

1 A bill to be entitled
 2 An act relating to aiding unmarried minors; amending
 3 ss. 984.085 and 985.731, F.S.; providing enhanced
 4 criminal penalties for knowingly sheltering an
 5 unmarried minor or aiding an unmarried minor runaway;
 6 creating a presumption concerning knowledge of a
 7 minor's age; providing a defense; providing an
 8 effective date.

9
 10 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

11
 12 **Section 1. Section 984.085, Florida Statutes, is amended**
 13 **to read:**

14 984.085 Sheltering unmarried minors; aiding unmarried
 15 minor runaways; violations.—

16 (1) (a) A person who is not an authorized agent of the
 17 Department of Juvenile Justice or the Department of Children and
 18 Families may not knowingly shelter an unmarried minor for more
 19 than 24 hours without the consent of the minor's parent or
 20 guardian or without notifying a law enforcement officer of the
 21 minor's name and the fact that the minor is being provided
 22 shelter.

23 (b) A person may not knowingly provide aid to an unmarried
 24 minor who has run away from home without first contacting the
 25 minor's parent or guardian or notifying a law enforcement

26 | officer. The aid prohibited under this paragraph includes
 27 | assisting the minor in obtaining shelter, such as hotel
 28 | lodgings.

29 | (c) Proof that a person has not attained the age of 18
 30 | years creates the presumption that the defendant knew the
 31 | minor's age or acted in reckless disregard thereof.

32 | (2) It is a defense that the defendant had reasonable
 33 | cause to believe that his or her action was necessary to
 34 | preserve the minor from danger to his or her welfare.

35 | (3)~~(2)~~ A person who violates this section commits a felony
 36 | ~~misdemeanor~~ of the third ~~first~~ degree, punishable as provided in
 37 | s. 775.082, ~~or~~ s. 775.083, or s. 775.084.

38 | **Section 2. Section 985.731, Florida Statutes, is amended**
 39 | **to read:**

40 | 985.731 Sheltering unmarried minors; aiding unmarried
 41 | minor runaways; violations.—

42 | (1) (a) A person who is not an authorized agent of the
 43 | department or the Department of Children and Families may not
 44 | knowingly shelter an unmarried minor for more than 24 hours
 45 | without the consent of the minor's parent or guardian or without
 46 | notifying a law enforcement officer of the minor's name and the
 47 | fact that the minor is being provided shelter.

48 | (b) A person may not knowingly provide aid to an unmarried
 49 | minor who has run away from home without first contacting the
 50 | minor's parent or guardian or notifying a law enforcement

51 officer. The aid prohibited under this paragraph includes
52 assisting the minor in obtaining shelter, such as hotel
53 lodgings.

54 (c) Proof that a person has not attained the age of 18
55 years creates the presumption that the defendant knew the
56 minor's age or acted in reckless disregard thereof.

57 (2) It is a defense that the defendant had reasonable
58 cause to believe that his or her action was necessary to
59 preserve the minor from danger to his or her welfare.

60 (3)(2) A person who violates this section commits a felony
61 ~~misdemeanor~~ of the third first degree, punishable as provided in
62 s. 775.082, ~~or~~ s. 775.083, or s. 775.084.

63 **Section 3.** This act shall take effect July 1, 2025.