

By the Committee on Children, Families, and Elder Affairs; and Senator Jones

586-02687-26

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A bill to be entitled

An act relating to the Agency for Persons with Disabilities; amending s. 393.0655, F.S.; requiring level 2 employment screening for all employees of residential facilities and adult day training programs; providing background screening requirements for such employees; requiring the agency to contract with a state university to develop and administer certain surveys for a specified purpose; specifying requirements for such surveys; requiring the state university to submit a final report to the agency by a specified date; requiring the agency to solicit input and conduct publicly noticed hearings for a specified purpose in each service region; requiring the agency to conduct or contract for a gap analysis to make certain assessments; requiring the agency to use certain information to identify certain core competencies and performance metrics and make recommendations for standardizing assessments; requiring the agency to submit a report of its findings and recommendations to the Governor and the Legislature by a specified date; providing an effective date.

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

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

393.0655 Screening of direct service providers.—

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30 (1) MINIMUM STANDARDS.—The agency shall require level 2
31 employment screening pursuant to chapter 435 for direct service
32 providers who are unrelated to their clients, including support
33 coordinators, and ~~all employees managers and supervisors~~ of
34 residential facilities or adult day training programs licensed
35 under this chapter and any other persons, including volunteers,
36 who provide care or services, who have access to a client's
37 living areas, or who have access to a client's funds or personal
38 property. Background screening for all employees must include
39 employment history checks as provided in s. 435.03(1) and local
40 criminal records checks through local law enforcement agencies.

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

46 (b) Licensed physicians, nurses, or other professionals
47 licensed and regulated by the Department of Health are not
48 subject to background screening pursuant to this section if they
49 are providing a service that is within their scope of licensed
50 practice.

51 (c) A person selected by the family or the individual with
52 developmental disabilities and paid by the family or the
53 individual to provide supports or services is not required to
54 have a background screening under this section.

55 (d) Persons 12 years of age or older, including family
56 members, residing with a direct services provider who provides
57 services to clients in his or her own place of residence are
58 subject to background screening; however, such persons who are

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59 12 to 18 years of age shall be screened for delinquency records
60 only.

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

70 1. The surveys must, at a minimum, solicit data and input
71 regarding:

72 a. The quality, consistency, and accessibility of services
73 provided by support coordinators.

74 b. Attributes and behaviors that define high-quality
75 support coordination.

76 c. Best practices and areas for improvement.

77 d. Quantitative and qualitative metrics suitable for
78 assessing support coordinator performance.

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

81 2. Surveys of qualified organizations must also
82 specifically address:

83 a. Professional and educational prerequisites established
84 by the organization for employment as a support coordinator.

85 b. Methods used to assess core competencies.

86 c. The efficacy of the mentoring program required under s.
87 393.0663(2) (b), Florida Statutes.

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88 d. Operational and systemic challenges with recruitment and
89 retention of qualified support coordinators.

90 3. Surveys of individual waiver support coordinators must
91 also specifically address:

92 a. Individual caseload ratios, capacity, and geographic
93 service areas.

94 b. The efficacy of the mentoring program required under s.
95 393.0663(2) (b), Florida Statutes.

96 c. Operational and systemic challenges to delivery of
97 effective support coordination.

98 4. Surveys of iBudget clients and their parents,
99 caregivers, or legal guardians must also specifically address
100 satisfaction with support coordination services.

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

104 (2) The agency shall solicit input on enhancing support
105 coordinator quality, capacity, and consistency from the whole
106 community of waiver program stakeholders, and shall conduct at
107 least one publicly noticed hearing for this purpose in each
108 service region.

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

112 (4) Using the information gathered under this section, the
113 agency shall identify specific core competencies for waiver
114 support coordinators, identify specific performance metrics to
115 assess those core competencies, and make recommendations on how
116 to standardize their assessment. By February 15, 2027, the

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117 agency shall submit a report to the Governor, the President of
118 the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives on
119 its findings and recommendations, and include the full report
120 submitted by the state university under subsection (1).

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