate  
 1274 degree with a major emphasis in marriage and family therapy or a  
 1275 closely related field, or a graduate degree in a major related

1276 to the practice of mental health counseling. ~~;~~ and  
 1277 (d)~~(e)~~ Met the following minimum coursework requirements:  
 1278 1. For clinical social work, a minimum of 15 semester  
 1279 hours or 22 quarter hours of the coursework required by s.  
 1280 491.005(1)(c)2.b. ~~s. 491.005(1)(b)2.b.~~  
 1281 2. For marriage and family therapy, 10 of the courses  
 1282 required by s. 491.005(3)(c) ~~s. 491.005(3)(b)~~, as determined by  
 1283 the board, and at least 6 semester hours or 9 quarter hours of  
 1284 the course credits must have been completed in the area of  
 1285 marriage and family systems, theories, or techniques.  
 1286 3. For mental health counseling, a minimum of seven of the  
 1287 courses required under s. 491.005(4)(c)1.a., b., or c. ~~s.~~  
 1288 ~~491.005(4)(b)1.a.-c.~~  
 1289 Section 39. Subsections (1) through (4) of section  
 1290 491.005, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:  
 1291 491.005 Licensure by examination.—  
 1292 (1) CLINICAL SOCIAL WORK.—Upon verification of  
 1293 documentation and payment of a fee not to exceed \$200, as set by  
 1294 board rule, the department shall issue a license as a clinical  
 1295 social worker to an applicant whom the board certifies has met  
 1296 all of the following criteria:  
 1297 (a) Submitted an application and paid the appropriate fee.  
 1298 (b) Submitted to background screening in accordance with  
 1299 s. 456.0135.  
 1300 (c)~~(b)~~1. Received a doctoral degree in social work from a

1301 graduate school of social work which at the time the applicant  
1302 graduated was accredited by an accrediting agency recognized by  
1303 the United States Department of Education or received a master's  
1304 degree in social work from a graduate school of social work  
1305 which at the time the applicant graduated:

1306 a. Was accredited by the Council on Social Work Education;

1307 b. Was accredited by the Canadian Association for Social  
1308 Work Education; or

1309 c. Has been determined to have been a program equivalent  
1310 to programs approved by the Council on Social Work Education by  
1311 the Foreign Equivalency Determination Service of the Council on  
1312 Social Work Education. An applicant who graduated from a program  
1313 at a university or college outside of the United States or  
1314 Canada must present documentation of the equivalency  
1315 determination from the council in order to qualify.

1316 2. The applicant's graduate program emphasized direct  
1317 clinical patient or client health care services, including, but  
1318 not limited to, coursework in clinical social work, psychiatric  
1319 social work, medical social work, social casework,  
1320 psychotherapy, or group therapy. The applicant's graduate  
1321 program must have included all of the following coursework:

1322 a. A supervised field placement which was part of the  
1323 applicant's advanced concentration in direct practice, during  
1324 which the applicant provided clinical services directly to  
1325 clients.

1326           b. Completion of 24 semester hours or 32 quarter hours in  
1327 theory of human behavior and practice methods as courses in  
1328 clinically oriented services, including a minimum of one course  
1329 in psychopathology, and no more than one course in research,  
1330 taken in a school of social work accredited or approved pursuant  
1331 to subparagraph 1.

1332           3. If the course title which appears on the applicant's  
1333 transcript does not clearly identify the content of the  
1334 coursework, the applicant provided additional documentation,  
1335 including, but not limited to, a syllabus or catalog description  
1336 published for the course.

1337           (d)~~(e)~~ Completed at least 2 years of clinical social work  
1338 experience, which took place subsequent to completion of a  
1339 graduate degree in social work at an institution meeting the  
1340 accreditation requirements of this section, under the  
1341 supervision of a licensed clinical social worker or the  
1342 equivalent who is a qualified supervisor as determined by the  
1343 board. An individual who intends to practice in Florida to  
1344 satisfy clinical experience requirements must register pursuant  
1345 to s. 491.0045 before commencing practice. If the applicant's  
1346 graduate program was not a program which emphasized direct  
1347 clinical patient or client health care services as described in  
1348 subparagraph (c)2. ~~(b)2.~~, the supervised experience requirement  
1349 must take place after the applicant has completed a minimum of  
1350 15 semester hours or 22 quarter hours of the coursework

1351 required. A doctoral internship may be applied toward the  
1352 clinical social work experience requirement. A licensed mental  
1353 health professional must be on the premises when clinical  
1354 services are provided by a registered intern in a private  
1355 practice setting.

1356 (e)~~(d)~~ Passed a theory and practice examination designated  
1357 by board rule.

1358 (f)~~(e)~~ Demonstrated, in a manner designated by board rule,  
1359 knowledge of the laws and rules governing the practice of  
1360 clinical social work, marriage and family therapy, and mental  
1361 health counseling.

1362 (2) CLINICAL SOCIAL WORK.—

1363 (a) Notwithstanding ~~the provisions of~~ paragraph (1)(c)  
1364 ~~(1)(b)~~, coursework which was taken at a baccalaureate level  
1365 shall not be considered toward completion of education  
1366 requirements for licensure unless an official of the graduate  
1367 program certifies in writing on the graduate school's stationery  
1368 that a specific course, which students enrolled in the same  
1369 graduate program were ordinarily required to complete at the  
1370 graduate level, was waived or exempted based on completion of a  
1371 similar course at the baccalaureate level. If this condition is  
1372 met, the board shall apply the baccalaureate course named toward  
1373 the education requirements.

1374 (b) An applicant from a master's or doctoral program in  
1375 social work which did not emphasize direct patient or client

1376 services may complete the clinical curriculum content  
1377 requirement by returning to a graduate program accredited by the  
1378 Council on Social Work Education or the Canadian Association of  
1379 Schools of Social Work, or to a clinical social work graduate  
1380 program with comparable standards, in order to complete the  
1381 education requirements for examination. However, a maximum of 6  
1382 semester or 9 quarter hours of the clinical curriculum content  
1383 requirement may be completed by credit awarded for independent  
1384 study coursework as defined by board rule.

1385 (3) MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERAPY.—Upon verification of  
1386 documentation and payment of a fee not to exceed \$200, as set by  
1387 board rule, the department shall issue a license as a marriage  
1388 and family therapist to an applicant whom the board certifies  
1389 has met all of the following criteria:

1390 (a) Submitted an application and paid the appropriate fee.

1391 (b) Submitted to background screening in accordance with  
1392 s. 456.0135.

1393 (c)1. Attained one of the following:

1394 a. A minimum of a master's degree in marriage and family  
1395 therapy from a program accredited by the Commission on  
1396 Accreditation for Marriage and Family Therapy Education.

1397 b. A minimum of a master's degree with a major emphasis in  
1398 marriage and family therapy or a closely related field from a  
1399 university program accredited by the Council on Accreditation of  
1400 Counseling and Related Educational Programs and graduate courses



1401 approved by the board.

1402 c. A minimum of a master's degree with an emphasis in  
1403 marriage and family therapy or a closely related field, with a  
1404 degree conferred before September 1, 2027, from an  
1405 institutionally accredited college or university and graduate  
1406 courses approved by the board.

1407 2. If the course title that appears on the applicant's  
1408 transcript does not clearly identify the content of the  
1409 coursework, the applicant provided additional documentation,  
1410 including, but not limited to, a syllabus or catalog description  
1411 published for the course. The required master's degree must have  
1412 been received in an institution of higher education that, at the  
1413 time the applicant graduated, was fully accredited by an  
1414 institutional accrediting body recognized by the Council for  
1415 Higher Education Accreditation or its successor organization or  
1416 was a member in good standing with Universities Canada, or an  
1417 institution of higher education located outside the United  
1418 States and Canada which, at the time the applicant was enrolled  
1419 and at the time the applicant graduated, maintained a standard  
1420 of training substantially equivalent to the standards of  
1421 training of those institutions in the United States which are  
1422 accredited by an institutional accrediting body recognized by  
1423 the Council for Higher Education Accreditation or its successor  
1424 organization. Such foreign education and training must have been  
1425 received in an institution or program of higher education

1426 | officially recognized by the government of the country in which  
1427 | it is located as an institution or program to train students to  
1428 | practice as professional marriage and family therapists or  
1429 | psychotherapists. The applicant has the burden of establishing  
1430 | that the requirements of this provision have been met, and the  
1431 | board shall require documentation, such as an evaluation by a  
1432 | foreign equivalency determination service, as evidence that the  
1433 | applicant's graduate degree program and education were  
1434 | equivalent to an accredited program in this country. An  
1435 | applicant with a master's degree from a program that did not  
1436 | emphasize marriage and family therapy may complete the  
1437 | coursework requirement in a training institution fully  
1438 | accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Marriage and  
1439 | Family Therapy Education recognized by the United States  
1440 | Department of Education.

1441 |       (d)~~(e)~~ Completed at least 2 years of clinical experience  
1442 | during which 50 percent of the applicant's clients were  
1443 | receiving marriage and family therapy services, which must be at  
1444 | the post-master's level under the supervision of a licensed  
1445 | marriage and family therapist with at least 5 years of  
1446 | experience, or the equivalent, who is a qualified supervisor as  
1447 | determined by the board. An individual who intends to practice  
1448 | in Florida to satisfy the clinical experience requirements must  
1449 | register pursuant to s. 491.0045 before commencing practice. If  
1450 | a graduate has a master's degree with a major emphasis in

1451 marriage and family therapy or a closely related field which did  
1452 not include all of the coursework required by paragraph (c) ~~(b)~~,  
1453 credit for the post-master's level clinical experience may not  
1454 commence until the applicant has completed a minimum of 10 of  
1455 the courses required by paragraph (c) ~~(b)~~, as determined by the  
1456 board, and at least 6 semester hours or 9 quarter hours of the  
1457 course credits must have been completed in the area of marriage  
1458 and family systems, theories, or techniques. Within the 2 years  
1459 of required experience, the applicant shall provide direct  
1460 individual, group, or family therapy and counseling to cases  
1461 including those involving unmarried dyads, married couples,  
1462 separating and divorcing couples, and family groups that include  
1463 children. A doctoral internship may be applied toward the  
1464 clinical experience requirement. A licensed mental health  
1465 professional must be on the premises when clinical services are  
1466 provided by a registered intern in a private practice setting.

1467 (e) ~~(d)~~ Passed a theory and practice examination designated  
1468 by board rule.

1469 (f) ~~(e)~~ Demonstrated, in a manner designated by board rule,  
1470 knowledge of the laws and rules governing the practice of  
1471 clinical social work, marriage and family therapy, and mental  
1472 health counseling.

1473  
1474 For the purposes of dual licensure, the department shall license  
1475 as a marriage and family therapist any person who meets the

1476 requirements of s. 491.0057. Fees for dual licensure may not  
 1477 exceed those stated in this subsection.

1478 (4) MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING.—Upon verification of  
 1479 documentation and payment of a fee not to exceed \$200, as set by  
 1480 board rule, the department shall issue a license as a mental  
 1481 health counselor to an applicant whom the board certifies has  
 1482 met all of the following criteria:

1483 (a) Submitted an application and paid the appropriate fee.

1484 (b) Submitted to background screening in accordance with  
 1485 s. 456.0135.

1486 (c)~~(b)~~1. Attained a minimum of an earned master's degree  
 1487 from a mental health counseling program accredited by the  
 1488 Council for the Accreditation of Counseling and Related  
 1489 Educational Programs which consists of at least 60 semester  
 1490 hours or 80 quarter hours of clinical and didactic instruction,  
 1491 including a course in human sexuality and a course in substance  
 1492 abuse. If the master's degree is earned from a program related  
 1493 to the practice of mental health counseling which is not  
 1494 accredited by the Council for the Accreditation of Counseling  
 1495 and Related Educational Programs, then the coursework and  
 1496 practicum, internship, or fieldwork must consist of at least 60  
 1497 semester hours or 80 quarter hours and meet all of the following  
 1498 requirements:

1499 a. Thirty-three semester hours or 44 quarter hours of  
 1500 graduate coursework, which must include a minimum of 3 semester

1501 hours or 4 quarter hours of graduate-level coursework in each of  
1502 the following 11 content areas: counseling theories and  
1503 practice; human growth and development; diagnosis and treatment  
1504 of psychopathology; human sexuality; group theories and  
1505 practice; individual evaluation and assessment; career and  
1506 lifestyle assessment; research and program evaluation; social  
1507 and cultural foundations; substance abuse; and legal, ethical,  
1508 and professional standards issues in the practice of mental  
1509 health counseling. Courses in research, thesis or dissertation  
1510 work, practicums, internships, or fieldwork may not be applied  
1511 toward this requirement.

1512       b. A minimum of 3 semester hours or 4 quarter hours of  
1513 graduate-level coursework addressing diagnostic processes,  
1514 including differential diagnosis and the use of the current  
1515 diagnostic tools, such as the current edition of the American  
1516 Psychiatric Association's Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of  
1517 Mental Disorders. The graduate program must have emphasized the  
1518 common core curricular experience.

1519       c. The equivalent, as determined by the board, of at least  
1520 700 hours of university-sponsored supervised clinical practicum,  
1521 internship, or field experience that includes at least 280 hours  
1522 of direct client services, as required in the accrediting  
1523 standards of the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and  
1524 Related Educational Programs for mental health counseling  
1525 programs. This experience may not be used to satisfy the post-

1526 master's clinical experience requirement.

1527       2. Provided additional documentation if a course title  
1528 that appears on the applicant's transcript does not clearly  
1529 identify the content of the coursework. The documentation must  
1530 include, but is not limited to, a syllabus or catalog  
1531 description published for the course.

1532  
1533 Education and training in mental health counseling must have  
1534 been received in an institution of higher education that, at the  
1535 time the applicant graduated, was fully accredited by an  
1536 institutional accrediting body recognized by the Council for  
1537 Higher Education Accreditation or its successor organization or  
1538 was a member in good standing with Universities Canada, or an  
1539 institution of higher education located outside the United  
1540 States and Canada which, at the time the applicant was enrolled  
1541 and at the time the applicant graduated, maintained a standard  
1542 of training substantially equivalent to the standards of  
1543 training of those institutions in the United States which are  
1544 accredited by an institutional accrediting body recognized by  
1545 the Council for Higher Education Accreditation or its successor  
1546 organization. Such foreign education and training must have been  
1547 received in an institution or program of higher education  
1548 officially recognized by the government of the country in which  
1549 it is located as an institution or program to train students to  
1550 practice as mental health counselors. The applicant has the

1551 burden of establishing that the requirements of this provision  
1552 have been met, and the board shall require documentation, such  
1553 as an evaluation by a foreign equivalency determination service,  
1554 as evidence that the applicant's graduate degree program and  
1555 education were equivalent to an accredited program in this  
1556 country. Beginning July 1, 2025, an applicant must have a  
1557 master's degree from a program that is accredited by the Council  
1558 for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational  
1559 Programs, the Masters in Psychology and Counseling Accreditation  
1560 Council, or an equivalent accrediting body which consists of at  
1561 least 60 semester hours or 80 quarter hours to apply for  
1562 licensure under this paragraph.

1563 (d)~~(e)~~ Completed at least 2 years of clinical experience  
1564 in mental health counseling, which must be at the post-master's  
1565 level under the supervision of a licensed mental health  
1566 counselor or the equivalent who is a qualified supervisor as  
1567 determined by the board. An individual who intends to practice  
1568 in Florida to satisfy the clinical experience requirements must  
1569 register pursuant to s. 491.0045 before commencing practice. If  
1570 a graduate has a master's degree with a major related to the  
1571 practice of mental health counseling which did not include all  
1572 the coursework required under sub-subparagraphs (c)1.a and b.  
1573 ~~(b)1.a. and b.~~, credit for the post-master's level clinical  
1574 experience may not commence until the applicant has completed a  
1575 minimum of seven of the courses required under sub-subparagraphs

1576 (c)1.a and b. ~~(b)1.a. and b.~~, as determined by the board, one of  
1577 which must be a course in psychopathology or abnormal  
1578 psychology. A doctoral internship may be applied toward the  
1579 clinical experience requirement. A licensed mental health  
1580 professional must be on the premises when clinical services are  
1581 provided by a registered intern in a private practice setting.

1582 (e)~~(d)~~ Passed a theory and practice examination designated  
1583 by board rule.

1584 (f)~~(e)~~ Demonstrated, in a manner designated by board rule,  
1585 knowledge of the laws and rules governing the practice of  
1586 clinical social work, marriage and family therapy, and mental  
1587 health counseling.

1588 Section 40. Subsection (1) of section 491.006, Florida  
1589 Statutes, as amended by SB 1600, 2024 Regular Session, is  
1590 amended to read:

1591 491.006 Licensure or certification by endorsement.—

1592 (1) The department shall license or grant a certificate to  
1593 a person in a profession regulated by this chapter who, upon  
1594 applying to the department, submitting to background screening  
1595 in accordance with s. 456.0135, and remitting the appropriate  
1596 fee, demonstrates to the board that he or she meets the  
1597 requirements for licensure by endorsement under s. 456.0145.

1598 Section 41. Paragraphs (d), (f), and (i) of subsection (1)  
1599 of section 468.505, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

1600 468.505 Exemptions; exceptions.—



1601 (1) Nothing in this part may be construed as prohibiting  
1602 or restricting the practice, services, or activities of:

1603 (d) A person pursuing a course of study leading to a  
1604 degree in dietetics and nutrition from a program or school  
1605 accredited pursuant to s. 468.509(3) ~~s. 468.509(2)~~, if the  
1606 activities and services constitute a part of a supervised course  
1607 of study and if the person is designated by a title that clearly  
1608 indicates the person's status as a student or trainee.

1609 (f) Any dietitian or nutritionist from another state  
1610 practicing dietetics or nutrition incidental to a course of  
1611 study when taking or giving a postgraduate course or other  
1612 course of study in this state, provided such dietitian or  
1613 nutritionist is licensed in another jurisdiction or is a  
1614 registered dietitian or holds an appointment on the faculty of a  
1615 school accredited pursuant to s. 468.509(3) ~~s. 468.509(2)~~.

1616 (i) An educator who is in the employ of a nonprofit  
1617 organization approved by the council; a federal, state, county,  
1618 or municipal agency, or other political subdivision; an  
1619 elementary or secondary school; or an accredited institution of  
1620 higher education the definition of which, as provided in s.  
1621 468.509(3) ~~s. 468.509(2)~~, applies to other sections of this  
1622 part, insofar as the activities and services of the educator are  
1623 part of such employment.

1624 Section 42. Subsections (15), (16), and (17) of section  
1625 491.003, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

1626 491.003 Definitions.—As used in this chapter:

1627 (15) "Registered clinical social worker intern" means a  
1628 person registered under this chapter who is completing the  
1629 postgraduate clinical social work experience requirement  
1630 specified in s. 491.005(1)(d) ~~s. 491.005(1)(e)~~.

1631 (16) "Registered marriage and family therapist intern"  
1632 means a person registered under this chapter who is completing  
1633 the post-master's clinical experience requirement specified in  
1634 s. 491.005(3)(d) ~~s. 491.005(3)(e)~~.

1635 (17) "Registered mental health counselor intern" means a  
1636 person registered under this chapter who is completing the post-  
1637 master's clinical experience requirement specified in s.  
1638 491.005(4)(d) ~~s. 491.005(4)(e)~~.

1639 Section 43. Effective July 1, 2024, for the 2024-2025  
1640 fiscal year, the sum of \$250,000 in nonrecurring funds from the  
1641 Medical Quality Assurance Trust Fund is appropriated to the  
1642 Department of Health to implement the provisions of this act.

1643 Section 44. Except as otherwise expressly provided in this  
1644 act and except for this section, which shall take effect July 1,  
1645 2024, this act shall take effect July 1, 2025.