

1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to the Agency for Persons with
3 Disabilities; amending s. 393.0655, F.S.; requiring
4 level 2 employment screening for all employees of
5 residential facilities and adult day training
6 programs; requiring the agency to contract with a
7 state university to develop and administer certain
8 surveys; providing requirements for such surveys;
9 requiring the state university to submit a certain
10 report to the agency by a specified date; requiring
11 the agency to conduct public hearings on specified
12 information; conduct or contract for a gap analysis
13 for specified purposes; identify core competencies and
14 performance metrics and make recommendations for
15 standardizing assessments; and submit a certain report
16 to the Governor and the Legislature by a specified
17 date; providing an effective date.

18
19 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

20
21 **Section 1. Subsection (1) of section 393.0655, Florida**
22 **Statutes, is amended to read:**

23 393.0655 Screening of direct service providers.—

24 (1) MINIMUM STANDARDS.—The agency shall require level 2
25 employment screening pursuant to chapter 435 for direct service

26 providers who are unrelated to their clients, including support
27 coordinators, and all employees ~~managers and supervisors~~ of
28 residential facilities or adult day training programs licensed
29 under this chapter and any other persons, including volunteers,
30 who provide care or services, who have access to a client's
31 living areas, or who have access to a client's funds or personal
32 property. Background screening must include employment history
33 checks as provided in s. 435.03(1) and local criminal records
34 checks through local law enforcement agencies.

35 (a) A volunteer who assists on an intermittent basis for
36 less than 10 hours per month does not have to be screened if a
37 person who meets the screening requirement of this section is
38 always present and has the volunteer within his or her line of
39 sight.

40 (b) Licensed physicians, nurses, or other professionals
41 licensed and regulated by the Department of Health are not
42 subject to background screening pursuant to this section if they
43 are providing a service that is within their scope of licensed
44 practice.

45 (c) A person selected by the family or the individual with
46 developmental disabilities and paid by the family or the
47 individual to provide supports or services is not required to
48 have a background screening under this section.

49 (d) Persons 12 years of age or older, including family
50 members, residing with a direct services provider who provides

51 services to clients in his or her own place of residence are
52 subject to background screening; however, such persons who are
53 12 to 18 years of age shall be screened for delinquency records
54 only.

55 **Section 2.** (1) (a) For purposes of enhancing the quality,
56 capacity, and consistency of waiver support coordination
57 services, the Agency for Persons with Disabilities shall
58 contract with a state university to develop and administer
59 surveys regarding waiver support coordination services. The
60 university shall administer surveys to owners and operators of
61 all qualified organizations in this state; support coordinators
62 currently employed by a qualified organization; and iBudget
63 clients and their parents, caregivers, or legal guardians.

64 1. The surveys must, at a minimum, solicit data and input
65 regarding:

66 a. The quality, consistency, and accessibility of services
67 provided by support coordinators.

68 b. Attributes and behaviors that define high-quality
69 support coordination.

70 c. Best practices and areas for improvement.

71 d. Quantitative and qualitative metrics suitable for
72 assessing support coordinator performance.

73 e. Any other factors deemed pertinent by the university or
74 the agency to improve service delivery.

75 2. Surveys of qualified organizations must also

76 specifically address:

77 a. Professional and educational prerequisites established
78 by the organization for employment as a support coordinator.

79 b. Methods used to assess core competencies.

80 c. The efficacy of the mentoring program required under s.
81 393.0663(2)(b), Florida Statutes.

82 d. Operational and systemic challenges with recruitment
83 and retention of qualified support coordinators.

84 3. Surveys of individual waiver support coordinators must
85 also specifically address:

86 a. Individual caseload ratios, capacity, and geographic
87 service areas.

88 b. The efficacy of the mentoring program required under s.
89 393.0663(2)(b), Florida Statutes.

90 c. Operational and systemic challenges to delivery of
91 effective support coordination.

92 4. Surveys of iBudget clients and their parents,
93 caregivers, or legal guardians must also specifically address
94 satisfaction with support coordination services.

95 (b) By October 1, 2026, the state university must submit a
96 final report to the agency, including a compilation and analysis
97 of the survey results.

98 (2) The agency shall solicit input on enhancing support
99 coordinator quality, capacity and consistency from the whole
100 community of waiver program stakeholders, and shall conduct at

101 least one publicly noticed hearing for this purpose in each
102 service region.

103 (3) The agency shall conduct or contract for a gap
104 analysis to assess the geographic distribution and caseload
105 capacity of waiver support coordinators across this state.

106 (4) Using the information gathered under this section, the
107 agency shall identify specific core competencies for waiver
108 support coordinators, identify specific performance metrics to
109 assess those core competencies, and make recommendations on how
110 to standardize their assessment. By February 15, 2027, the
111 agency shall submit a report to the Governor, the President of
112 the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives on
113 its findings and recommendations, and include the full report
114 submitted by the state university under paragraph (1).

115 **Section 3.** This act shall take effect upon becoming a law.