

CS/CS/HB 765

2026

A bill to be entitled  
An act relating to child care and early learning services; amending s. 402.302, F.S.; revising and providing definitions; amending s. 402.305, F.S.; revising the minimum standards for child care facility licensing; amending ss. 402.313 and 402.3131, F.S.; removing provisions requiring family day care homes and large family child care homes, respectively, to provide specified information to parents; amending s. 627.70161, F.S.; changing the term "family day care" to "family child care"; providing legislative intent relating to large family child care homes; defining the term "large family child care home"; prohibiting residential property insurance policies from providing coverage for liability for claims arising out of, or in connection with, the operations of large family child care homes; providing that insurers are under no obligation to defend against lawsuits covering such claims; providing exceptions; prohibiting insurers from denying, cancelling, and refusing to renew a policy for residential property insurance on the basis that the policyholders or applicants operate large family child care homes; providing exceptions; reenacting and amending s. 1001.24, F.S.; revising the definition of the term "Department of Education"

26       direct-support organization"; creating s. 1002.821,  
27       F.S.; creating the Brighter Futures Program within a  
28       Department of Education direct-support organization;  
29       providing that program funds shall be deposited in the  
30       Early Learning Fund; providing the funds from state  
31       sources are accounted separately; providing for the  
32       use of funds; requiring an annual report; providing  
33       requirements for such report; amending s. 1002.95,  
34       F.S.; providing for the administration of the Center  
35       for Early Childhood Professional Recognition; amending  
36       s. 39.101, F.S.; conforming a cross-reference;  
37       amending ss. 39.202, 125.0109, 166.0445, 212.08,  
38       402.306, 402.309, 402.310, 402.3115, 402.312, 402.315,  
39       402.316, 402.318, 402.319, 409.988, 411.203, 1002.55,  
40       1002.82, 1002.83, 1002.84, 1002.88, 1002.895, 1002.92,  
41       1002.93, and 1002.945, F.S.; conforming provisions to  
42       changes made by the act; providing an effective date.  
43

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

45  
46       **Section 1. Subsections (15) through (18) of section**  
47       **402.302, Florida Statutes, are renumbered as subsections (16)**  
48       **through (19), respectively, paragraph (a) of subsection (2) and**  
49       **subsections (3), (8), (9), and (11) are amended, and a new**  
50       **subsection (15) is added to that section, to read:**

51        402.302 Definitions.—As used in this chapter, the term:

52        (2) "Child care facility" includes any child care center  
53 or child care arrangement which provides child care for more  
54 than five children unrelated to the operator and which receives  
55 a payment, fee, or grant for any of the children receiving care,  
56 wherever operated, and whether or not operated for profit. The  
57 following are not included:

58        (a) Public schools and nonpublic schools and their  
59 administered integral programs, except as provided in s.

60 402.3025.~~;~~

61        (b) Summer camps having children in full-time residence.~~;~~

62        (c) Summer day camps.~~;~~

63        (d) Bible schools normally conducted during vacation  
64 periods.~~;~~ and

65        (e) Operators of transient establishments, as defined in  
66 chapter 509, which provide child care services solely for the  
67 guests of their establishment or resort, provided that all child  
68 care personnel of the establishment are screened according to  
69 the level 2 screening requirements of chapter 435.

70        (f) Before-school and after-school programs, and any  
71 programs during off-school hours, offered and operated by public  
72 and nonpublic elementary schools at school sites for the  
73 schools' student populations.

74        (3) "Child care personnel" means all owners, operators,  
75 employees, and volunteers working in a child care facility. The

76 term does not include persons who work in a child care facility  
77 after hours when children are not present or parents of children  
78 in a child care facility. For purposes of screening, the term  
79 includes any member, over the age of 12 years, of a child care  
80 facility operator's family, or person, over the age of 12 years,  
81 residing with a child care facility operator if the child care  
82 facility is located in or adjacent to the home of the operator  
83 or if the family member of, or person residing with, the child  
84 care facility operator has any direct contact with the children  
85 in the facility during its hours of operation. Members of the  
86 operator's family or persons residing with the operator who are  
87 between the ages of 12 years and 18 years are not required to be  
88 fingerprinted but must be screened for delinquency records. For  
89 purposes of screening, the term also includes persons who work  
90 in child care programs that provide care for children 15 hours  
91 or more each week in public or nonpublic schools, family child  
92 ~~day~~ care homes, membership organizations under s. 402.301, or  
93 programs otherwise exempted under s. 402.316. The term does not  
94 include public or nonpublic school personnel who are providing  
95 care during regular school hours, or after hours for activities  
96 related to a school's program for students attending public or  
97 nonpublic school programs ~~grades kindergarten through 12~~. A  
98 volunteer who assists on an intermittent basis for less than 10  
99 hours per month is not included in the term "personnel" for the  
100 purposes of screening and training if a person who meets the

101 screening requirement of s. 402.305(2) is always present and has  
102 the volunteer in his or her line of sight. Students who observe  
103 and participate in a child care facility as a part of their  
104 required coursework are not considered child care personnel,  
105 provided such observation and participation are on an  
106 intermittent basis and a person who meets the screening  
107 requirement of s. 402.305(2) is always present and has the  
108 student in his or her line of sight.

109 (8) "Family child day care home" means an occupied  
110 residence in which child care is regularly provided for children  
111 from at least two unrelated families and which receives a  
112 payment, fee, or grant for any of the children receiving care,  
113 whether or not operated for profit. Household children under 13  
114 years of age, when on the premises of the family child day care  
115 home or on a field trip with children enrolled in child care,  
116 shall be included in the overall capacity of the licensed home.  
117 A family child day care home shall be allowed to provide care  
118 for one of the following groups of children, which shall include  
119 household children under 13 years of age:

120 (a) A maximum of four children from birth to 12 months of  
121 age.

122 (b) A maximum of three children from birth to 12 months of  
123 age, and other children, for a maximum total of six children.

124 (c) A maximum of six preschool children if all are older  
125 than 12 months of age.

126                   (d) A maximum of 10 children if no more than 5 are  
127 preschool age and, of those 5, no more than 2 are under 12  
128 months of age.

129                   (9) "Household children" means children who are related by  
130 blood, marriage, or legal adoption to, or who are the legal  
131 wards of, the family child ~~day~~ care home operator, the large  
132 family child care home operator, or an adult household member  
133 who permanently or temporarily resides in the home. Supervision  
134 of the operator's household children shall be left to the  
135 discretion of the operator unless those children receive  
136 subsidized child care through the school readiness program  
137 pursuant to s. 1002.92 to be in the home.

138                   (11) "Large family child care home" means an occupied  
139 residence in which child care is regularly provided for children  
140 from at least two unrelated families, which receives a payment,  
141 fee, or grant for any of the children receiving care, whether or  
142 not operated for profit, and which has at least two full-time  
143 child care personnel on the premises during the hours of  
144 operation. One of the two full-time child care personnel must be  
145 the owner or occupant of the residence. A large family child  
146 care home must first have operated as a licensed family child  
147 ~~day~~ care home for 2 years, with an operator who has had a child  
148 development associate credential or its equivalent for 1 year,  
149 before seeking licensure as a large family child care home.  
150 Household children under 13 years of age, when on the premises

151 of the large family child care home or on a field trip with  
152 children enrolled in child care, shall be included in the  
153 overall capacity of the licensed home. A large family child care  
154 home shall be allowed to provide care for one of the following  
155 groups of children, which shall include household children under  
156 13 years of age:

157 (a) A maximum of 8 children from birth to 24 months of  
158 age.

159 (b) A maximum of 12 children, with no more than 4 children  
160 under 24 months of age.

161 (15) "School-age children" means children who are:

162 (a) In kindergarten through grade 12;

163 (b) Three-year olds in a public or nonpublic school  
164 exceptional student education program; or

165 (c) Four-year olds in a public or nonpublic school child  
166 care program.

167 **Section 2. Paragraph (a) of subsection (2), paragraph (a)**  
168 **of subsection (7), and paragraph (a) of subsection (17) of**  
169 **section 402.305, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:**

170 402.305 Licensing standards; child care facilities.—

171 (2) PERSONNEL.—Minimum standards for child care personnel  
172 shall include minimum requirements as to:

173 (a) Good moral character based upon screening as defined  
174 in s. 402.302 ~~s. 402.302(15)~~. This screening shall be conducted  
175 as provided in chapter 435, using the level 2 standards for

176 screening provided in that chapter, and include employment  
177 history checks, a search of criminal history records, sexual  
178 predator and sexual offender registries, and child abuse and  
179 neglect registry of any state in which the current or  
180 prospective child care personnel resided during the preceding 5  
181 years. The department shall complete the screening and provide  
182 the results to the child care facility within 3 business days  
183 from the receipt of the criminal history record check. If the  
184 department is unable to complete the screening within 3 business  
185 days, the department shall issue the current or prospective  
186 child care personnel a 45-day provisional-hire status while all  
187 required information is being requested and the department is  
188 awaiting results unless the department has reason to believe a  
189 disqualifying factor may exist. During the 45-day period, the  
190 current or prospective child care personnel must be under the  
191 direct supervision of a screened and trained staff member when  
192 in contact with children.

193  
194 The department may grant limited exemptions to the minimum  
195 standards provided in this subsection which authorize a person  
196 to work in a specified role or with a specified population.

197 (7) SANITATION AND SAFETY.—

198 (a) Minimum standards must include requirements for  
199 sanitary and safety conditions, first aid treatment, emergency  
200 procedures, and pediatric cardiopulmonary resuscitation. The

201 minimum standards must require that ~~at least~~ one staff person  
202 trained in person in cardiopulmonary resuscitation, as evidenced  
203 by current documentation of course completion, be present at all  
204 times that children are present.

205 (17) TRANSFER OF OWNERSHIP.—

206 (a) One week prior to the transfer of ownership of a child  
207 care facility or family child ~~day~~ care home, the transferor  
208 shall notify the parent or caretaker of each child of the  
209 impending transfer.

210 **Section 3. Section 402.313, Florida Statutes, is amended  
211 to read:**

212 402.313 Family child ~~day~~ care homes.—

213 (1) Family child ~~day~~ care homes shall be licensed under  
214 this act if they are presently being licensed under an existing  
215 county licensing ordinance or if the board of county  
216 commissioners passes a resolution that family child ~~day~~ care  
217 homes be licensed.

218 (a) If not subject to license, family ~~day~~ care homes shall  
219 register annually with the department, providing the following  
220 information:

- 221 1. The name and address of the home.
- 222 2. The name of the operator.
- 223 3. The number of children served.
- 224 4. Proof of a written plan to provide at least one other  
225 competent adult to be available to substitute for the operator

226 in an emergency. This plan shall include the name, address, and  
227 telephone number of the designated substitute.

228 5. Proof of screening and background checks.

229 6. Proof of successful completion of the 30-hour training  
230 course, as evidenced by passage of a competency examination,  
231 which shall include:

232 a. State and local rules and regulations that govern child  
233 care.

234 b. Health, safety, and nutrition.

235 c. Identifying and reporting child abuse and neglect.

236 d. Child development, including typical and atypical  
237 language development; and cognitive, motor, social, and self-  
238 help skills development.

239 e. Observation of developmental behaviors, including using  
240 a checklist or other similar observation tools and techniques to  
241 determine a child's developmental level.

242 f. Specialized areas, including early literacy and  
243 language development of children from birth to 5 years of age,  
244 as determined by the department, for owner-operators of family  
245 child day care homes.

246 7. Proof that immunization records are kept current.

247 8. Proof of completion of the required continuing  
248 education units or clock hours.

249 (b) A family child day care home may volunteer to be  
250 licensed under this act.

251       (c) The department may provide technical assistance to  
252 counties and family child day care home providers to enable  
253 counties and family child day care providers to achieve  
254 compliance with family child day care homes standards.

255       (2) This information shall be included in a directory to  
256 be published annually by the department to inform the public of  
257 available child care facilities.

258       (3) Child care personnel in family child day care homes  
259 shall be subject to the applicable screening provisions  
260 contained in ss. 402.305(2) and 402.3055. For purposes of  
261 screening in family child day care homes, the term includes any  
262 member over the age of 12 years of a family child day care home  
263 operator's family, or persons over the age of 12 years residing  
264 with the operator in the family child day care home. Members of  
265 the operator's family, or persons residing with the operator,  
266 who are between the ages of 12 years and 18 years shall not be  
267 required to be fingerprinted, but shall be screened for  
268 delinquency records.

269       (4) Operators of family child day care homes must  
270 successfully complete an approved 30-clock-hour introductory  
271 course in child care, as evidenced by passage of a competency  
272 examination, before caring for children.

273       (5) In order to further develop their child care skills  
274 and, if appropriate, their administrative skills, operators of  
275 family child day care homes shall be required to complete an

276 additional 1 continuing education unit of approved training or  
277 10 clock hours of equivalent training, as determined by the  
278 department, annually.

279 (6) Operators of family child day care homes shall be  
280 required to complete 0.5 continuing education unit of approved  
281 training in early literacy and language development of children  
282 from birth to 5 years of age one time. The year that this  
283 training is completed, it shall fulfill the 0.5 continuing  
284 education unit or 5 clock hours of the annual training required  
285 in subsection (5).

286 (7) Operators of family child day care homes shall be  
287 required annually to complete a health and safety home  
288 inspection self-evaluation checklist developed by the department  
289 in conjunction with the statewide resource and referral program.  
290 The completed checklist shall be signed by the operator of the  
291 family child day care home and provided to parents as  
292 certification that basic health and safety standards are being  
293 met.

294 (8) Family child day care home operators may avail  
295 themselves of supportive services offered by the department.

296 (9) The department shall prepare a brochure on family  
297 child day care for distribution by the department and by local  
298 licensing agencies, if appropriate, to family child day care  
299 homes for distribution to parents utilizing such child care, and  
300 to all interested persons, including physicians and other health

301 professionals; mental health professionals; school teachers or  
302 other school personnel; social workers or other professional  
303 child care, foster care, residential, or institutional workers;  
304 and law enforcement officers. The brochure shall, at a minimum,  
305 contain the following information:

306 (a) A brief description of the requirements for family  
307 child day care registration, training, and fingerprinting and  
308 screening.

309 (b) A listing of those counties that require licensure of  
310 family child day care homes. Such counties shall provide an  
311 addendum to the brochure that provides a brief description of  
312 the licensure requirements or may provide a brochure in lieu of  
313 the one described in this subsection, provided it contains all  
314 the required information on licensure and the required  
315 information in the subsequent paragraphs.

316 (c) A statement indicating that information about the  
317 family child day care home's compliance with applicable state or  
318 local requirements can be obtained by telephoning the department  
319 office or the office of the local licensing agency, if  
320 appropriate, at a telephone number or numbers which shall be  
321 affixed to the brochure.

322 (d) The statewide toll-free telephone number of the  
323 central abuse hotline, together with a notice that reports of  
324 suspected and actual child physical abuse, sexual abuse, and  
325 neglect are received and referred for investigation by the

326 hotline.

327 (e) Any other information relating to competent child care  
328 that the department or local licensing agency, if preparing a  
329 separate brochure, deems would be helpful to parents and other  
330 caretakers in their selection of a family child day care home.

331 (10) On an annual basis, the department shall evaluate the  
332 registration and licensure system for family child day care  
333 homes. Such evaluation shall, at a minimum, address the  
334 following:

335 (a) The number of family child day care homes registered  
336 and licensed and the dates of such registration and licensure.

337 (b) The number of children being served in both registered  
338 and licensed family child day care homes and any available slots  
339 in such homes.

340 (c) The number of complaints received concerning family  
341 child day care, the nature of the complaints, and the resolution  
342 of such complaints.

343 (d) The training activities utilized by child care  
344 personnel in family child day care homes for meeting the state  
345 or local training requirements.

346  
347 The evaluation shall be utilized by the department in any  
348 administrative modifications or adjustments to be made in the  
349 registration of family child day care homes or in any  
350 legislative requests for modifications to the system of

351 registration or to other requirements for family child day care  
352 homes.

353 (11) In order to inform the public of the state  
354 requirement for registration of family child day care homes as  
355 well as the other requirements for such homes to legally operate  
356 in the state, the department shall institute a media campaign to  
357 accomplish this end. Such a campaign shall include, at a  
358 minimum, flyers, newspaper advertisements, radio advertisements,  
359 and television advertisements.

360 (12) Notwithstanding any other state or local law or  
361 ordinance, any family child day care home licensed pursuant to  
362 this chapter or pursuant to a county ordinance shall be charged  
363 the utility rates accorded to a residential home. A licensed  
364 family child day care home may not be charged commercial utility  
365 rates.

366 (13) The department shall, by rule, establish minimum  
367 standards for family child day care homes that are required to  
368 be licensed by county licensing ordinance or county licensing  
369 resolution or that voluntarily choose to be licensed. The  
370 standards should include requirements for staffing, training,  
371 maintenance of immunization records, minimum health and safety  
372 standards, reduced standards for the regulation of child care  
373 during evening hours by municipalities and counties, and  
374 enforcement of standards.

375 (14) ~~During the months of August and September of each~~

376 ~~year, each family day care home shall provide parents of~~  
377 ~~children enrolled in the home detailed information regarding the~~  
378 ~~causes, symptoms, and transmission of the influenza virus in an~~  
379 ~~effort to educate those parents regarding the importance of~~  
380 ~~immunizing their children against influenza as recommended by~~  
381 ~~the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices of the Centers~~  
382 ~~for Disease Control and Prevention.~~

383 (15) ~~During the months of April and September of each~~  
384 ~~year, at a minimum, each family day care home shall provide~~  
385 ~~parents of children attending the family day care home~~  
386 ~~information regarding the potential for a distracted adult to~~  
387 ~~fail to drop off a child at the family day care home and instead~~  
388 ~~leave the child in the adult's vehicle upon arrival at the~~  
389 ~~adult's destination. The family day care home shall also give~~  
390 ~~parents information about resources with suggestions to avoid~~  
391 ~~this occurrence. The department shall develop a flyer or~~  
392 ~~brochure with this information that shall be posted to the~~  
393 ~~department's website, which family day care homes may choose to~~  
394 ~~reproduce and provide to parents to satisfy the requirements of~~  
395 ~~this subsection.~~

396 **Section 4. Subsections (9) and (10) of section 402.3131,**  
397 **Florida Statutes, are amended to read:**

398 402.3131 Large family child care homes.—

399 (9) ~~During the months of August and September of each~~  
400 ~~year, each large family child care home shall provide parents of~~

401 children enrolled in the home detailed information regarding the  
402 causes, symptoms, and transmission of the influenza virus in an  
403 effort to educate those parents regarding the importance of  
404 immunizing their children against influenza as recommended by  
405 the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices of the Centers  
406 for Disease Control and Prevention.

407 (10) During the months of April and September of each  
408 year, at a minimum, each large family child care home shall  
409 provide parents of children attending the large family child  
410 care home information regarding the potential for a distracted  
411 adult to fail to drop off a child at the large family child care  
412 home and instead leave the child in the adult's vehicle upon  
413 arrival at the adult's destination. The large family child care  
414 home shall also give parents information about resources with  
415 suggestions to avoid this occurrence. The department shall  
416 develop a flyer or brochure with this information that shall be  
417 posted to the department's website, which large family child  
418 care homes may choose to reproduce and provide to parents to  
419 satisfy the requirements of this subsection.

420 **Section 5. Section 627.70161, Florida Statutes, is amended**  
421 **to read:**

422 627.70161 Family child day care and large family child  
423 care insurance.—

424 (1) PURPOSE AND INTENT.—The Legislature recognizes that  
425 family child day care and large family child care homes fulfill

426 a vital role in providing child care in Florida. It is the  
427 intent of the Legislature that residential property insurance  
428 coverage should not be canceled, denied, or nonrenewed solely on  
429 the basis of the child family day care services at the  
430 residence. The Legislature also recognizes that the potential  
431 liability of residential property insurers is substantially  
432 increased by the rendition of child care services on the  
433 premises. The Legislature therefore finds that there is a public  
434 need to specify that contractual liabilities that arise in  
435 connection with the operation of the family child day care home  
436 or the large family child care home are excluded from  
437 residential property insurance policies unless they are  
438 specifically included in such coverage.

439 (2) DEFINITIONS.—As used in this section, the term:

440 (a) "Child care" means the care, protection, and  
441 supervision of a child, for a period of less than 24 hours a day  
442 on a regular basis, which supplements parental care, enrichment,  
443 and health supervision for the child, in accordance with his or  
444 her individual needs, and for which a payment, fee, or grant is  
445 made for care.

446 (b) "Family child day care home" means an occupied  
447 residence in which child care is regularly provided for children  
448 from at least two unrelated families and which receives a  
449 payment, fee, or grant for any of the children receiving care,  
450 whether or not operated for a profit.

451        (c) "Large family child care home" means an occupied  
452        residence in which child care is regularly provided for children  
453        from at least two unrelated families, which receives a payment,  
454        fee, or grant for any of the children receiving care, whether or  
455        not operated for profit, and which has at least two full-time  
456        child care personnel on the premises during the hours of  
457        operation. One of the two full-time child care personnel must be  
458        the owner or occupant of the residence. A large family child  
459        care home must first have operated as a licensed family child  
460        care home for at least 2 years, with an operator who has held a  
461        child development associate credential or its equivalent for at  
462        least 1 year, before seeking licensure as a large family child  
463        care home. Household children under 13 years of age, when on the  
464        premises of the large family child care home or on a field trip  
465        with children enrolled in child care, must be included in the  
466        overall capacity of the licensed home. A large family child care  
467        home may provide care for one of the following groups of  
468        children, which must include household children under 13 years  
469        of age:

470        1. A maximum of 8 children from birth to 24 months of age.  
471        2. A maximum of 12 children, with no more than 4 children  
472        under 24 months of age.

473        (3) FAMILY CHILD DAY CARE AND LARGE FAMILY CHILD CARE  
474        HOMES; COVERAGE.—A residential property insurance policy may  
475        shall not provide coverage for liability for claims arising out

476 of, or in connection with, the operation of a family child day  
477 care home or a large family child care home, and the insurer  
478 shall be under no obligation to defend against lawsuits covering  
479 such claims, unless:

480 (a) Specifically covered in a policy; or

481 (b) Covered by a rider or endorsement for business

482 coverage attached to a policy.

483 (4) DENIAL, CANCELLATION, REFUSAL TO RENEW PROHIBITED.—An  
484 insurer may not deny, cancel, or refuse to renew a policy for  
485 residential property insurance solely on the basis that the  
486 policyholder or applicant operates a family child day care home  
487 or a large family child care home. In addition to other lawful  
488 reasons for refusing to insure, an insurer may deny, cancel, or  
489 refuse to renew a policy of a family child day care home or a  
490 large family child care home provider if one or more of the  
491 following conditions occur:

492 (a) The policyholder or applicant provides care for more  
493 children than authorized ~~for family day care homes~~ by s.

494 402.302;

495 (b) The policyholder or applicant fails to maintain a  
496 separate commercial liability policy or an endorsement providing  
497 liability coverage for the family child day care home or the  
498 large family child care home operations;

499 (c) The policyholder or applicant fails to comply with the  
500 applicable family day care home licensure and registration

501 requirements specified in chapter 402 ~~s. 402.313~~; or  
502 (d) Discovery of willful or grossly negligent acts or  
503 omissions or any violations of state laws or regulations  
504 establishing safety standards for family child day care homes or  
505 large family child care homes by the named insured or his or her  
506 representative which materially increase any of the risks  
507 insured.

508 **Section 6. Section 1001.24, Florida Statutes, is reenacted**  
509 **and amended to read:**

510 1001.24 Direct-support organization; use of property;  
511 board of directors; audit.—

512 (1) DEFINITIONS.—For the purposes of this section, the  
513 term:

514 (a) "Department of Education direct-support organization"  
515 means an organization:

516 1. That is a corporation not for profit that is  
517 incorporated under the provisions of chapter 617 and approved by  
518 the Department of State.

519 2. That is organized and operated exclusively to receive,  
520 hold, invest, and administer property and to make expenditures  
521 to or for the benefit of the early learning programs under parts  
522 V and VI of chapter 1002, child care facilities licensed under  
523 s. 402.305, family child care homes licensed or registered under  
524 s. 402.313, large family child care homes licensed under s.  
525 402.3131, and public prekindergarten through 12th grade

526 education in this state.

527       3. That the State Board of Education, after review, has  
528 certified to be operating in a manner consistent with the goals  
529 and best interest of the Department of Education.

530       (b) "Personal services" includes full-time or part-time  
531 personnel, as well as payroll processing.

532       (2) USE OF PROPERTY.—The State Board of Education:

533       (a) May permit the use of property, facilities, and  
534 personal services of the department by the direct-support  
535 organization, subject to the provisions of this section.

536       (b) Shall prescribe by rule conditions with which the  
537 direct-support organization must comply in order to use  
538 property, facilities, or personal services of the department.  
539 Such rules shall provide for budget and audit review and for  
540 oversight by the department.

541       (c) Shall not permit the use of property, facilities, or  
542 personal services of the direct-support organization if such  
543 organization does not provide equal employment opportunities to  
544 all persons, regardless of race, color, national origin, gender,  
545 age, or religion.

546       (3) BOARD OF DIRECTORS.—The board of directors of the  
547 department direct-support organization shall be appointed by the  
548 commissioner and shall include representation from business,  
549 industry, and other components of Florida's economy.

550       (4) ANNUAL AUDIT.—Each direct-support organization shall

551 provide for an annual financial audit in accordance with s.  
552 215.981. The identity of donors who desire to remain anonymous  
553 shall be protected, and that anonymity shall be maintained in  
554 the auditor's report. All records of the organization other than  
555 the auditor's report, management letter, and any supplemental  
556 data requested by the Auditor General and the Office of Program  
557 Policy Analysis and Government Accountability shall be  
558 confidential and exempt from the provisions of s. 119.07(1).

559 **Section 7. Section 1002.821, Florida Statutes, is created  
560 to read:**

561 1002.821 Brighter Futures Program.—The Brighter Futures  
562 Program is established to support early learning and child care  
563 needs of Florida families.

564 (1) The direct-support organization established pursuant  
565 to s. 1001.24 shall administer the program.

566 (2) Any bequests, gifts, grants, and donations made to the  
567 program as may be solicited for such purpose from public or  
568 private sources and any legislative appropriations that may be  
569 made to the program shall be deposited in the Early Learning  
570 Fund. Any funds received from state sources and interest  
571 earnings shall be accounted for separately.

572 (3) Funds shall be used to provide:

573 (a) Care for children from birth until the student is  
574 eligible to enroll in kindergarten in accordance with:

575 1. An allocation methodology to fund the waiting list of

576 early learning coalitions; or

577 2. The intentions of a donor.

578 (b) The early learning coalition shall fund school  
579 readiness program providers and providers selected by the donor  
580 at the reimbursement rate calculated pursuant to s. 1002.84(17).  
581 If the provider selected by the donor is not a school readiness  
582 program provider, the early learning coalition may establish a  
583 contract with the provider to provide such funds.

584 (4) By January 1 of each year, beginning January 1, 2027,  
585 the Division of Early Learning shall summarize the performance  
586 of the program and the program's fundraising activities for the  
587 previous fiscal year, identify the child care needs supported by  
588 the fund principal or earnings and those supported by private  
589 sources, bequests, gifts, grants, and donations. The report must  
590 also include:

591 (a) Outcome data, including the number of children served  
592 and any child outcomes, by each early learning coalition.

593 (b) The amount of funds spent on administrative expenses  
594 and fundraising and the amount of funds raised from private  
595 sources.

596 **Section 8. Section 1002.95, Florida Statutes, is amended**  
597 **to read:**

598 1002.95 Teacher Education and Compensation Helps (TEACH)  
599 Scholarship Program.—

600 (1) (a) The department may contract for the administration

601 of the Teacher Education and Compensation Helps (TEACH)  
602 Scholarship Program, which provides educational scholarships to  
603 caregivers and administrators of early childhood programs,  
604 family child day care homes, and large family child care homes.  
605 The goal of the program is to increase the education and  
606 training for caregivers, increase the compensation for child  
607 caregivers who complete the program requirements, and reduce the  
608 rate of participant turnover in the field of early childhood  
609 education.

610 (b) Subject to appropriation, the TEACH Scholarships  
611 Program administrator contracted under paragraph (a) shall also  
612 establish and administer the Center for Early Childhood  
613 Professional Recognition to ensure alignment of training  
614 statewide, including, but not limited to, methods of early  
615 childhood professional training approval, and implementation of  
616 competency-based assessments aligned to the early learning  
617 professional development standards and career pathways under s.  
618 1002.995.

619 (2) The State Board of Education shall adopt rules as  
620 necessary to administer this section.

621 **Section 9. Paragraph (a) of subsection (4) of section**  
622 **39.101, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:**

623 39.101 Central abuse hotline.—The central abuse hotline is  
624 the first step in the safety assessment and investigation  
625 process.

626       (4) USE OF INFORMATION RECEIVED BY THE CENTRAL ABUSE  
627 HOTLINE.—

628       (a) Information received by the central abuse hotline may  
629 not be used for employment screening, except as provided in s.  
630 39.202(2)(a) and (h) or s. 402.302(16) ~~s. 402.302(15)~~.

631       **Section 10. Paragraph (a) of subsection (2) of section  
632 39.202, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:**

633       39.202 Confidentiality of reports and records in cases of  
634 child abuse or neglect; exception.—

635       (2) Except as provided in subsection (4), access to such  
636 records, excluding the name of, or other identifying information  
637 with respect to, the reporter which may only be released as  
638 provided in subsection (5), may only be granted to the following  
639 persons, officials, and agencies:

640       (a) Employees, authorized agents, or contract providers of  
641 the department, the Department of Health, the Agency for Persons  
642 with Disabilities, the Agency for Health Care Administration,  
643 the Department of Education, or county agencies responsible for  
644 carrying out:

645           1. Child or adult protective investigations;  
646           2. Ongoing child or adult protective services;  
647           3. Early intervention and prevention services;  
648           4. Healthy Start services;  
649           5. Licensure or approval of adoptive homes, foster homes,  
650 child care facilities, facilities licensed under chapters 393

651 and 394, family child day care homes, providers who receive  
652 school readiness funding under part VI of chapter 1002, or other  
653 homes used to provide for the care and welfare of children;

654 6. Employment screening for caregivers in residential  
655 group homes and facilities licensed under chapters 393, 394, and  
656 409; or

657 7. Services for victims of domestic violence when provided  
658 by certified domestic violence centers working at the  
659 department's request as case consultants or with shared clients.

660  
661 Also, employees or agents of the Department of Juvenile Justice  
662 responsible for the provision of services to children, pursuant  
663 to chapters 984 and 985.

664 **Section 11. Section 125.0109, Florida Statutes, is amended  
665 to read:**

666 125.0109 Family child day care homes; local zoning  
667 regulation.—The operation of a residence as a family child day  
668 care home, as defined by law, registered or licensed with the  
669 Department of Children and Families shall constitute a valid  
670 residential use for purposes of any local zoning regulations,  
671 and no such regulation shall require the owner or operator of  
672 such family child day care home to obtain any special exemption  
673 or use permit or waiver, or to pay any special fee in excess of  
674 \$50, to operate in an area zoned for residential use.

675 **Section 12. Section 166.0445, Florida Statutes, is amended**

676 **to read:**

677 166.0445 Family child day care homes; local zoning  
678 regulation.—The operation of a residence as a family child day  
679 care home, as defined by law, registered or licensed with the  
680 Department of Children and Families shall constitute a valid  
681 residential use for purposes of any local zoning regulations,  
682 and no such regulation shall require the owner or operator of  
683 such family child day care home to obtain any special exemption  
684 or use permit or waiver, or to pay any special fee in excess of  
685 \$50, to operate in an area zoned for residential use.

686 **Section 13. Paragraph (j) of subsection (7) of section  
687 212.08, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:**

688 212.08 Sales, rental, use, consumption, distribution, and  
689 storage tax; specified exemptions.—The sale at retail, the  
690 rental, the use, the consumption, the distribution, and the  
691 storage to be used or consumed in this state of the following  
692 are hereby specifically exempt from the tax imposed by this  
693 chapter.

694 (7) MISCELLANEOUS EXEMPTIONS.—Exemptions provided to any  
695 entity by this chapter do not inure to any transaction that is  
696 otherwise taxable under this chapter when payment is made by a  
697 representative or employee of the entity by any means,  
698 including, but not limited to, cash, check, or credit card, even  
699 when that representative or employee is subsequently reimbursed  
700 by the entity. In addition, exemptions provided to any entity by

701 this subsection do not inure to any transaction that is  
702 otherwise taxable under this chapter unless the entity has  
703 obtained a sales tax exemption certificate from the department  
704 or the entity obtains or provides other documentation as  
705 required by the department. Eligible purchases or leases made  
706 with such a certificate must be in strict compliance with this  
707 subsection and departmental rules, and any person who makes an  
708 exempt purchase with a certificate that is not in strict  
709 compliance with this subsection and the rules is liable for and  
710 shall pay the tax. The department may adopt rules to administer  
711 this subsection.

712 (j) Household fuels.—Also exempt from payment of the tax  
713 imposed by this chapter are sales of utilities to residential  
714 households or owners of residential models in this state by  
715 utility companies who pay the gross receipts tax imposed under  
716 s. 203.01, and sales of fuel to residential households or owners  
717 of residential models, including oil, kerosene, liquefied  
718 petroleum gas, coal, wood, and other fuel products used in the  
719 household or residential model for the purposes of heating,  
720 cooking, lighting, and refrigeration, regardless of whether such  
721 sales of utilities and fuels are separately metered and billed  
722 direct to the residents or are metered and billed to the  
723 landlord. If any part of the utility or fuel is used for a  
724 nonexempt purpose, the entire sale is taxable. The landlord  
725 shall provide a separate meter for nonexempt utility or fuel

726 consumption. For the purposes of this paragraph, licensed family  
727 child day care homes shall also be exempt.

728 **Section 14. Subsection (3) of section 402.306, Florida  
729 Statutes, is amended to read:**

730 402.306 Designation of licensing agency; dissemination by  
731 the department and local licensing agency of information on  
732 child care.—

733 (3) The department and local licensing agencies, or the  
734 designees thereof, shall be responsible for coordination and  
735 dissemination of information on child care to the community and  
736 shall make available through electronic means all licensing  
737 standards and procedures, health and safety standards for school  
738 readiness providers, monitoring and inspection reports, and the  
739 names and addresses of licensed child care facilities, school  
740 readiness program providers, and, where applicable pursuant to  
741 s. 402.313, licensed or registered family child day care homes.  
742 This information shall also include the number of deaths,  
743 serious injuries, and instances of substantiated child abuse  
744 that have occurred in child care settings each year; research  
745 and best practices in child development; and resources regarding  
746 social-emotional development, parent and family engagement,  
747 healthy eating, and physical activity.

748 **Section 15. Subsections (1) and (2) and paragraph (a) of  
749 subsection (3) of section 402.309, Florida Statutes, are amended  
750 to read:**

751        402.309 Provisional license or registration.—

752        (1) The local licensing agency or the department,

753 whichever is authorized to license child care facilities in a  
754 county, may issue a provisional license for child care  
755 facilities, family child day care homes, or large family child  
756 care homes, or a provisional registration for family child day  
757 care homes to applicants for an initial license or registration  
758 or to licensees or registrants seeking a renewal who are unable  
759 to meet all the standards provided for in ss. 402.301-402.319.

760        (2) A provisional license or registration may not be  
761 issued unless the operator or owner makes adequate provisions  
762 for the health and safety of the child. A provisional license  
763 may be issued for a child care facility if all of the screening  
764 materials have been timely submitted. A provisional license or  
765 registration may not be issued unless the child care facility,  
766 family child day care home, or large family child care home is  
767 in compliance with the requirements for screening of child care  
768 personnel in ss. 402.305, 402.3055, 402.313, and 402.3131,  
769 respectively.

770        (3) Notwithstanding subsection (2), a local licensing  
771 agency or the department, whichever is authorized to license  
772 child care facilities in a county, must issue a provisional  
773 license or registration if the operator or owner:

774        (a) Is applying for an initial license or registration for  
775 a child care facility, a family child day care home, or a large

776 family child care home;

777 **Section 16. Paragraph (d) of subsection (1) and subsection**

778 **(4) of section 402.310, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:**

779 402.310 Disciplinary actions; hearings upon denial,  
780 suspension, or revocation of license or registration;  
781 administrative fines.—

782 (1)

783 (d) The disciplinary sanctions ~~set forth~~ in this section  
784 apply to licensed child care facilities, licensed large family  
785 child care homes, and licensed or registered family child day  
786 care homes.

787 (4) An applicant, registrant, or licensee shall have the  
788 right to appeal a decision of the local licensing agency to a  
789 representative of the department. Any required hearing shall be  
790 held in the county in which the child care facility, family  
791 child day care home, or large family child care home is being  
792 operated or is to be established. The hearing shall be conducted  
793 in accordance with the provisions of chapter 120.

794 **Section 17. Subsection (1) and paragraph (a) of subsection**

795 **(2) of section 402.3115, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:**

796 402.3115 Elimination of duplicative and unnecessary  
797 inspections; abbreviated inspections.—

798 (1) The Department of Children and Families and local  
799 governmental agencies that license child care facilities shall  
800 develop and implement a plan to eliminate duplicative and

801 unnecessary inspections of child care facilities, family child  
802 ~~day~~ care homes, and large family child care homes.

803 (2) (a) The department and the local governmental agencies  
804 shall develop and implement an abbreviated inspection plan for  
805 child care facilities, family child ~~day~~ care homes, and large  
806 family child care homes that meet all of the following  
807 conditions:

808 1. Have been licensed for at least 2 consecutive years.  
809 2. Have not had a Class 1 deficiency, as defined by rule,  
810 for at least 2 consecutive years.

811 3. Have not had more than three of the same Class 2  
812 deficiencies, as defined by rule, for at least 2 consecutive  
813 years.

814 4. Have received at least two full onsite renewal  
815 inspections in the most recent 2 years.

816 5. Do not have any current uncorrected violations.

817 6. Do not have any open regulatory complaints or active  
818 child protective services investigations.

819 **Section 18. Section 402.312, Florida Statutes, is amended**  
820 **to read:**

821 402.312 License required; injunctive relief.—

822 (1) The operation of a child care facility without a  
823 license, a family child ~~day~~ care home without a license or  
824 registration, or a large family child care home without a  
825 license is prohibited. If the department or the local licensing

826 agency discovers that a child care facility is being operated  
827 without a license, a family child ~~day~~ care home is being  
828 operated without a license or registration, or a large family  
829 child care home is being operated without a license, the  
830 department or local licensing agency is authorized to seek an  
831 injunction in the circuit court where the facility is located to  
832 enjoin continued operation of such facility, family child ~~day~~  
833 care home, or large family child care home. When the court is  
834 closed for the transaction of judicial business, the department  
835 or local licensing agency is authorized to seek an emergency  
836 injunction to enjoin continued operation of such unlicensed  
837 facility, unregistered or unlicensed family child ~~day~~ care home,  
838 or unlicensed large family child care home, which injunction  
839 shall be continued, modified, or revoked on the next day of  
840 judicial business.

841 (2) Other grounds for seeking an injunction to close a  
842 child care facility, family child ~~day~~ care home, or a large  
843 family child care home are that:

844 (a) There is any violation of the standards applied under  
845 ss. 402.301-402.319 which threatens harm to any child in the  
846 child care facility, a family child ~~day~~ care home, or large  
847 family child care home.

848 (b) A licensee or registrant has repeatedly violated the  
849 standards provided for under ss. 402.301-402.319.

850 (c) A child care facility, family child ~~day~~ care home, or

851 large family child care home continues to have children in  
852 attendance after the closing date established by the department  
853 or the local licensing agency.

854 (3) The department or local licensing agency may impose an  
855 administrative fine on any child care facility, family child day  
856 care home, or large family child care home operating without a  
857 license or registration, consistent with ~~the provisions of~~ s.  
858 402.310.

859 **Section 19. Subsection (3) of section 402.315, Florida  
860 Statutes, is amended to read:**

861 402.315 Funding; license fees.—

862 (3) The department shall collect a fee for any license it  
863 issues for a child care facility, family child day care home, or  
864 large family child care home pursuant to ss. 402.305, 402.313,  
865 and 402.3131.

866 (a) For a child care facility licensed pursuant to s.  
867 402.305, such fee shall be \$1 per child, based on the licensed  
868 capacity of the facility, except that the minimum fee shall be  
869 \$25 per facility and the maximum fee shall be \$100 per facility.

870 (b) For a family child day care home registered pursuant  
871 to s. 402.313, such fee shall be \$25.

872 (c) For a family child day care home licensed pursuant to  
873 s. 402.313, such fee shall be \$50.

874 (d) For a large family child care home licensed pursuant  
875 to s. 402.3131, such fee shall be \$60.

876       **Section 20. Subsection (2) of section 402.316, Florida**  
877       **Statutes, is amended to read:**

878       402.316 Exemptions.—

879       (2) The provisions of ss. 402.301-402.319 do not apply to  
880       a child care facility or family child day care home if the child  
881       care facility or family child day care home has a certificate  
882       issued by the United States Department of Defense or by the  
883       United States Coast Guard to provide child care and has  
884       completed background screening by the United States Department  
885       of Defense pursuant to 34 U.S.C. s. 20351 and 32 C.F.R. part 86  
886       and received a favorable suitability and fitness determination.  
887       If the child care facility or family child day care home elects  
888       to serve children ineligible for care under the United States  
889       Department of Defense Instruction 6060.02, the child care  
890       facility or family child day care home must be licensed under  
891       this chapter.

892       **Section 21. Section 402.318, Florida Statutes, is amended**  
893       **to read:**

894       402.318 Advertisement.—A person, as defined in s. 1.01(3),  
895       may not advertise a child care facility, family child day care  
896       home, or large family child care home without including within  
897       such advertisement the state or local agency license number or  
898       registration number of such facility or home. Violation of this  
899       section is a misdemeanor of the first degree, punishable as  
900       provided in s. 775.082 or s. 775.083.

901       **Section 22. Section 402.319, Florida Statutes, is amended**  
902       **to read:**

903       402.319 Penalties.—

904       (1) It is a misdemeanor of the first degree, punishable as  
905 provided in s. 775.082 or s. 775.083, for any person knowingly  
906 to:

907           (a) Fail, by false statement, misrepresentation,  
908 impersonation, or other fraudulent means, to disclose in any  
909 application for voluntary or paid employment or licensure  
910 regulated under ss. 402.301-402.318 all information required  
911 under those sections or a material fact used in making a  
912 determination as to such person's qualifications to be child  
913 care personnel, as defined in s. 402.302, in a child care  
914 facility, family child day care home, or other child care  
915 program.

916           (b) Operate or attempt to operate a child care facility  
917 without having procured a license as required by this act.

918           (c) Operate or attempt to operate a family child day care  
919 home without a license or without registering with the  
920 department, whichever is applicable.

921           (d) Operate or attempt to operate a child care facility or  
922 family child day care home under a license that is suspended,  
923 revoked, or terminated.

924           (e) Misrepresent, by act or omission, a child care  
925 facility or family child day care home to be duly licensed

926 pursuant to this act without being so licensed.

927 (f) Make any other misrepresentation, by act or omission,  
928 regarding the licensure or operation of a child care facility or  
929 family child day care home to a parent or guardian who has a  
930 child placed in the facility or is inquiring as to placing a  
931 child in the facility, or to a representative of the licensing  
932 authority, or to a representative of a law enforcement agency,  
933 including, but not limited to, any misrepresentation as to:

934 1. The number of children at the child care facility or  
935 the family child day care home;

936 2. The part of the child care facility or family child day  
937 care home designated for child care;

938 3. The qualifications or credentials of child care  
939 personnel;

940 4. Whether a family child day care home or child care  
941 facility complies with the screening requirements of s. 402.305;  
942 or

943 5. Whether child care personnel have the training as  
944 required by s. 402.305.

945 (2) If any child care personnel makes any  
946 misrepresentation in violation of this section to a parent or  
947 guardian who has placed a child in the child care facility or  
948 family child day care home, and the parent or guardian relied  
949 upon the misrepresentation, and the child suffers great bodily  
950 harm, permanent disfigurement, permanent disability, or death as

951 a result of an intentional act or negligence by the child care  
952 personnel, then the child care personnel commits a felony of the  
953 second degree, punishable as provided in s. 775.082, s. 775.083,  
954 or s. 775.084.

955 (3) Each child care facility, family child day care home,  
956 and large family child care home shall annually submit an  
957 affidavit of compliance with s. 39.201.

958 **Section 23. Paragraph (c) of subsection (2) of section  
959 409.988, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:**

960 409.988 Community-based care lead agency duties; general  
961 provisions.—

962 (2) LICENSURE.—

963 (c) Substitute care providers who are licensed under s.  
964 409.175 and who have contracted with a lead agency are also  
965 authorized to provide registered or licensed family child day  
966 care under s. 402.313 if such care is consistent with federal  
967 law and if the home has met the requirements of s. 402.313.

968 **Section 24. Paragraph (b) of subsection (8) of section  
969 411.203, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:**

970 411.203 Continuum of comprehensive services.—The  
971 Department of Education and the Department of Health shall  
972 utilize the continuum of prevention and early assistance  
973 services for high-risk pregnant women and for high-risk and  
974 handicapped children and their families, as outlined in this  
975 section, as a basis for the intraagency and interagency program

976 coordination, monitoring, and analysis required in this chapter.  
977 The continuum shall be the guide for the comprehensive statewide  
978 approach for services for high-risk pregnant women and for high-  
979 risk and handicapped children and their families, and may be  
980 expanded or reduced as necessary for the enhancement of those  
981 services. Expansion or reduction of the continuum shall be  
982 determined by intraagency or interagency findings and agreement,  
983 whichever is applicable. Implementation of the continuum shall  
984 be based upon applicable eligibility criteria, availability of  
985 resources, and interagency prioritization when programs impact  
986 both agencies, or upon single agency prioritization when  
987 programs impact only one agency. The continuum shall include,  
988 but not be limited to:

989 (8) SUPPORT SERVICES FOR ALL EXPECTANT PARENTS AND PARENTS  
990 OF HIGH-RISK CHILDREN.—

991 (b) Child care and early childhood programs, including,  
992 but not limited to, licensed child care facilities, family child  
993 ~~day~~ care homes, therapeutic child care, Head Start, and  
994 preschool programs in public and private schools.

995 **Section 25. Paragraph (a) of subsection (3) of section  
996 1002.55, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:**

997 1002.55 School-year prekindergarten program delivered by  
998 private prekindergarten providers.—

999 (3) To be eligible to deliver the prekindergarten program,  
1000 a private prekindergarten provider must meet each of the

1001 following requirements:

1002 (a) The private prekindergarten provider must be a child  
1003 care facility licensed under s. 402.305, family child day care  
1004 home licensed under s. 402.313, large family child care home  
1005 licensed under s. 402.3131, nonpublic school exempt from  
1006 licensure under s. 402.3025(2), faith-based child care provider  
1007 exempt from licensure under s. 402.316, child development  
1008 program that is accredited by a national accrediting body and  
1009 operates on a military installation that is certified by the  
1010 United States Department of Defense, or private prekindergarten  
1011 provider that has been issued a provisional license under s.  
1012 402.309. A private prekindergarten provider may not deliver the  
1013 program while holding a probation-status license under s.  
1014 402.310.

1015 **Section 26. Paragraph (u) of subsection (2) of section**  
1016 **1002.82, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:**

1017 1002.82 Department of Education; powers and duties.—

1018 (2) The department shall:

1019 (u) Administer a statewide toll-free Warm-Line to provide  
1020 assistance and consultation to child care facilities and family  
1021 child day care homes regarding health, developmental,  
1022 disability, and special needs issues of the children they are  
1023 serving, particularly children with disabilities and other  
1024 special needs. The department shall:

1025 1. Annually inform child care facilities and family child

1026 day care homes of the availability of this service through the  
1027 child care resource and referral network under s. 1002.92.

1028 2. Expand or contract for the expansion of the Warm-Line  
1029 to maintain at least one Warm-Line in each early learning  
1030 coalition service area.

1031 **Section 27. Paragraph (j) of subsection (4) of section  
1032 1002.83, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:**

1033 1002.83 Early learning coalitions.—

1034 (4) Each early learning coalition must include the  
1035 following member positions; however, in a multicounty coalition,  
1036 each ex officio member position may be filled by multiple  
1037 nonvoting members but no more than one voting member shall be  
1038 seated per member position. If an early learning coalition has  
1039 more than one member representing the same entity, only one of  
1040 such members may serve as a voting member:

1041 (j) A representative of private for-profit child care  
1042 providers, including private for-profit family child ~~day~~ care  
1043 homes.

1044 **Section 28. Subsection (4) of section 1002.84, Florida  
1045 Statutes, is amended to read:**

1046 1002.84 Early learning coalitions; school readiness powers  
1047 and duties.—Each early learning coalition shall:

1048 (4) Establish a regional Warm-Line as directed by the  
1049 department pursuant to s. 1002.82(2)(u). Regional Warm-Line  
1050 staff shall provide onsite technical assistance, when requested,

1051 to assist child care facilities and family child ~~day~~ care homes  
1052 with inquiries relating to the strategies, curriculum, and  
1053 environmental adaptations the child care facilities and family  
1054 child ~~day~~ care homes may need as they serve children with  
1055 disabilities and other special needs.

1056 **Section 29. Paragraphs (a) and (c) of subsection (1) of  
1057 section 1002.88, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:**

1058 1002.88 School readiness program provider standards;  
1059 eligibility to deliver the school readiness program.—

1060 (1) To be eligible to deliver the school readiness  
1061 program, a school readiness program provider must:

1062 (a) Be a child care facility licensed under s. 402.305, a  
1063 family child ~~day~~ care home licensed or registered under s.  
1064 402.313, a large family child care home licensed under s.  
1065 402.3131, a public school or nonpublic school exempt from  
1066 licensure under s. 402.3025, a faith-based child care provider  
1067 exempt from licensure under s. 402.316, a before-school or  
1068 after-school program described in s. 402.305(1)(c), a child  
1069 development program that is accredited by a national accrediting  
1070 body and operates on a military installation that is certified  
1071 by the United States Department of Defense, an informal child  
1072 care provider to the extent authorized in the state's Child Care  
1073 and Development Fund Plan as approved by the United States  
1074 Department of Health and Human Services pursuant to 45 C.F.R. s.  
1075 98.18, or a provider who has been issued a provisional license

1076 pursuant to s. 402.309. A provider may not deliver the program  
1077 while holding a probation-status license under s. 402.310.

1078 (c) Provide basic health and safety of its premises and  
1079 facilities and compliance with requirements for age-appropriate  
1080 immunizations of children enrolled in the school readiness  
1081 program.

1082 1. For a provider that is licensed, compliance with s.  
1083 402.305, s. 402.3131, or s. 402.313 and this subsection, as  
1084 verified pursuant to s. 402.311, satisfies this requirement.

1085 2. For a provider that is a registered family child day  
1086 care home or is not subject to licensure or registration by the  
1087 Department of Children and Families, compliance with this  
1088 subsection, as verified pursuant to s. 402.311, satisfies this  
1089 requirement. Upon verification pursuant to s. 402.311, the  
1090 provider shall annually post the health and safety checklist  
1091 adopted by the department prominently on its premises in plain  
1092 sight for visitors and parents and shall annually submit the  
1093 checklist to its local early learning coalition.

1094 3. For a child development program that is accredited by a  
1095 national accrediting body and operates on a military  
1096 installation that is certified by the United States Department  
1097 of Defense, the submission and verification of annual  
1098 inspections pursuant to United States Department of Defense  
1099 Instructions 6060.2 and 1402.05 satisfies this requirement.

1100 **Section 30. Paragraph (c) of subsection (2) of section**

1101 **1002.895, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:**

1102       1002.895 Market rate schedule.—The school readiness  
1103 program market rate schedule shall be implemented as follows:

1104       (2) The market rate schedule must differentiate rates by  
1105 provider type, including, but not limited to:

1106       (c) Family child ~~day~~ care homes licensed or registered  
1107 under s. 402.313.

1108       **Section 31. Paragraph (a) of subsection (3) and subsection  
1109 (4) of section 1002.92, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:**

1110       1002.92 Child care and early childhood resource and  
1111 referral.—

1112       (3) Child care resource and referral agencies shall  
1113 provide the following services:

1114       (a) Identification of existing public and private child  
1115 care and early childhood education services, including child  
1116 care services by public and private employers, and the  
1117 development of an early learning provider performance profile of  
1118 those services through the single statewide information system  
1119 developed by the department under s. 1002.82(2)(q). These  
1120 services may include family child ~~day~~ care, public and private  
1121 child care programs, the Voluntary Prekindergarten Education  
1122 Program, Head Start, the school readiness program, special  
1123 education programs for prekindergarten children with  
1124 disabilities, services for children with developmental  
1125 disabilities, full-time and part-time programs, before-school

1126 and after-school programs, and vacation care programs. The early  
1127 learning provider performance profile shall include, but not be  
1128 limited to:

1129 1. Type of program.

1130 2. Hours of service.

1131 3. Ages of children served.

1132 4. Number of children served.

1133 5. Program information.

1134 6. Fees and eligibility for services.

1135 7. Availability of transportation.

1136 8. Participation in the Child Care Food Program, if  
1137 applicable.

1138 9. A link to licensing inspection reports, if applicable.

1139 10. The components of the Voluntary Prekindergarten  
1140 Education Program performance metric calculated under s. 1002.68  
1141 which must consist of the program assessment composite score,  
1142 learning gains score, achievement score, and its designations,  
1143 if applicable.

1144 11. The school readiness program assessment composite  
1145 score and program assessment care level composite score results  
1146 delineated by infant classrooms, toddler classrooms, and  
1147 preschool classrooms results under s. 1002.82, if applicable.

1148 12. Gold Seal Quality Care designation under s. 1002.945,  
1149 if applicable.

1150 13. Indication of whether the provider implements a

1151 curriculum approved by the department and the name of the  
1152 curriculum, if applicable.

1153 14. Participation in school readiness child assessment  
1154 under s. 1002.82.

1155 (4) A child care facility licensed under s. 402.305 and  
1156 licensed and registered family child ~~day~~ care homes must provide  
1157 the statewide child care and resource and referral network with  
1158 the following information annually:

1159 (a) Type of program.  
1160 (b) Hours of service.  
1161 (c) Ages of children served.  
1162 (d) Fees and eligibility for services.

1163 **Section 32. Subsection (2) of section 1002.93, Florida  
1164 Statutes, is amended to read:**

1165 1002.93 School readiness program transportation services.—  
1166 (2) The transportation servicers may only provide  
1167 transportation to each child participating in the school  
1168 readiness program to the extent that such transportation is  
1169 necessary to provide child care opportunities that otherwise  
1170 would not be available to a child whose home is more than a  
1171 reasonable walking distance from the nearest child care facility  
1172 or family child ~~day~~ care home.

1173 **Section 33. Paragraph (b) of subsection (1), paragraphs  
1174 (a) and (c) of subsection (3), and subsection (4) of section  
1175 1002.945, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:**

1176        1002.945 Gold Seal Quality Care Program.—

1177        (1)

1178        (b) A child care facility, large family child care home,

1179        or family child day care home that is accredited by an

1180        accrediting association approved by the Department of Education

1181        under subsection (3) and meets all other requirements shall,

1182        upon application to the department, receive a separate "Gold

1183        Seal Quality Care" designation.

1184        (3) (a) In order to be approved by the Department of

1185        Education for participation in the Gold Seal Quality Care

1186        Program, an accrediting association must apply to the department

1187        and demonstrate that it:

1188        1. Is a recognized accrediting association.

1189        2. Has accrediting standards that substantially meet or

1190        exceed the Gold Seal Quality Care standards adopted by the state

1191        board under subsection (2).

1192        3. Is a registered corporation with the Department of

1193        State.

1194        4. Can provide evidence that the process for accreditation

1195        has, at a minimum, all of the following components:

1196        a. Clearly defined prerequisites that a child care

1197        provider must meet before beginning the accreditation process.

1198        However, accreditation may not be granted to a child care

1199        facility, large family child care home, or family child day care

1200        home before the site is operational and is attended by children.

1201       b. Procedures for completion of a self-study and  
1202 comprehensive onsite verification process for each classroom  
1203 that documents compliance with accrediting standards.

1204       c. A training process for accreditation verifiers to  
1205 ensure inter-rater reliability.

1206       d. Ongoing compliance procedures that include requiring  
1207 each accredited child care facility, large family child care  
1208 home, and family child day care home to file an annual report  
1209 with the accrediting association and risk-based, onsite auditing  
1210 protocols for accredited child care facilities, large family  
1211 child care homes, and family child day care homes.

1212       e. Procedures for the revocation of accreditation due to  
1213 failure to maintain accrediting standards as evidenced by sub-  
1214 subparagraph d. or any other relevant information received by  
1215 the accrediting association.

1216       f. Accreditation renewal procedures that include an onsite  
1217 verification occurring at least every 5 years.

1218       g. A process for verifying continued accreditation  
1219 compliance in the event of a transfer of ownership of  
1220 facilities.

1221       h. A process to communicate issues that arise during the  
1222 accreditation period with governmental entities that have a  
1223 vested interest in the Gold Seal Quality Care Program, including  
1224 the Department of Education, the Department of Children and  
1225 Families, the Department of Health, local licensing entities if

1226 applicable, and the early learning coalition.

1227 (c) If an accrediting association has granted  
1228 accreditation to a child care facility, large family child care  
1229 home, or family child day care under fraudulent terms or failed  
1230 to conduct onsite verifications, the accrediting association  
1231 shall be liable for the repayment of any rate differentials paid  
1232 under subsection (6).

1233 (4) In order to obtain and maintain a designation as a  
1234 Gold Seal Quality Care provider, a child care facility, large  
1235 family child care home, or family child day care home must meet  
1236 the following additional criteria:

1237 (a) The child care provider must not have had any class I  
1238 violations, as defined by rule of the Department of Children and  
1239 Families, within the 2 years preceding its application for  
1240 designation as a Gold Seal Quality Care provider. Commission of  
1241 a class I violation shall be grounds for termination of the  
1242 designation as a Gold Seal Quality Care provider until the  
1243 provider has no class I violations for a period of 2 years.

1244 (b) The child care provider must not have had three or  
1245 more of the same class II violations, as defined by rule of the  
1246 Department of Children and Families, within the 2 years  
1247 preceding its application for designation as a Gold Seal Quality  
1248 Care provider. Commission of three or more of the same class II  
1249 violations within a 2-year period shall be grounds for  
1250 termination of the designation as a Gold Seal Quality Care

1251 provider until the provider has no class II violations that are  
1252 the same for a period of 1 year.

1253 (c) The child care provider must not have been cited for  
1254 the same class III violation, as defined by rule of the  
1255 Department of Children and Families, three or more times and  
1256 failed to correct the violation within 1 year after the date of  
1257 each citation, within the 2 years preceding its application for  
1258 designation as a Gold Seal Quality Care provider. Commission of  
1259 the same class III violation three or more times and failure to  
1260 correct within the required time during a 2-year period may be  
1261 grounds for termination of the designation as a Gold Seal  
1262 Quality Care provider until the provider has no class III  
1263 violations for a period of 1 year.

1264 (d) Notwithstanding paragraph (a), if the Department of  
1265 Education determines through a formal process that a provider  
1266 has been in business for at least 5 years and has no other class  
1267 I violations recorded, the department may recommend to the state  
1268 board that the provider maintain its Gold Seal Quality Care  
1269 status. The state board's determination regarding such  
1270 provider's status is final.

1271 **Section 34.** This act shall take effect July 1, 2026.