

1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to community services for needy
3 individuals and families; creating s. 23.41, F.S.;
4 providing a short title; creating s. 23.42, F.S.;
5 providing goals of Hope Florida; creating s. 23.43,
6 F.S.; providing definitions; creating s. 23.44, F.S.;
7 creating the Hope Florida Office within the Executive
8 Office of the Governor; providing duties of the
9 office; providing eligibility requirements for Hope
10 Florida participants; specifying that Hope Florida is
11 voluntary; specifying mechanisms by which individuals
12 may receive assistance; requiring the office to
13 designate a state agency to perform certain functions;
14 creating s. 23.45, F.S.; requiring Hope Navigators to
15 be embedded in communities for specified purposes;
16 requiring care plans to include certain steps and
17 timelines; specifying duties of the Hope Florida
18 partner network; requiring specified state agencies to
19 participate in Hope Florida at the direction of the
20 Executive Office of the Governor; requiring
21 participating state agencies to use existing resources
22 and personnel, if possible; authorizing other entities
23 to participate in Hope Florida at the direction of the
24 office; providing an effective date.
25

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

27
 28 **Section 1.** Part IV of chapter 23, Florida Statutes,
 29 consisting of sections 23.41, 23.42, 23.43, 23.44, and 23.45, is
 30 created and entitled "Hope Florida."

31 **Section 2. Section 23.41, Florida Statutes, is created to**
 32 **read:**

33 23.41 Short title.—This part may be cited as the "Hope
 34 Florida Act."

35 **Section 3. Section 23.42, Florida Statutes, is created to**
 36 **read:**

37 23.42 Hope Florida goals.—The goals of Hope Florida are
 38 to:

39 (1) Streamline access to support, services, and assistance
 40 so that residents in need can reach their full potential within
 41 their local communities and to holistically coordinate care
 42 through Hope Navigators.

43 (2) Facilitate alignment and coordination of participating
 44 state agencies.

45 (3) Break down traditional silos and establish a seamless
 46 network of support systems, managed through one centralized
 47 system comprised of private businesses, nonprofit entities,
 48 state agencies, and faith-based organizations, to effectively
 49 achieve desired outcomes and sustain long-term results including
 50 greater self-sufficiency, community integration, and the

51 reduction of the participant's sole reliance on government
52 programs.

53 **Section 4. Section 23.43, Florida Statutes, is created to**
54 **read:**

55 23.43 Definitions.—As used in this part, the term:

56 (1) "Care plan" means a written document that contains
57 information provided by Hope Florida to participants and
58 develops and customizes tangible action steps and corresponding
59 timelines so that participants can achieve their immediate,
60 intermediate, and long-term goals. The care plan must also
61 address barriers by directly connecting participants to
62 community resources and opportunities.

63 (2) "Hope Florida partner network" means a group of
64 entities, including state agencies, public-private partnerships,
65 and nonprofit, private-sector, and faith-based organizations,
66 that is actively engaged in Hope Florida and provides goods or
67 services to directly support the participants' goals and address
68 identified barriers.

69 (3) "Hope line" means a statewide toll-free telephone
70 number that serves as a hotline for Hope Florida inquiries and
71 referrals for services.

72 (4) "Hope Navigators" means individuals that coordinate
73 care and assist participants and families seeking services
74 through Hope Florida.

75 (5) "Office" means the Hope Florida Office within the

76 Executive Office of the Governor.

77 (6) "Participant" means an individual who voluntarily
 78 participates in Hope Florida.

79 (7) "Participating state agency" means a state agency
 80 participating in Hope Florida at the direction of the Executive
 81 Office of the Governor.

82 **Section 5. Section 23.44, Florida Statutes, is created to**
 83 **read:**

84 23.44 Hope Florida Office; eligibility to participate;
 85 duties.—

86 (1) The Hope Florida Office is created within the
 87 Executive Office of the Governor. The director of the Hope
 88 Florida Office shall be appointed by and serve at the pleasure
 89 of the Governor.

90 (2) The office shall:

91 (a) Establish goals and strategies for Hope Florida.

92 (b) Facilitate coordination and collaboration among
 93 participating state agencies to achieve these goals.

94 (c) Expand the Hope Florida partner network to meet the
 95 needs of participants.

96 (d) Empower and assist residents in need to help identify
 97 and achieve immediate, intermediate, and long-term goals and
 98 remove barriers to goal achievement through the development and
 99 implementation of care plans in partnership with Hope
 100 Navigators.

101 (e) Use Hope Navigators to assist participants in
 102 identifying their personal goals, developing individualized
 103 plans for achieving immediate, intermediate, and long-term
 104 goals, identifying and addressing barriers, and actively
 105 connecting participants to community resources and opportunities
 106 to achieve their goals.

107 (f) Use participating state agencies to serve families
 108 holistically in achieving self-sufficiency, maximizing community
 109 integration, and building a prosperous future. Barriers to self-
 110 sufficiency may include the inability to:

- 111 1. Obtain stable employment;
- 112 2. Increase wages;
- 113 3. Obtain the necessary skills for greater independence,
 114 education, or training;
- 115 4. Meet basic needs; or
- 116 5. Find stable housing.

117 (g) Refer participants requiring assistance with
 118 employment or vocational training to CareerSource Florida and
 119 local workforce development boards or other entities to prepare,
 120 train, and place the participants in meaningful employment.

121 (3) (a) To become a participant in Hope Florida, an
 122 individual must be:

- 123 1. A legal resident of this state.
- 124 2. A citizen of the United States or a permanent resident
 125 alien of the United States, as determined by the United States

126 Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services.
127 3.a. At least 18 years of age;
128 b. If emancipated, at least 16 years of age; or
129 c. If not emancipated and under 18 years of age,
130 authorized to participate via written the consent of a parent or
131 guardian.
132 (b) Participation in Hope Florida is voluntary.
133 (c) Individuals may receive assistance by:
134 1. Calling the Hope Line;
135 2. Accessing the Hope Florida website; or
136 3. Being contacted or referred to the Hope Florida website
137 by a participating state agency, Hope Navigator, or community
138 organization.
139 (4) The office shall designate a state agency to, at a
140 minimum:
141 (a) Operate the Hope Line, which shall be available, at a
142 minimum, during business hours Monday through Friday.
143 (b) Develop and maintain a website for individuals to
144 connect with Hope Florida or to volunteer their time or donate
145 resources.
146 (c) Develop and maintain a Hope Florida case management
147 system that, at a minimum, conducts intake for Hope Florida
148 inquiries and referrals for individuals and families in need of
149 services. An electronic system shall be developed and maintained
150 by the state agency to provide, at a minimum, care planning

151 functionality, closed-loop referrals, and tracking.

152 (d) Work with the Department of Commerce and CareerSource
153 Florida to maintain a portal for designating employers as Hope
154 Florida employers. The portal must be integrated with the
155 Department of Commerce's one-stop delivery system to ensure that
156 all Floridians served through Hope Florida have access to
157 employment and training services.

158 **Section 6. Section 23.45, Florida Statutes, is created to**
159 **read:**

160 23.45 Hope Navigators; care plans; Hope Florida partner
161 network; participating state agencies.—

162 (1) (a) Hope Navigators are resources that must be embedded
163 within communities and which serve as catalysts and a single
164 point of contact for participants. Hope Navigators must use
165 participant information to jointly develop and implement care
166 plans and navigate and actively leverage community-based
167 supports and opportunities to create a sustainable network of
168 supports to help participants achieve their goals, overcome
169 barriers, and realize their full potential.

170 (b) A care plan, at a minimum, must include action steps
171 and corresponding timelines to address immediate, intermediate,
172 and long-term goals and barriers to help participants achieve
173 their personal goals. Personal goals may include goals relating
174 to mentorship and coaching, life skills development, employment,
175 education attainment, community engagement and volunteerism, and

176 addressing barriers such as the inability of participants to
177 meet their basic needs, transportation disadvantages, or
178 untreated medical and behavioral health conditions.

179 (2) The Hope Florida partner network must work to retain
180 existing partnerships and continuously develop new partnerships
181 to sustain the effectiveness of Hope Florida.

182 (3) (a) State agencies shall participate in Hope Florida at
183 the direction of the Executive Office of the Governor. At a
184 minimum, the following state agencies must participate in the
185 program:

- 186 1. The Department of Children and Families.
- 187 2. The Agency for Persons with Disabilities.
- 188 3. The Department of Juvenile Justice.
- 189 4. The Statewide Guardian ad Litem Office.
- 190 5. The Department of Education.
- 191 6. The Agency for Health Care Administration.
- 192 7. The Department of Corrections.
- 193 8. The Division of Emergency Management.
- 194 9. The Department of Veterans' Affairs.
- 195 10. The Department of Commerce.
- 196 11. The Department of Elderly Affairs.

197 (b) In order to use government resources more effectively
198 and efficiently, participating state agencies must use existing
199 resources and personnel, to the extent possible, to operate Hope
200 Florida.

201 (c) Other public-private partners may also participate in
202 Hope Florida at the direction of the office, including
203 CareerSource Florida and the Commission on Community Service.

204 **Section 7.** This act shall take effect upon becoming a law.