

1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to child welfare; amending s. 39.524,
3 F.S.; requiring the Department of Children and
4 Families to provide to the Legislature specified
5 assessment data as part of a certain annual report
6 relating to the commercial sexual exploitation of
7 children; requiring the department to maintain copies
8 of certain assessments or tools used to assess a child
9 for a certain placement; requiring such copies be
10 provided to the Legislature upon request; amending s.
11 39.905, F.S.; authorizing the department to waive a
12 specified requirement if there is an emergency need
13 for a new domestic violence center; authorizing the
14 department to issue a provisional certificate under
15 certain circumstances; authorizing the department to
16 adopt rules; amending ss. 402.305 and 409.175, F.S.;
17 removing authority for the department to grant
18 exemptions from working with children or the
19 developmentally disabled; authorizing the department
20 to grant limited exemptions to certain minimum
21 standards and requirements, respectively; amending s.
22 402.402, F.S.; requiring the department to develop a
23 child protective investigator and case manager
24 recruitment program for a specified purpose;
25 specifying requirements for the program; specifying

26 | duties of the department under the program, to be
27 | completed in collaboration with community-based care
28 | lead agencies; authorizing the department to adopt
29 | rules to implement the program; amending s. 409.987,
30 | F.S.; removing the requirement that an entity post a
31 | specified fidelity bond in order to serve as a lead
32 | agency; amending s. 409.993, F.S.; providing immunity
33 | from liability for subcontractors of lead agencies for
34 | certain acts or omissions; providing applicability;
35 | amending s. 409.996, F.S.; subject to an appropriation
36 | and beginning on a specified date, requiring the
37 | department to develop a 4-year pilot program for
38 | treatment foster care; requiring the department to
39 | implement the pilot program by a specified date;
40 | limiting participation in the pilot program to
41 | children meeting specified criteria; requiring the
42 | department to identify two judicial circuits
43 | determined to have the greatest need for
44 | implementation of such pilot program; requiring the
45 | department to arrange for an independent evaluation of
46 | the pilot program to make specified determinations;
47 | requiring the department to establish certain minimum
48 | standards for the pilot program; requiring the
49 | department, by a specified date, to submit a final
50 | report to the Governor and the Legislature which

51 includes specified evaluations, findings, and
52 recommendations; amending s. 1004.615, F.S.;
53 specifying that incentives provided to state employees
54 for participating in research or evaluation with the
55 Florida Institute for Child Welfare do not violate
56 certain laws or require certain reporting; amending
57 ss. 402.30501, 1002.57, and 1002.59, F.S.; conforming
58 cross-references; requiring the department to convene
59 a case management workforce workgroup by a specified
60 date; providing for membership of the work group;
61 specifying duties of the workgroup, to be completed in
62 collaboration with the Florida Institute for Child
63 Welfare; providing for meetings of the workgroup;
64 providing for the operation of the workgroup until a
65 specified date; requiring the workgroup to draft and
66 submit a report to the Governor and the Legislature by
67 a specified date; providing requirements for the
68 report; requiring the department to contract for a
69 detailed study of bed capacity for residential
70 treatment services for child victims of commercial
71 sexual exploitation; requiring that the study be
72 completed by a specified date; providing requirements
73 for the study; providing effective dates.

74
75 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

76
77
78
79
80
81
82
83
84
85
86
87
88
89
90
91
92
93
94
95
96
97
98
99
100

Section 1. Subsection (3) of section 39.524, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

39.524 Safe-harbor placement.—

(3) (a) By October 1 of each year, the department, with information from community-based care agencies, shall report to the Legislature on the prevalence of ~~child~~ commercial sexual exploitation of children; the specialized services provided and placement of such children; the local service capacity assessed pursuant to s. 409.1754; the placement of children in safe houses and safe foster homes during the year, including the criteria used to determine the placement of children; the number of children who were evaluated for placement; the number of children who were placed based upon the evaluation; the number of children who were not placed; and the department's response to the findings and recommendations made by the Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability in its annual study on commercial sexual exploitation of children, as required by s. 409.16791. The department must also maintain a copy of any paper-based assessments or tools used to assess a child for placement in safe houses or safe foster homes, which must be provided to the Legislature upon request.

(b) The department shall maintain individual-level data of all children assessed for placement in a safe house or safe foster home and use this data to produce information that

101 specifies ~~specifying~~ the number of children who were verified as
102 victims of commercial sexual exploitation, who were referred to
103 nonresidential services in the community, who were placed in a
104 safe house or safe foster home, and who were referred to a safe
105 house or safe foster home for whom placement was unavailable,
106 and shall identify the counties in which such placement was
107 unavailable. The department shall include this data in its
108 report under this subsection so that the Legislature may
109 consider this information in developing the General
110 Appropriations Act. The department shall maintain collected
111 individual-level data in a format that allows for extraction and
112 analysis of anonymized individual-level and aggregate data upon
113 request by the Legislature.

114 **Section 2. Paragraph (h) of subsection (1) of section**
115 **39.905, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:**

116 39.905 Domestic violence centers.—

117 (1) Domestic violence centers certified under this part
118 must:

119 (h) Demonstrate local need and ability to sustain
120 operations through a history of 18 consecutive months' operation
121 as a domestic violence center, including 12 months' operation of
122 an emergency shelter as provided in paragraph (c), and a
123 business plan which addresses future operations and funding of
124 future operations. The department may waive this requirement if
125 there is an emergency need for a new domestic violence center to

126 provide services in an area and no other viable options exist to
127 ensure continuity of services. If there is such an emergency
128 need, the department may issue a provisional certificate to the
129 domestic violence center as long as the domestic violence center
130 meets all other criteria in this subsection. The department may
131 adopt rules to provide minimum standards for a provisional
132 certificate, including increased monitoring and site visits and
133 the time period such provisional certificate is valid.

134 **Section 3. Subsection (2) of section 402.305, Florida**
135 **Statutes, is amended to read:**

136 402.305 Licensing standards; child care facilities.—

137 (2) PERSONNEL.—Minimum standards for child care personnel
138 shall include minimum requirements as to:

139 (a) Good moral character based upon screening as defined
140 in s. 402.302(15). This screening shall be conducted as provided
141 in chapter 435, using the level 2 standards for screening set
142 forth in that chapter, and include employment history checks, a
143 search of criminal history records, sexual predator and sexual
144 offender registries, and child abuse and neglect registry of any
145 state in which the current or prospective child care personnel
146 resided during the preceding 5 years.

147 (b) Fingerprint submission for child care personnel, which
148 shall comply with s. 435.12.

149 ~~(c) The department may grant exemptions from~~
150 ~~disqualification from working with children or the~~

151 ~~developmentally disabled as provided in s. 435.07.~~

152 (c)~~(d)~~ Minimum age requirements. Such minimum standards
153 shall prohibit a person under the age of 21 from being the
154 operator of a child care facility and a person under the age of
155 16 from being employed at such facility unless such person is
156 under direct supervision and is not counted for the purposes of
157 computing the personnel-to-child ratio.

158 (d)~~(e)~~ Minimum training requirements for child care
159 personnel.

160 1. Such minimum standards for training shall ensure that
161 all child care personnel take an approved 40-clock-hour
162 introductory course in child care, which course covers at least
163 the following topic areas:

164 a. State and local rules and regulations which govern
165 child care.

166 b. Health, safety, and nutrition.

167 c. Identifying and reporting child abuse and neglect.

168 d. Child development, including typical and atypical
169 language, cognitive, motor, social, and self-help skills
170 development.

171 e. Observation of developmental behaviors, including using
172 a checklist or other similar observation tools and techniques to
173 determine the child's developmental age level.

174 f. Specialized areas, including computer technology for
175 professional and classroom use and early literacy and language

176 development of children from birth to 5 years of age, as
177 determined by the department, for owner-operators and child care
178 personnel of a child care facility.

179 g. Developmental disabilities, including autism spectrum
180 disorder and Down syndrome, and early identification, use of
181 available state and local resources, classroom integration, and
182 positive behavioral supports for children with developmental
183 disabilities.

184
185 Within 90 days after employment, child care personnel shall
186 begin training to meet the training requirements. Child care
187 personnel shall successfully complete such training within 1
188 year after the date on which the training began, as evidenced by
189 passage of a competency examination. Successful completion of
190 the 40-clock-hour introductory course shall articulate into
191 community college credit in early childhood education, pursuant
192 to ss. 1007.24 and 1007.25. Exemption from all or a portion of
193 the required training shall be granted to child care personnel
194 based upon educational credentials or passage of competency
195 examinations. Child care personnel possessing a 2-year degree or
196 higher that includes 6 college credit hours in early childhood
197 development or child growth and development, or a child
198 development associate credential or an equivalent state-approved
199 child development associate credential, or a child development
200 associate waiver certificate shall be automatically exempted

201 from the training requirements in sub-subparagraphs b., d., and
202 e.

203 2. The introductory course in child care shall stress, to
204 the extent possible, an interdisciplinary approach to the study
205 of children.

206 3. The introductory course shall cover recognition and
207 prevention of shaken baby syndrome; prevention of sudden infant
208 death syndrome; recognition and care of infants and toddlers
209 with developmental disabilities, including autism spectrum
210 disorder and Down syndrome; and early childhood brain
211 development within the topic areas identified in this paragraph.

212 4. On an annual basis in order to further their child care
213 skills and, if appropriate, administrative skills, child care
214 personnel who have fulfilled the requirements for the child care
215 training shall be required to take an additional 1 continuing
216 education unit of approved inservice training, or 10 clock hours
217 of equivalent training, as determined by the department.

218 5. Child care personnel shall be required to complete 0.5
219 continuing education unit of approved training or 5 clock hours
220 of equivalent training, as determined by the department, in
221 early literacy and language development of children from birth
222 to 5 years of age one time. The year that this training is
223 completed, it shall fulfill the 0.5 continuing education unit or
224 5 clock hours of the annual training required in subparagraph 4.

225 6. Procedures for ensuring the training of qualified child

226 care professionals to provide training of child care personnel,
227 including onsite training, shall be included in the minimum
228 standards. It is recommended that the state community child care
229 coordination agencies (central agencies) be contracted by the
230 department to coordinate such training when possible. Other
231 district educational resources, such as community colleges and
232 career programs, can be designated in such areas where central
233 agencies may not exist or are determined not to have the
234 capability to meet the coordination requirements set forth by
235 the department.

236 7. Training requirements shall not apply to certain
237 occasional or part-time support staff, including, but not
238 limited to, swimming instructors, piano teachers, dance
239 instructors, and gymnastics instructors.

240 8. The child care operator shall be required to take basic
241 training in serving children with disabilities within 5 years
242 after employment, either as a part of the introductory training
243 or the annual 8 hours of inservice training.

244 (e)~~(f)~~ Periodic health examinations.

245 (f)~~(g)~~ A credential for child care facility directors. The
246 credential shall be a required minimum standard for licensing.

247
248 The department may grant limited exemptions to the minimum
249 standards provided in this subsection which authorize a person
250 to work in a specified role or with a specified population.

251 **Section 4. Subsections (4) and (5) of section 402.402,**
252 **Florida Statutes, are renumbered as subsections (5) and (6),**
253 **respectively, and a new subsection (4) is added to that section,**
254 **to read:**

255 402.402 Child protection and child welfare personnel;
256 attorneys employed by the department.—

257 (4) RECRUITMENT PROGRAM.—The department shall develop and
258 implement a child protective investigator and case manager
259 recruitment program for the purpose of recruiting individuals
260 who have previously held public safety and service positions,
261 such as former law enforcement officers, first responders,
262 military servicemembers, teachers, health care practitioners,
263 and emergency management professionals. This recruitment program
264 must focus on the education and recruitment of individuals who
265 have held positions of public trust and who wish to further
266 serve their communities as child welfare personnel.

267 (a) The department, in collaboration with community-based
268 care lead agencies, shall:

269 1. Develop information pertaining to employment
270 opportunities, application procedures, and training requirements
271 for employment within the child welfare system and distribute
272 such information to individuals who have previously held public
273 safety and service positions.

274 2. Develop and implement an employment referral system
275 with lead agencies for the case management population.

276 3. Collect the following information quarterly:
 277 a. The total number of individuals who sought information
 278 from the program; were hired by the department as child
 279 protective investigators; were referred by the program to a lead
 280 agency for case management positions; and, based upon a referral
 281 by the program, were hired by the lead agency as a case manager.
 282 b. The overall turnover rate for child protective
 283 investigators and case managers compared to the turnover rate
 284 for child protective investigators and case managers hired based
 285 upon this program.
 286 (b) The department may adopt rules to implement this
 287 subsection.

288 **Section 5. Paragraph (b) of subsection (5) and paragraph**
 289 **(e) of subsection (14) of section 409.175, Florida Statutes, are**
 290 **amended to read:**

291 409.175 Licensure of family foster homes, residential
 292 child-caring agencies, and child-placing agencies; public
 293 records exemption.—

294 (5) The department shall adopt and amend rules for the
 295 levels of licensed care associated with the licensure of family
 296 foster homes, residential child-caring agencies, and child-
 297 placing agencies. The rules may include criteria to approve
 298 waivers to licensing requirements when applying for a child-
 299 specific license.

300 (b) The requirements for licensure and operation of family

301 foster homes, residential child-caring agencies, and child-
 302 placing agencies shall include:

303 1. The operation, conduct, and maintenance of these homes
 304 and agencies and the responsibility which they assume for
 305 children served and the evidence of need for that service.

306 2. The provision of food, clothing, educational
 307 opportunities, services, equipment, and individual supplies to
 308 assure the healthy physical, emotional, and mental development
 309 of the children served.

310 3. The appropriateness, safety, cleanliness, and general
 311 adequacy of the premises, including fire prevention and health
 312 standards, to provide for the physical comfort, care, and well-
 313 being of the children served.

314 4. The ratio of staff to children required to provide
 315 adequate care and supervision of the children served and, in the
 316 case of family foster homes, the maximum number of children in
 317 the home.

318 5. The good moral character based upon screening,
 319 education, training, and experience requirements for personnel
 320 and family foster homes.

321 ~~6. The department may grant exemptions from~~
 322 ~~disqualification from working with children or the~~
 323 ~~developmentally disabled as provided in s. 435.07.~~

324 6.7. The provision of preservice and inservice training
 325 for all foster parents and agency staff.

326 ~~7.8.~~ Satisfactory evidence of financial ability to provide
327 care for the children in compliance with licensing requirements.

328 ~~8.9.~~ The maintenance by the agency of records pertaining
329 to admission, progress, health, and discharge of children
330 served, including written case plans and reports to the
331 department.

332 ~~9.10.~~ The provision for parental involvement to encourage
333 preservation and strengthening of a child's relationship with
334 the family.

335 ~~10.11.~~ The transportation safety of children served.

336 ~~11.12.~~ The provisions for safeguarding the cultural,
337 religious, and ethnic values of a child.

338 ~~12.13.~~ Provisions to safeguard the legal rights of
339 children served.

340 ~~13.14.~~ Requiring signs to be conspicuously placed on the
341 premises of facilities maintained by child-caring agencies to
342 warn children of the dangers of human trafficking and to
343 encourage the reporting of individuals observed attempting to
344 engage in human trafficking activity. The signs must advise
345 children to report concerns to the local law enforcement agency
346 or the Department of Law Enforcement, specifying the appropriate
347 telephone numbers used for such reports. The department shall
348 specify, at a minimum, the content of the signs by rule.

349
350 The department may grant limited exemptions to the requirements

351 provided in this paragraph which authorize a person to work in a
 352 specified role or with a specified population.

353 (14)

354 (e)1. In addition to any other preservice training
 355 required by law, foster parents, as a condition of licensure,
 356 and agency staff must successfully complete preservice training
 357 related to human trafficking which must be uniform statewide and
 358 must include, but need not be limited to:

359 a. Basic information on human trafficking, such as an
 360 understanding of relevant terminology, and the differences
 361 between sex trafficking and labor trafficking;

362 b. Factors and knowledge on identifying children at risk
 363 of human trafficking; and

364 c. Steps that should be taken to prevent at-risk youths
 365 from becoming victims of human trafficking.

366 2. Foster parents, before licensure renewal, and agency
 367 staff, during each full year of employment, must complete
 368 inservice training related to human trafficking to satisfy the
 369 training requirement under subparagraph (5) (b) 6. ~~(5) (b) 7.~~

370 **Section 6. Paragraph (c) of subsection (4) of section**
 371 **409.987, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:**

372 409.987 Lead agency procurement; boards; conflicts of
 373 interest.—

374 (4) In order to serve as a lead agency, an entity must:

375 (c) Demonstrate financial responsibility through an

376 organized plan for regular fiscal audits and; the posting of a
377 performance bond; ~~and the posting of a fidelity bond to cover~~
378 ~~any costs associated with procurement and the assessed~~
379 ~~penalties related to a failure to disclose a conflict of~~
380 ~~interest under subsection (7).~~

381 **Section 7. Paragraph (b) of subsection (3) of section**
382 **409.993, Florida Statutes, is redesignated as paragraph (c),**
383 **paragraph (a) is amended, and a new paragraph (b) is added to**
384 **that subsection, to read:**

385 409.993 Lead agencies and subcontractor liability.—

386 (3) SUBCONTRACTOR LIABILITY.—

387 (a) A subcontractor of an eligible community-based care
388 lead agency that is a direct provider of foster care and related
389 services to children and families, and its employees or
390 officers, except as otherwise provided in paragraph (c) ~~(b)~~,
391 must, as a part of its contract, obtain a minimum of \$1 million
392 per occurrence with a policy period aggregate limit of \$3
393 million in general liability insurance coverage. The
394 subcontractor of a lead agency must also require that staff who
395 transport client children and families in their personal
396 automobiles in order to carry out their job responsibilities
397 obtain minimum bodily injury liability insurance in the amount
398 of \$100,000 per person in any one automobile accident, and
399 subject to such limits for each person, \$300,000 for all damages
400 resulting from any one automobile accident, on their personal

401 automobiles. In lieu of personal motor vehicle insurance, the
402 subcontractor's casualty, liability, or motor vehicle insurance
403 carrier may provide nonowned automobile liability coverage. This
404 insurance provides liability insurance for automobiles that the
405 subcontractor uses in connection with the subcontractor's
406 business but does not own, lease, rent, or borrow. This coverage
407 includes automobiles owned by the employees of the subcontractor
408 or a member of the employee's household but only while the
409 automobiles are used in connection with the subcontractor's
410 business. The nonowned automobile coverage for the subcontractor
411 applies as excess coverage over any other collectible insurance.
412 The personal automobile policy for the employee of the
413 subcontractor shall be primary insurance, and the nonowned
414 automobile coverage of the subcontractor acts as excess
415 insurance to the primary insurance. The subcontractor shall
416 provide a minimum limit of \$1 million in nonowned automobile
417 coverage. In a tort action brought against such subcontractor or
418 employee, net economic damages shall be limited to \$2 million
419 per liability claim and \$200,000 per automobile claim,
420 including, but not limited to, past and future medical expenses,
421 wage loss, and loss of earning capacity, offset by any
422 collateral source payment paid or payable. In a tort action
423 brought against such subcontractor, noneconomic damages shall be
424 limited to \$400,000 per claim. A claims bill may be brought on
425 behalf of a claimant pursuant to s. 768.28 for any amount

426 | exceeding the limits specified in this paragraph. Any offset of
427 | collateral source payments made as of the date of the settlement
428 | or judgment shall be in accordance with s. 768.76.

429 | (b) A subcontractor of a lead agency that is a direct
430 | provider of foster care and related services is not liable for
431 | the acts or omissions of the lead agency, the department, or the
432 | officers, agents, or employees of the lead agency or the
433 | department. The limitation on liability established in this
434 | paragraph applies to contracts entered into or renewed after
435 | July 1, 2025.

436 | **Section 8. Subsection (27) is added to section 409.996,**
437 | **Florida Statutes, to read:**

438 | 409.996 Duties of the Department of Children and
439 | Families.—The department shall contract for the delivery,
440 | administration, or management of care for children in the child
441 | protection and child welfare system. In doing so, the department
442 | retains responsibility for the quality of contracted services
443 | and programs and shall ensure that, at a minimum, services are
444 | delivered in accordance with applicable federal and state
445 | statutes and regulations and the performance standards and
446 | metrics specified in the strategic plan created under s.
447 | 20.19(1).

448 | (27) (a) Subject to appropriation, beginning July 1, 2025,
449 | the department shall develop a 4-year pilot program of treatment
450 | foster care or a substantially similar evidence-based program of

451 professional foster care. The department shall implement the
452 pilot program by January 1, 2026.

453 (b) Participation in the pilot program is limited to
454 children who:

455 1. Are entering or continuing in foster care with high
456 resource indicators, as determined by the department. These high
457 resource indicators may include the potential for frequent
458 placement change due to current or past behavior or Department
459 of Juvenile Justice involvement;

460 2. Will require placement in foster care when the children
461 are discharged from inpatient residential treatment; or

462 3. Are identified for residential or group home care and
463 who, based on a determination by the department, could be placed
464 in a foster home with higher level interventions.

465 (c) The department shall identify two judicial circuits
466 within which the pilot program will be implemented. The
467 department shall use relevant removal and placement data to
468 identify areas with the greatest need for such a program.

469 (d) The department shall arrange for an independent
470 evaluation of the pilot program to determine whether:

471 1. The pilot program is maintaining children in the least
472 restrictive and most appropriate family-like setting near the
473 child's home while he or she is in department care.

474 2. There is a long-term cost benefit associated with
475 continuation and expansion of a treatment or professional foster

476 care program.

477 (e) The department shall establish standards for the pilot
478 program. Those standards must, at a minimum, ensure:

479 1. Placement of a child in a treatment foster care home is
480 intended to be a temporary holistic treatment option and may not
481 exceed 9 months. A one-time 3-month extension may be granted if
482 the department determines that the child is not ready for
483 discharge from treatment foster care at 9 months.

484 2. Development and implementation of specialized training
485 for treatment foster parents in care coordination, de-
486 escalation, crisis management, and other identified relevant
487 skills needed to care for children with high behavioral health
488 needs that cannot be or have not been met in traditional foster
489 care placements.

490 3. No more than two eligible children may be placed at any
491 time in a treatment foster care home.

492 4. At least one foster parent with specialized training is
493 available and dedicated to the care and treatment of placed
494 children.

495 5. A 24 hour on-call crisis person available to the child
496 and family to provide in-home crisis intervention and placement
497 stabilization services.

498 (f) By January 1, 2030, the department shall submit to the
499 Governor, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the
500 House of Representatives a final report that includes the

501 independent evaluation, the department's findings and
502 evaluation, recommendations as to whether the pilot program
503 should be continued and expanded statewide and, if so, fiscal
504 and policy recommendations to ensure effective expansion and
505 continued operation of the program.

506 **Section 9. Subsection (11) is added to section 1004.615,**
507 **Florida Statutes, to read:**

508 1004.615 Florida Institute for Child Welfare.—

509 (11) An incentive provided to state employees for
510 participating in the institute's research or evaluation as
511 required by the institute's statutory mission under this section
512 may not be considered a violation of s. 112.313 or require
513 reporting under s. 112.3148.

514 **Section 10. Section 402.30501, Florida Statutes, is**
515 **amended to read:**

516 402.30501 Modification of introductory child care course
517 for community college credit authorized.—The Department of
518 Children and Families may modify the 40-clock-hour introductory
519 course in child care under s. 402.305 or s. 402.3131 to meet the
520 requirements of articulating the course to community college
521 credit. Any modification must continue to provide that the
522 course satisfies the requirements of s. 402.305(2)(d) ~~s.~~
523 ~~402.305(2)(e)~~.

524 **Section 11. Subsections (3) and (4) of section 1002.57,**
525 **Florida Statutes, are amended to read:**

526 1002.57 Prekindergarten director credential.—

527 (3) The prekindergarten director credential must meet or
528 exceed the requirements of the Department of Children and
529 Families for the child care facility director credential under
530 s. 402.305(2)(f) ~~s. 402.305(2)(g)~~, and successful completion of
531 the prekindergarten director credential satisfies these
532 requirements for the child care facility director credential.

533 (4) The department shall, to the maximum extent
534 practicable, award credit to a person who successfully completes
535 the child care facility director credential under s.
536 402.305(2)(f) ~~s. 402.305(2)(g)~~ for those requirements of the
537 prekindergarten director credential which are duplicative of
538 requirements for the child care facility director credential.

539 **Section 12. Subsection (1) of section 1002.59, Florida**
540 **Statutes, is amended to read:**

541 1002.59 Emergent literacy and performance standards
542 training courses.—

543 (1) The department, in collaboration with the Just Read,
544 Florida! Office, shall adopt minimum standards for courses in
545 emergent literacy for prekindergarten instructors. Each course
546 must consist of 5 clock hours and provide instruction in
547 strategies and techniques to address the age-appropriate
548 progress of prekindergarten students in developing emergent
549 literacy skills, including oral communication, knowledge of
550 print and letters, phonological and phonemic awareness,

551 vocabulary and comprehension development, and foundational
552 background knowledge designed to correlate with the content that
553 students will encounter in grades K-12, consistent with the
554 evidence-based content and strategies grounded in the science of
555 reading identified pursuant to s. 1001.215(7). The course
556 standards must be reviewed as part of any review of subject
557 coverage or endorsement requirements in the elementary, reading,
558 and exceptional student educational areas conducted pursuant to
559 s. 1012.586. Each course must also provide resources containing
560 strategies that allow students with disabilities and other
561 special needs to derive maximum benefit from the Voluntary
562 Prekindergarten Education Program. Successful completion of an
563 emergent literacy training course approved under this section
564 satisfies requirements for approved training in early literacy
565 and language development under ss. 402.305(2)(d)5. ~~ss.~~
566 ~~402.305(2)(e)5.,~~ 402.313(6), and 402.3131(5).

567 **Section 13.** Effective upon this act becoming a law, the
568 Department of Children and Families shall convene a case
569 management workforce workgroup by July 1, 2025. The workgroup
570 shall be composed of persons with subject-matter expertise in
571 case management and child welfare policy.

572 (1) The department shall ensure the workgroup has at least
573 two representatives with subject matter expertise in case
574 management from each of the following:

575 (a) The Department of Children and Families.

- 576 (b) Community-based care lead agencies.
- 577 (c) Contracted case management organizations.
- 578 (2) In collaboration with the Florida Institute for Child
579 Welfare, the workgroup shall do all of the following:
- 580 (a) Review and analyze existing statutes, rules, operating
581 procedures, and federal requirements relating to the provision
582 of case management.
- 583 (b) Review and analyze legislative changes relating to
584 case management processes during the preceding 10 years and the
585 impact that those changes have had on workload and workforce.
- 586 (c) Gather statewide data to assess all of the following:
- 587 1. Compliance with statutory requirements.
- 588 2. Variations in case management practices.
- 589 3. Current workforce capacity.
- 590 4. Barriers to successful implementation of any statutes,
591 rules, and operating procedures.
- 592 (d) Solicit insight from stakeholders, including frontline
593 workers, supervisors, and administrators regarding challenges
594 and potential solutions.
- 595 (e) Analyze findings of the work conducted under
596 paragraphs (a)-(d) to:
- 597 1. Identify any needed statutory changes.
- 598 2. Evaluate whether the current structure, processes, and
599 requirements of statute, rule, and operating procedure are
600 duplicative or unworkable.

601 3. Evaluate how effectively case managers are implementing
602 policy.

603 (f) Develop clear and actionable recommendations to
604 streamline, clarify, standardize, and implement case management
605 processes and practices that address workforce retention and
606 allow for local community innovation.

607 (3) The workgroup shall meet as often as necessary to
608 carry out these duties and responsibilities and shall operate
609 until December 1, 2025, by which time it shall submit to the
610 Governor, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the
611 House of Representatives a report that summarizes its work,
612 describes and details its analysis of data, and recommends clear
613 actionable policy.

614 **Section 14.** Effective upon this act becoming a law, the
615 Department of Children and Families shall contract for a
616 detailed study of bed capacity for residential treatment
617 services for child victims of commercial sexual exploitation
618 identified by the child welfare systems of care and those not
619 involved in the child welfare systems of care. The study must
620 include analyses of current capacity, current and projected
621 future demand, and this state's current and projected future
622 ability to meet that demand. The study must be completed by
623 December 31, 2025, and, at a minimum, include all of the
624 following:

625 (1) By department region, the current number of

626 residential treatment beds in safe homes for treatment of child
627 victims of commercial sexual exploitation, the number of
628 individuals admitted and discharged annually, the types and
629 frequency of diagnoses, and the lengths of stays.

630 (2) By department region, the current number of
631 specialized safe therapeutic foster home placements for child
632 victims of commercial sexual exploitation, the number of
633 placements annually, and the lengths of stays.

634 (3) Policy recommendations for ensuring sufficient bed
635 capacity for residential treatment beds and specialized safe
636 therapeutic foster home placements, and enhancing services for
637 child victims of commercial sexual exploitation which could
638 prevent the need for residential treatment beds.

639 **Section 15.** Except as otherwise expressly provided in this
640 act and except for this section, which shall take effect upon
641 this act becoming a law, this act shall take effect July 1,
642 2025.