

By Senator Collins

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1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to public records; amending s. 295.22,
3 F.S.; providing an exemption from public records
4 requirements for specified materials and information
5 received, generated, ascertained, or discovered by
6 Florida Is For Veterans, Inc., while administering the
7 Veterans Florida Opportunity Program; providing for
8 future legislative review and repeal of the exemption;
9 providing a statement of public necessity; providing a
10 contingent effective date.

11
12 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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14 Section 1. Subsection (4) of section 295.22, Florida
15 Statutes, as amended by SB 1280, 2025 Regular Session, is
16 amended to read:

17 295.22 Veterans Florida Opportunity Program.—

18 (4) ADMINISTRATION AND PUBLIC RECORDS EXEMPTION.—

19 (a) Florida Is For Veterans, Inc., shall administer the
20 Veterans Florida Opportunity Program and perform all of the
21 following functions:

22 1.~~(a)~~ Conduct marketing and recruiting efforts directed at
23 individuals within the target market who reside in or have an
24 interest in relocating to this state and who are seeking
25 employment. Marketing must include information related to how
26 military experience can be valuable to a target industry or
27 secondary industry business. Such efforts may include attending
28 job fairs and events; hosting events for servicemembers,
29 veterans, and their spouses or the business community; and using

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30 digital and social media and direct mail campaigns. The
31 corporation shall also include such marketing as part of its
32 main marketing campaign.

33 2.~~(b)~~ Assist individuals in the target market who reside in
34 or relocate to this state and who are seeking employment with
35 target industry or secondary industry businesses. The
36 corporation shall offer skills assessments to such individuals
37 and assist them in establishing employment goals and applying
38 for and achieving gainful employment.

39 a.1. ~~Assessment may include skill match information, skill~~
40 ~~gap analysis, résumé creation, translation of military skills~~
41 ~~into civilian workforce skills, and translation of military~~
42 ~~achievements and experience into generally understood civilian~~
43 ~~workforce skills.~~

44 b.2. ~~Assistance may include providing the servicemember,~~
45 ~~veteran, or his or her spouse with information on current~~
46 ~~workforce demand by industry or geographic region, creating~~
47 ~~employment goals, and aiding or teaching general knowledge~~
48 ~~related to completing applications.~~

49 c.3. ~~Assessment and assistance may be in person or by~~
50 ~~electronic means, as determined by the corporation to be most~~
51 ~~efficient and best meet the needs of veterans or their spouses.~~

52 3.~~(e)~~ Assist Florida target industry and secondary industry
53 businesses in recruiting and hiring individuals in the target
54 market. The corporation shall provide services to Florida
55 businesses to meet their hiring needs by connecting businesses
56 with suitable applicants for employment. Suitable applicants
57 include veterans or veterans' spouses who have appropriate job
58 skills or may need additional training to meet the specific

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59 needs of a business. The corporation shall also provide
60 information about the state and federal benefits of hiring
61 veterans.

62 4.~~(d)~~ Create a grant program to provide funding to assist
63 individuals in the target market in meeting the workforce-skill
64 needs of target industry and secondary industry businesses
65 seeking to hire, promote, or generally improve specialized
66 skills of veterans, establish criteria for approval of requests
67 for funding, and maximize the use of funding for this program.
68 Grant funds may be used only in the absence of available
69 veteran-specific federally funded programs. Grants may fund
70 specialized training specific to a particular business.

71 a.1.~~1.~~ The program may prioritize grant funds to be used to
72 provide a certificate, a license, or nondegree training from the
73 Master Credentials List pursuant to s. 445.004(4)(h); any
74 federally created certifications or licenses; and any skills-
75 based industry certifications or licenses deemed relevant or
76 necessary by the corporation. Funds may be allocated only upon a
77 review that includes, but is not limited to, documentation of
78 accreditation and licensure.

79 b.2.~~2.~~ Grant reimbursements are limited to \$5,000 per
80 eligible trainee per fiscal year. Qualified businesses must
81 cover the entire cost for all of the training provided before
82 receiving reimbursement from the corporation. Training costs for
83 a trainee in a fiscal year must be equal to or greater than
84 \$5,000. Eligible costs and expenditures include, but are not
85 limited to:

86 (I)~~a.~~ Tuition and fees.

87 (II)~~b.~~ Books and classroom materials.

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88 (III)e. Rental fees for facilities.

89 c.3. Before funds are allocated for a request pursuant to
90 this section, the corporation shall prepare a grant agreement
91 between the business requesting funds and the corporation. Such
92 agreement must include, but need not be limited to:

93 (I)a. Identification of the personnel necessary to conduct
94 the instructional program, instructional program description,
95 and any vendors used to conduct the instructional program.

96 (II)b. Identification of the duration of the instructional
97 program.

98 (III)e. Identification of all direct, training-related
99 costs.

100 (IV)d. Identification of special program requirements that
101 are not otherwise addressed in the agreement.

102 (V)e. Permission to access aggregate information specific
103 to the wages and performance of participants upon the completion
104 of instruction for evaluation purposes. The agreement must
105 specify that any evaluation published subsequent to the
106 instruction may not identify the employer or any individual
107 participant.

108 d.4. A business may receive a grant under any state program
109 and a grant under this section for the same veteran trainee.

110 e.5. Notwithstanding sub-subparagraph b. subparagraph 2.,
111 grant funds may be used as educational stipends for individuals
112 in the target market while training at any location of the
113 University of Florida's Institute for Food and Agricultural
114 Sciences within this state. The corporation and the University
115 of Florida shall enter into an agreement before any grant funds
116 are expended, and the corporation shall determine the amount and

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117 structure of any educational stipend. Such stipend may be used
118 only for such training for a period of no less than 4 months and
119 no more than 6 months, in the absence of veteran-specific
120 federally funded programs.

121 5.~~(e)~~ Contract with one or more entities to administer an
122 entrepreneur initiative program for individuals in the target
123 market in this state which connects business leaders in the
124 state with such individuals seeking to become entrepreneurs.

125 a.1. The corporation shall award each contract in
126 accordance with the competitive bidding requirements in s.
127 287.057 to one or more public or private entities that:

128 (I)~~a.~~ Demonstrate the ability to implement the program and
129 the commitment of resources, including financial resources, to
130 such programs.

131 (II)~~b.~~ Have a demonstrated experience working with veteran
132 entrepreneurs.

133 (III)~~e.~~ As determined by the corporation, have been
134 recognized for their performance in assisting entrepreneurs to
135 launch successful businesses in this state.

136 b.2. Each contract must include performance metrics,
137 including a focus on employment and business creation. The
138 entity may also work with a university or college offering
139 related programs to refer individuals in the target market or to
140 provide services. The entrepreneur initiative program may
141 include activities and assistance such as peer-to-peer learning
142 sessions, mentoring, technical assistance, business roundtables,
143 networking opportunities, support of student organizations,
144 speaker series, or other tools within a virtual environment.

145 6.~~(f)~~ Administer a SkillBridge initiative for target

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146 industry and secondary industry businesses in this state and for
147 eligible individuals in the target market who reside in, or who
148 wish to reside in, this state. In administering the initiative,
149 the corporation shall:

150 ~~a.1.~~ Establish and maintain, as applicable, its
151 certification for the SkillBridge initiative or any other
152 similar workforce training and transition programs established
153 by the United States Department of Defense;

154 ~~b.2.~~ Educate businesses, business associations, and
155 eligible individuals in the target market on the SkillBridge
156 initiative and its benefits, and educate military command and
157 personnel within the state on the opportunities available to
158 eligible individuals in the target market;

159 ~~c.3.~~ Assist businesses in obtaining approval for skilled
160 workforce training curricula under the SkillBridge initiative,
161 including, but not limited to, apprenticeships, internships, or
162 fellowships; and

163 ~~d.4.~~ Match eligible individuals in the target market with
164 training opportunities offered by the corporation or
165 participating businesses, with the intent of having them achieve
166 gainful employment in this state upon completion of their
167 SkillBridge training.

168 (b) Materials that relate to methods of manufacture or
169 production, potential trade secrets, potentially patentable
170 material, actual trade secrets, workforce training plans,
171 business transactions, business plans, military records, skills
172 assessments and career goals, resumes and contact information,
173 certificates, financial and proprietary information, and
174 agreements or proposals to receive funding which are received,

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175 generated, ascertained, or discovered by Florida Is For
176 Veterans, Inc., including partnership and training participants,
177 such as private enterprises, educational institutions, and other
178 organizations, for the purposes of administering this subsection
179 are confidential and exempt from s. 119.07(1) and s. 24(a), Art.
180 I of the State Constitution. Aggregated data with no personal
181 identifying information for reporting purposes is not exempt.
182 This paragraph is subject to the Open Government Sunset Review
183 Act in accordance with s. 119.15 and shall stand repealed on
184 October 2, 2030, unless reviewed and saved from repeal through
185 reenactment by the Legislature.

186 Section 2. The Legislature finds that it is a public
187 necessity that information pertaining to an individual or
188 organization that seeks assistance, services, or training under
189 s. 295.22(4), Florida Statutes, be made confidential and exempt
190 from public records requirements under s. 119.07(1), Florida
191 Statutes, and s. 24(a), Article I of the State Constitution. The
192 Legislature created Florida Is For Veterans, Inc., and funds the
193 program under s. 295.22(4), Florida Statutes, administered by
194 the corporation, in order to provide assistance, services, and
195 training to separating servicemembers, veterans, and others
196 through organizations such as employers, nonprofits, and
197 universities in the areas of career placement and training and
198 entrepreneurship training to support workforce and economic
199 development within this state. Making information, such as
200 resumes of job seekers, entrepreneurship business plans, and
201 employer workforce training plans and curricula, publicly
202 available exposes those individuals and organizations to risk of
203 loss of personal privacy and theft of confidential business

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204 information. Without the public records exemption, the state
205 would be unable to effectively and efficiently implement and
206 administer the program.

207 Section 3. This act shall take effect on the same date that
208 SB 1280 or similar legislation takes effect, if such legislation
209 is adopted in the same legislative session or an extension
210 thereof and becomes a law.