

By Senator Davis

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A bill to be entitled  
An act relating to maternal health and early learning;  
providing a short title; creating s. 383.012, F.S.;  
requiring the Department of Health to establish a  
certain home visit program for expectant mothers;  
providing program requirements; requiring health  
insurance providers and Medicaid to provide coverage  
for the program, as applicable; amending s. 383.305,  
F.S.; authorizing the Agency for Health Care  
Administration to authorize reduced fees for an  
applicant or a licensee for certain birthing centers;  
amending s. 383.31, F.S.; deleting acceptance criteria  
for birthing centers; creating s. 383.55, F.S.;  
defining the term "blood pressure monitor and cuff";  
requiring the department to provide a blood pressure  
monitor and cuff to an expectant mother for certain  
purposes and to repair the device and provide  
replacement parts as necessary; requiring the  
department to create certain educational materials;  
creating ss. 395.3043 and 395.6071, F.S.; defining the  
terms "doula" and "midwife"; authorizing a doula or  
midwife to be present with his or her client during  
childbirth at a hospital; creating s. 402.822, F.S.;  
requiring the Department of Children and Families to  
provide incentives for early learning centers to  
remain open 24 hours; specifying the incentives;  
creating ss. 458.355 and 459.075, F.S.; revising  
continuing education requirements for physicians to  
include education on certain Medicaid payments for

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pregnant women; amending s. 1002.83, F.S.; requiring that certain child care facilities be called early learning centers; requiring the Department of Education to ensure certain instruction and curriculum for early learning centers; amending s. 1003.21, F.S.; lowering the age at which children are required to attend school regularly; amending ss. 1002.53, 1002.61, and 1002.87, F.S.; conforming cross-references; providing an effective date.

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

Section 1. This act may be cited as "The Motherhood Initiative."

Section 2. Section 383.012, Florida Statutes, is created to read:

383.012 Home visit program for expectant mothers.—

(1) The Department of Health shall expand the current home visit program to include a home visit program for expectant mothers within the Healthy Start program, which shall include Healthy Start Care Coordination Programs.

(2) The program shall:

(a)1. Conduct screenings for expectant mothers for depression and substance abuse disorders provided by a registered nurse or licensed practical nurse licensed under part I of chapter 464.

2. Refer at-risk expectant mothers for mental health treatment.

(b) Ensure that an expectant mother is monitoring her blood

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pressure and that the educational materials created under s. 383.55(3) are provided and reviewed with her.

(c) Include a 3-hour course on the care of a newborn including, but not limited to, bathing, dressing, and feeding; cardiopulmonary resuscitation; and setting up sleep routines for the newborn and the mother which hospitals and birth centers shall offer to a mother before going home with her newborn.

(3) Health insurance providers and Medicaid shall provide coverage for the program, as applicable.

Section 3. Subsection (1) of section 383.305, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

383.305 Licensure; fees.—

(1) In accordance with s. 408.805, an applicant or a licensee shall pay a fee for each license application submitted under ss. 383.30-383.332 and part II of chapter 408. The amount of the fee shall be established by rule. The Agency for Health Care Administration may reduce the fees for an applicant or a licensee under this section for birthing centers in rural and other medically underserved areas.

Section 4. Section 383.31, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

~~383.31 Selection of clients;~~ Informed consent.—

~~(1)(a) A birth center may accept only those patients who are expected to have normal pregnancies, labors, and deliveries.~~

~~(b)~~ The criteria for the selection of birth center clients and the establishment of risk status shall be defined by rule of the agency.

(2)(a) A patient may not be accepted for care at a birth center until the patient has signed a client informed-consent

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form.

(b) The agency shall develop a client informed-consent form to be used by the center to inform the client of the benefits and risks related to childbirth outside a hospital.

Section 5. Section 383.55, Florida Statutes, is created to read:

383.55 Coverage of blood pressure monitors and cuffs.—

(1) As used in this section, the term "blood pressure monitor and cuff" means a device designed for the purpose of aiding in the treatment of hypertension by measuring blood pressure levels through a validated blood pressure measurement device at home or elsewhere outside of the clinic setting.

(2) The Department of Health shall provide a blood pressure monitor and cuff for an expectant mother to monitor for preeclampsia and shall provide all necessary repairs or replacement parts for the blood pressure monitor and cuff.

(3) The department shall create educational materials on the use of the blood pressure monitor and cuff, including, but not limited to, the proper use of the blood pressure monitor and cuff and the urgent maternal warning signs and symptoms provided by the Hear Her campaign established by the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Section 6. Section 395.3043, Florida Statutes, is created to read:

395.3043 Doula and midwife services.—

(1) As used in this section, the term:

(a) "Doula" means a nonmedical professional who provides physical, emotional, and informational support to individuals and families before, during, and after childbirth.

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117 (b) "Midwife" has the same definition as in s. 467.003.

118 (2) A doula or midwife may be present with his or her  
119 client during childbirth at a hospital.

120 Section 7. Section 395.6071, Florida Statutes, is created  
121 to read:

122 395.6071 Doula and midwife services.—

123 (1) As used in this section, the term:

124 (a) "Doula" means a nonmedical professional who provides  
125 physical, emotional, and informational support to individuals  
126 and families before, during, and after childbirth.

127 (b) "Midwife" has the same definition as in s. 467.003.

128 (2) A doula or midwife may be present with his or her  
129 client during childbirth at a rural hospital.

130 Section 8. Section 402.822, Florida Statutes, is created to  
131 read:

132 402.822 Twenty-four hour early learning centers.—The  
133 Department of Children and Families shall provide incentives for  
134 early learning centers to remain open 24 hours for the children  
135 of first responders, health care practitioners, and people  
136 employed in other industries who work nontraditional hours.  
137 Incentives for child care facilities may include, but need not  
138 be limited to:

139 (1) Raising subsidy rates for child care outside of  
140 traditional hours.

141 (2) Authorizing local agencies to restructure their subsidy  
142 systems.

143 (3) Authorizing counties to create contract nontraditional  
144 hours slots for child care providers or to create shared service  
145 agreements.

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146       Section 9. Section 458.355, Florida Statutes, is created to  
147 read:

148       458.355 Continuing education; Medicaid payment  
149 information.—The continuing education requirements prescribed by  
150 the board for a physician under this chapter or chapter 459 must  
151 include education on the mandatory Medicaid payments for a  
152 pregnant woman for the duration of her pregnancy and the  
153 postpartum period, consisting of the 12-month period beginning  
154 on the last day of her pregnancy.

155       Section 10. Section 459.075, Florida Statutes, is created  
156 to read:

157       459.075 Continuing education; Medicaid payment  
158 information.—The continuing education requirements prescribed by  
159 the board for a physician under this chapter or chapter 458 must  
160 include education on the mandatory Medicaid payments for a  
161 pregnant woman for the duration of her pregnancy and the  
162 postpartum period, consisting of the 12-month period beginning  
163 on the last day of her pregnancy.

164       Section 11. Subsection (15) of section 1002.83, Florida  
165 Statutes, is amended to read:

166       1002.83 Early learning coalitions.—

167       (15) (a) Each school district shall, upon request of the  
168 coalition, make a list of all individuals currently eligible to  
169 act as a substitute teacher within the school district, pursuant  
170 to rules adopted by the school district pursuant to s. 1012.35,  
171 available to an early learning coalition serving students within  
172 the school district.

173       (b) Child care facilities as defined in s. 402.302 may  
174 employ individuals listed as substitute instructors for the

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purpose of offering the school readiness program, the Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Program, and all other legally operating child care programs.

1. Child care facilities that receive support from early learning coalitions shall be called early learning centers.

2. The Department of Education shall ensure appropriate instruction and pacing of an approved curriculum for each early learning center.

Section 12. Paragraph (a) of subsection (1) and subsection (4) of section 1003.21, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

1003.21 School attendance.—

(1)(a)~~1.~~ All children who have attained the age of 5 ~~6~~ years or who will have attained the age of 5 ~~6~~ years by February 1 of any school year or who are older than 5 ~~6~~ years of age but who have not attained the age of 16 years, except as otherwise provided, are required to attend school regularly during the entire school term.

~~2. Children who will have attained the age of 5 years on or before September 1 of the school year are eligible for admission to public kindergartens during that school year under rules adopted by the district school board.~~

(4) Before admitting a child to kindergarten, the principal shall require evidence that the child has attained the age at which he or she should be admitted in accordance with the provisions of paragraph (1)(a) ~~subparagraph (1)(a)2.~~ The district school superintendent may require evidence of the age of any child who is being enrolled in public school and who the district school superintendent believes to be within the limits of compulsory attendance as provided for by law; however, the

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district school superintendent may not require evidence from any child who meets regular attendance requirements by attending a school or program listed in s. 1003.01(16)(b)-(e). If the first prescribed evidence is not available, the next evidence obtainable in the order set forth below shall be accepted:

(a) A duly attested transcript of the child's birth record filed according to law with a public officer charged with the duty of recording births;

(b) A duly attested transcript of a certificate of baptism showing the date of birth and place of baptism of the child, accompanied by an affidavit sworn to by the parent;

(c) An insurance policy on the child's life that has been in force for at least 2 years;

(d) A bona fide contemporary religious record of the child's birth accompanied by an affidavit sworn to by the parent;

(e) A passport or certificate of arrival in the United States showing the age of the child;

(f) A transcript of record of age shown in the child's school record of at least 4 years prior to application, stating date of birth; or

(g) If none of these evidences can be produced, an affidavit of age sworn to by the parent, accompanied by a certificate of age signed by a public health officer or by a public school physician, or, if these are not available in the county, by a licensed practicing physician designated by the district school board, which states that the health officer or physician has examined the child and believes that the age as stated in the affidavit is substantially correct. Children and



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youths who are experiencing homelessness and children who are known to the department, as defined in s. 39.0016, shall be given temporary exemption from this section for 30 school days.

Section 13. Subsection (2) of section 1002.53, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

1002.53 Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Program; eligibility and enrollment.—

(2) Each child who resides in this state who will have attained the age of 4 years on or before September 1 of the school year is eligible for the Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Program during either that school year or the following school year. The child remains eligible until the child is admitted to kindergarten, or unless he or she will have attained the age of 6 years by February 1 of any school year under s. 1003.21(1)(a) ~~s. 1003.21(1)(a)1~~.

Section 14. Subsection (2) of section 1002.61, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

1002.61 Summer prekindergarten program delivered by public schools and private prekindergarten providers.—

(2) Each summer prekindergarten program delivered by a public school or private prekindergarten provider must:

(a) Comprise at least 300 instructional hours;

(b) Not begin earlier than May 1 of the school year; and

(c) Not deliver the program for a child earlier than the summer immediately before the school year for which the child is eligible for admission to kindergarten in a public school under s. 1003.21(1)(a) ~~s. 1003.21(1)(a)2~~.

Section 15. Paragraph (c) of subsection (1) of section 1002.87, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

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1002.87 School readiness program; eligibility and enrollment.—

(1) Each early learning coalition shall give priority for participation in the school readiness program as follows:

(c) Subsequent priority shall be given, based on the early learning coalition's local priorities identified under s. 1002.85(2)(i), to children who meet the following criteria:

1. A child from birth to the beginning of the school year for which the child is eligible for admission to kindergarten in a public school under s. 1003.21(1)(a) ~~s. 1003.21(1)(a)2.~~ who is from a working family that is economically disadvantaged, and may include such child's eligible siblings, beginning with the school year in which the sibling is eligible for admission to kindergarten in a public school under s. 1003.21(1)(a) ~~s. 1003.21(1)(a)2.~~ until the beginning of the school year in which the sibling is eligible to begin 6th grade, provided that the first priority for funding an eligible sibling is local revenues available to the coalition for funding direct services.

2. A child of a parent who transitions from the work program into employment as described in s. 445.032 from birth to the beginning of the school year for which the child is eligible for admission to kindergarten in a public school under s. 1003.21(1)(a) ~~s. 1003.21(1)(a)2.~~

3. An at-risk child who is at least 9 years of age but younger than 13 years of age. An at-risk child whose sibling is enrolled in the school readiness program within an eligibility priority category listed in paragraphs (a) and (b) and subparagraph 1. shall be given priority over other children who are eligible under this paragraph.

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291 4. A child who is younger than 13 years of age from a  
292 working family that is economically disadvantaged.

293 5. A child of a parent who transitions from the work  
294 program into employment as described in s. 445.032 who is  
295 younger than 13 years of age.

296 6. A child who has special needs and has been determined  
297 eligible as a student who requires additional accommodations  
298 beyond those required by the Americans with Disabilities Act.  
299 The child's special needs and associated accommodations must be  
300 validated by a licensed health care professional, a licensed  
301 mental health professional, or an educational psychologist. Such  
302 person may not be the child's parent or relative or a person  
303 employed by a child care provider. The following documentation  
304 must be used to determine the child's eligibility for such  
305 accommodations:

306 a. A current individual education plan with a Florida  
307 school district;

308 b. A current individualized family support plan;

309 c. A diagnosed special need; or

310 d. A written determination of required accommodations by a  
311 licensed health care professional, a licensed mental health  
312 professional, or an educational psychologist.

313 7. A child who otherwise meets one of the eligibility  
314 criteria in paragraphs (a) and (b) and subparagraphs 1. and 2.  
315 but who is also enrolled concurrently in the federal Head Start  
316 Program and the Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Program.

317 Section 16. This act shall take effect July 1, 2026.