

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

586-02687-26

2026794c1

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.—

586-02687-26

2026794c1

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

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

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

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

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

586-02687-26

2026794c1

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

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

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

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

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

c. Best practices and areas for improvement.

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

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

2. Surveys of qualified organizations must also specifically address:

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

b. Methods used to assess core competencies.

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

586-02687-26

2026794c1

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

586-02687-26

2026794c1

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.