

By Senator Bracy Davis

15-00700-26

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A bill to be entitled
An act relating to mental health programs for gun
violence prevention; creating s. 394.4997, F.S.;
providing legislative findings and intent; requiring
IMPACT GNV of the City of Gainesville, in
collaboration with certain entities, to develop and
implement the Gun Violence Prevention Pilot Program;
providing eligibility and program requirements;
providing alternatives to incarceration for specified
youth; providing for referrals to specified programs;
requiring the City of Gainesville, in collaboration
with Alachua County, to annually submit a specified
report to IMPACT GNV by a specified date; requiring
IMPACT GNV to report specified information to the
Governor and the Legislature by a specified date;
providing for expiration of the pilot program;
providing an appropriation; providing an effective
date.

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

Section 1. Section 394.4997, Florida Statutes, is created
to read:

394.4997 Gun Violence Prevention Pilot Program.—

(1) LEGISLATIVE FINDINGS AND INTENT.—The Legislature finds
that persons under 21 years of age in this state are
disproportionately affected by gun violence, which has
significant adverse effects on the health, safety, and well-
being of persons under 21 years of age. Further, the Legislature

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finds that mental health challenges and unresolved conflicts are contributing factors to the prevalence of gun violence and that there is a need for targeted mental health and conflict resolution education programs to assist persons under 21 years of age in mitigating these issues. It is the intent of the Legislature to establish programs that provide mental health services tailored to the needs of persons under 21 years of age, implement conflict resolution training in schools and community centers to prevent violence, and fund community-based initiatives that address the root causes of gun violence among persons under 21 years of age.

(2) CREATION.—

(a) IMPACT GNV of the City of Gainesville shall develop and implement a Gun Violence Prevention Pilot Program in the City of Gainesville, in collaboration with the Department of Juvenile Justice, the state attorney, and the public defender of the Eighth Judicial Circuit.

(b) The pilot program shall provide mental health services, community-based intervention programs, conflict resolution training, and alternative opportunities.

(c) IMPACT GNV shall design the pilot program to align with and complement existing efforts in the City of Gainesville to address gun violence among youth and young adults. IMPACT GNV shall, at a minimum, consult with stakeholders before and during implementation of the pilot program.

(3) ELIGIBILITY.—In order to become an eligible program participant, he or she must be:

(a) A person who is at least 10 to 21 years of age, who is at moderate or high risk of being:

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59 1. A victim of gun violence;
60 2. An offender who has inflicted bodily harm or death; or
61 3. An individual returning to the community from a
62 delinquency residential program; or
63 (b) A family member of a person eligible under paragraph
64 (a).
65 (4) PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS.—The program shall:
66 (a) Provide program participants with access to mental
67 health services, including, but not limited to, all of the
68 following:
69 1. Individual therapy sessions with qualified professionals
70 or mental health counselors to address personal mental health
71 issues.
72 2. Facilitated group therapy sessions to provide peer
73 support and shared experiences.
74 3. Family therapy sessions involving family members to
75 address familial issues contributing to mental health problems.
76 4. Trauma-focused cognitive behavioral therapy for
77 participants who have experienced trauma.
78 5. Art and music therapies to help participants express
79 emotions and cope with stress.
80 6. Substance abuse treatment programs addressing substance
81 abuse issues that may contribute to violent behavior.
82 7. Mediation training.
83 8. Restoration of relationships.
84 9. Resilience and leadership skills.
85 (b) In collaboration with the Department of Juvenile
86 Justice, the state attorney, and the public defender for the
87 Eighth Judicial Circuit, provide program participants who are

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involved with the delinquency system or on probation with
opportunities to obtain:

1. A graduate equivalency degree.

2. Job training, skills development, or an apprenticeship.

3. Employment at high-risk or critical need positions.

(5) REFERRAL.—

(a) The public defender's office will receive referrals to
the dependency program.

(b) The state attorney's office will receive referrals to
the diversion program under part III of chapter 985.

(c) The Department of Juvenile Justice will receive
referrals to the class for firearm offenders under s.
985.601(11).

(6) REPORTS.—

(a) Beginning October 31, 2027, and annually thereafter,
the City of Gainesville, in collaboration with Alachua County,
shall report to IMPACT GNV and the Department of Juvenile
Justice the number of participants in the pilot program; data on
the impact on the rate of gun violence among individuals within
the age group and geographic area served by the program; data on
risk factors for gun violence in the geographic area served by
the program; feedback from program participants; and
recommendations for improvement and expansion of services based
on the results of the pilot program.

(b) IMPACT GNV shall report to the Governor, the President
of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives
by December 31 of each year on the implementation and
performance of the program.

(7) REPEAL.—This section expires June 30, 2030.

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117 Section 2. For the 2026-2027 fiscal year, the sum of
118 \$500,000 is appropriated in nonrecurring funds from the General
119 Revenue Fund to the Department of Children and Families for the
120 purpose of implementing this act.

121 Section 3. This act shall take effect July 1, 2026.