

By the Committee on Rules; the Appropriations Committee on Health and Human Services; the Committee on Health Policy; and Senator Garcia

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1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to the Department of Health; amending
3 s. 381.986, F.S.; revising the definition of the term
4 "low-THC cannabis"; revising requirements for
5 department approval of qualified physicians and
6 medical directors of medical marijuana treatment
7 centers; deleting obsolete language; defining the term
8 "park"; prohibiting medical marijuana treatment center
9 cultivating, processing, or dispensing facilities from
10 being located within a specified distance of parks,
11 child care facilities, or facilities providing early
12 learning services; authorizing counties and
13 municipalities to approve a dispensing facility within
14 such distance under certain circumstances; providing
15 that the subsequent establishment of any park, child
16 care facility, early learning facility, or school
17 after the approval of a medical marijuana treatment
18 center's cultivating, processing, or dispensing
19 facility does not affect the continued operation or
20 location of the approved cultivating, processing, or
21 dispensing facility; exempting cultivating,
22 processing, or dispensing facilities approved before a
23 specified date from such distance requirements;
24 creating s. 381.994, F.S.; creating the
25 Neurofibromatosis Disease Grant Program within the
26 department; providing the purpose of the program;
27 requiring the program, subject to legislative
28 appropriation, to award grants for certain purposes;
29 specifying entities that are eligible to apply for

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30 grants under the program; allowing certain grant
31 proposals to receive preference in the awarding of
32 grants; requiring the department to award grants after
33 consulting with the Rare Disease Advisory Council;
34 specifying the types of applications that may be
35 considered for grant funding; requiring the department
36 to appoint peer review panels to review the scientific
37 merit of grant applications and establish their
38 priority scores; requiring the council to consider the
39 priority scores in determining which proposals are
40 recommended for grant funding under the program;
41 requiring the council and peer review panels to
42 establish and follow certain guidelines when
43 performing their duties under the program; prohibiting
44 members of the council or peer review panels from
45 participating in discussions or decisions if there are
46 certain conflicts of interest; authorizing certain
47 appropriated funds to be carried forward under certain
48 circumstances; amending s. 383.14, F.S.; requiring the
49 department to create an evidence-based educational
50 pamphlet on the nutritional needs of preterm infants
51 for a specified purpose; requiring the department to
52 make the pamphlet available electronically to certain
53 hospitals by a specified date; specifying requirements
54 for the pamphlet; amending s. 391.308, F.S.; revising
55 duties of the department in administering the Early
56 Steps Program; revising provisions related to
57 transitioning children from the Early Steps Program to
58 school district programs; amending s. 391.3081, F.S.;

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59 revising provisions relating to the Early Steps
60 Extended Option to conform to changes made by the act;
61 amending s. 456.074, F.S.; requiring the department to
62 issue an emergency order suspending the license of a
63 health care practitioner arrested for committing or
64 attempting, soliciting, or conspiring to commit murder
65 in this state or another jurisdiction; amending s.
66 464.0156, F.S.; authorizing a registered nurse to
67 delegate the administration of certain controlled
68 substances to a home health aide for medically fragile
69 children under certain circumstances; amending s.
70 491.005, F.S.; revising licensure requirements for
71 marriage and family therapists; amending s. 1004.551,
72 F.S.; revising requirements for the micro-credential
73 component of specialized training provided by the
74 University of Florida Center for Autism and
75 Neurodevelopment; providing an effective date.

76
77 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

78
79 Section 1. Paragraph (f) of subsection (1), paragraphs (a)
80 and (c) of subsection (3), paragraph (h) of subsection (4),
81 paragraph (a) of subsection (8), and subsection (11) of section
82 381.986, Florida Statutes, are amended, to read:

83 381.986 Medical use of marijuana.—

84 (1) DEFINITIONS.—As used in this section, the term:

85 (f) “Low-THC cannabis” means a plant of the genus *Cannabis*,
86 whether growing or not ~~the dried flowers of which contain 0.8~~
87 ~~percent or less of tetrahydrocannabinol and more than 10 percent~~

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88 ~~of cannabidiol weight for weight~~; the seeds thereof; the resin
89 extracted from any part of such plant; and every ~~or any~~
90 compound, manufacture, salt, derivative, mixture, or preparation
91 of such plant or its seeds or resin, excluding edibles; which
92 contains 0.8 percent or less of tetrahydrocannabinol and more
93 than 2 percent of cannabidiol, weight for weight, which ~~that~~ is
94 dispensed from a medical marijuana treatment center.

95 (3) QUALIFIED PHYSICIANS AND MEDICAL DIRECTORS.—

96 (a) Before being approved as a qualified physician ~~and~~
97 ~~before each license renewal~~, a physician must successfully
98 complete a 2-hour course and subsequent examination offered by
99 the Florida Medical Association or the Florida Osteopathic
100 Medical Association which encompass the requirements of this
101 section and any rules adopted hereunder. Qualified physicians
102 must renew the course certification biennially. The course and
103 examination must be administered at least annually and may be
104 offered in a distance learning format, including an electronic,
105 online format that is available upon request. The price of the
106 course may not exceed \$500.

107 (c) Before being employed as a medical director ~~and before~~
108 ~~each license renewal~~, a medical director must successfully
109 complete a 2-hour course and subsequent examination offered by
110 the Florida Medical Association or the Florida Osteopathic
111 Medical Association which encompass the requirements of this
112 section and any rules adopted hereunder. Medical directors must
113 renew the course certification biennially. The course and
114 examination must be administered at least annually and may be
115 offered in a distance learning format, including an electronic,
116 online format that is available upon request. The price of the

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117 course may not exceed \$500.

118 (4) PHYSICIAN CERTIFICATION.—

119 ~~(h) An active order for low-THC cannabis or medical~~
120 ~~cannabis issued pursuant to former s. 381.986, Florida Statutes~~
121 ~~2016, and registered with the compassionate use registry before~~
122 ~~June 23, 2017, is deemed a physician certification, and all~~
123 ~~patients possessing such orders are deemed qualified patients~~
124 ~~until the department begins issuing medical marijuana use~~
125 ~~registry identification cards.~~

126 (8) MEDICAL MARIJUANA TREATMENT CENTERS.—

127 (a) The department shall license medical marijuana
128 treatment centers to ensure reasonable statewide accessibility
129 and availability as necessary for qualified patients registered
130 in the medical marijuana use registry and who are issued a
131 physician certification under this section.

132 1. As soon as practicable, but no later than July 3, 2017,
133 the department shall license as a medical marijuana treatment
134 center any entity that holds an active, unrestricted license to
135 cultivate, process, transport, and dispense low-THC cannabis,
136 medical cannabis, and cannabis delivery devices, under former s.
137 381.986, Florida Statutes 2016, before July 1, 2017, and which
138 meets the requirements of this section. In addition to the
139 authority granted under this section, these entities are
140 authorized to dispense low-THC cannabis, medical cannabis, and
141 cannabis delivery devices ordered pursuant to former s. 381.986,
142 Florida Statutes 2016, ~~which were entered into the compassionate~~
143 ~~use registry before July 1, 2017,~~ and are authorized to begin
144 dispensing marijuana under this section on July 3, 2017. The
145 department may grant variances from the representations made in

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146 such an entity's original application for approval under former
147 s. 381.986, Florida Statutes 2014, pursuant to paragraph (e).

148 2. The department shall license as medical marijuana
149 treatment centers 10 applicants that meet the requirements of
150 this section, under the following parameters:

151 a. As soon as practicable, but no later than August 1,
152 2017, the department shall license any applicant whose
153 application was reviewed, evaluated, and scored by the
154 department and which was denied a dispensing organization
155 license by the department under former s. 381.986, Florida
156 Statutes 2014; which had one or more administrative or judicial
157 challenges pending as of January 1, 2017, or had a final ranking
158 within one point of the highest final ranking in its region
159 under former s. 381.986, Florida Statutes 2014; which meets the
160 requirements of this section; and which provides documentation
161 to the department that it has the existing infrastructure and
162 technical and technological ability to begin cultivating
163 marijuana within 30 days after registration as a medical
164 marijuana treatment center.

165 b. As soon as practicable, the department shall license one
166 applicant that is a recognized class member of *Pigford v.*
167 *Glickman*, 185 F.R.D. 82 (D.D.C. 1999), or *In Re Black Farmers*
168 *Litig.*, 856 F. Supp. 2d 1 (D.D.C. 2011). An applicant licensed
169 under this sub-subparagraph is exempt from the requirement of
170 subparagraph (b)2. An applicant that applies for licensure under
171 this sub-subparagraph, pays its initial application fee, is
172 determined by the department through the application process to
173 qualify as a recognized class member, and is not awarded a
174 license under this sub-subparagraph may transfer its initial

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175 application fee to one subsequent opportunity to apply for
176 licensure under subparagraph 4.

177 c. As soon as practicable, but no later than October 3,
178 2017, the department shall license applicants that meet the
179 requirements of this section in sufficient numbers to result in
180 10 total licenses issued under this subparagraph, while
181 accounting for the number of licenses issued under sub-
182 subparagraphs a. and b.

183 3. For up to two of the licenses issued under subparagraph
184 2., the department shall give preference to applicants that
185 demonstrate in their applications that they own one or more
186 facilities that are, or were, used for the canning,
187 concentrating, or otherwise processing of citrus fruit or citrus
188 molasses and will use or convert the facility or facilities for
189 the processing of marijuana.

190 4. Within 6 months after the registration of 100,000 active
191 qualified patients in the medical marijuana use registry, the
192 department shall license four additional medical marijuana
193 treatment centers that meet the requirements of this section.
194 Thereafter, the department shall license four medical marijuana
195 treatment centers within 6 months after the registration of each
196 additional 100,000 active qualified patients in the medical
197 marijuana use registry that meet the requirements of this
198 section.

199 (11) PREEMPTION.—Regulation of cultivation, processing, and
200 delivery of marijuana by medical marijuana treatment centers is
201 preempted to the state except as provided in this subsection.

202 (a) As used in this subsection, the term "park" means any
203 public or private property, excluding private residences, which

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204 has equipment specifically installed for children's athletic,
205 recreational, or leisure activities, including, but not limited
206 to, playgrounds and athletic playing fields. The term does not
207 include conservation and recreation lands acquired in accordance
208 with chapter 259 or conservation and recreation lands designated
209 by a local government, unless such lands contain equipment
210 installed for children's athletic, recreational, or leisure
211 activities.

212 (b)(a) A medical marijuana treatment center cultivating or
213 processing facility may not be located within 500 feet of the
214 real property that comprises a park, a child care facility as
215 defined in s. 402.302, a facility that provides early learning
216 services as specified in s. 1000.04(1), or a public or private
217 elementary school, middle school, or secondary school. The
218 subsequent establishment of any such park, child care facility,
219 early learning facility, or school after the approval of the
220 medical marijuana treatment center cultivating or processing
221 facility does not affect the continued operation or location of
222 the approved cultivating or processing facility. A medical
223 marijuana treatment center cultivating or processing facility
224 that was approved by the department before July 1, 2026, is
225 exempt from the distance restrictions relating to parks, child
226 care facilities, and early learning facilities.

227 (c)(b)1. A county or municipality may, by ordinance, ban
228 medical marijuana treatment center dispensing facilities from
229 being located within the boundaries of that county or
230 municipality. A county or municipality that does not ban
231 dispensing facilities under this subparagraph may not place
232 specific limits, by ordinance, on the number of dispensing

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233 facilities that may locate within that county or municipality.

234 2. A municipality may determine by ordinance the criteria
235 for the location of, and other permitting requirements that do
236 not conflict with state law or department rule for, medical
237 marijuana treatment center dispensing facilities located within
238 the boundaries of that municipality. A county may determine by
239 ordinance the criteria for the location of, and other permitting
240 requirements that do not conflict with state law or department
241 rule for, all such dispensing facilities located within the
242 unincorporated areas of that county. Except as provided in
243 paragraph (d) ~~(e)~~, a county or municipality may not enact
244 ordinances for permitting or for determining the location of
245 dispensing facilities which are more restrictive than its
246 ordinances permitting or determining the locations for
247 pharmacies licensed under chapter 465. A municipality or county
248 may not charge a medical marijuana treatment center a license or
249 permit fee in an amount greater than the fee charged by such
250 municipality or county to pharmacies. A dispensing facility
251 location approved by a municipality or county pursuant to former
252 s. 381.986(8)(b), Florida Statutes 2016, is not subject to the
253 location requirements of this subsection.

254 (d) ~~(e)~~ A medical marijuana treatment center dispensing
255 facility may not be located within 500 feet of the real property
256 that comprises a park, a child care facility as defined in s.
257 402.302, a facility that provides early learning services as
258 specified in s. 1000.04(1), or a public or private elementary
259 school, middle school, or secondary school unless the county or
260 municipality approves the location through a formal proceeding
261 open to the public at which the county or municipality

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262 determines that the location promotes the public health, safety,
263 and general welfare of the community. The subsequent
264 establishment of any such park, child care facility, early
265 learning facility, or school after the approval of the medical
266 marijuana treatment center dispensing facility does not affect
267 the continued operation or location of the approved dispensing
268 facility. A medical marijuana treatment center dispensing
269 facility that was approved by the department before July 1,
270 2026, is exempt from the distance restrictions relating to
271 parks, child care facilities, and early learning facilities.

272 (e) ~~(d)~~ This subsection does not prohibit any local
273 jurisdiction from ensuring medical marijuana treatment center
274 facilities comply with the Florida Building Code, the Florida
275 Fire Prevention Code, or any local amendments to the Florida
276 Building Code or the Florida Fire Prevention Code.

277 Section 2. Section 381.994, Florida Statutes, is created to
278 read:

279 381.994 Neurofibromatosis Disease Grant Program.—

280 (1) (a) There is created within the Department of Health the
281 Neurofibromatosis Disease Grant Program. The purpose of the
282 program is to advance the progress of research and cures for
283 neurofibromatosis by awarding grants through a competitive,
284 peer-reviewed process.

285 (b) Subject to legislative appropriation, the program shall
286 award grants for scientific and clinical research to further the
287 search for new diagnostics, treatments, and cures for
288 neurofibromatosis.

289 (2) (a) Applications for grants for neurofibromatosis
290 disease research may be submitted by any university or

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291 established research institute in this state. All qualified
292 investigators in this state, regardless of institutional
293 affiliation, shall have equal access and opportunity to compete
294 for the research funding. Preference may be given to grant
295 proposals that foster collaboration among institutions,
296 researchers, and community practitioners, as such proposals
297 support the advancement of treatments and cures of
298 neurofibromatosis through basic or applied research. Grants
299 shall be awarded by the department, after consultation with the
300 Rare Disease Advisory Council under s. 381.99, on the basis of
301 scientific merit, as determined by the competitive, peer-
302 reviewed process to ensure objectivity, consistency, and high
303 quality. The following types of applications may be considered
304 for funding:

- 305 1. Investigator-initiated research grants.
- 306 2. Institutional research grants.
- 307 3. Collaborative research grants, including those that
308 advance the finding of treatments and cures through basic or
309 applied research.

310 (b) To ensure appropriate and fair evaluation of grant
311 applications based on scientific merit, the department shall
312 appoint peer review panels of independent, scientifically
313 qualified individuals to review the scientific merit of each
314 proposal and establish its priority score. The priority scores
315 shall be forwarded to the council, and the council must consider
316 priority scores in determining which proposals are recommended
317 for funding.

318 (3) For purposes of performing their duties under this
319 section, the Rare Disease Advisory Council and the peer review

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320 panels shall establish and follow rigorous guidelines for
321 ethical conduct and adhere to a strict policy with regard to
322 conflicts of interest. A member of the council or panel may not
323 participate in any discussion or decision of the council or
324 panel with respect to a research proposal by any firm, entity,
325 or agency with which the member is associated as a member of the
326 governing body or as an employee or with which the member has
327 entered into a contractual arrangement.

328 (4) Notwithstanding s. 216.301 and pursuant to s. 216.351,
329 the balance of any appropriation from the General Revenue Fund
330 for the Neurofibromatosis Disease Grant Program which is not
331 disbursed but is obligated pursuant to contract or committed to
332 be expended by June 30 of the fiscal year in which the funds are
333 appropriated may be carried forward for up to 5 years after the
334 effective date of the original appropriation.

335 Section 3. Paragraph (i) is added to subsection (3) of
336 section 383.14, Florida Statutes, to read:

337 383.14 Screening for metabolic disorders, other hereditary
338 and congenital disorders, and environmental risk factors.—

339 (3) DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH; POWERS AND DUTIES.—The department
340 shall administer and provide certain services to implement the
341 provisions of this section and shall:

342 (i) Create an evidence-based educational pamphlet on the
343 nutritional needs of preterm infants to be provided to parents
344 and guardians of infants receiving care in a neonatal intensive
345 care unit. By January 1, 2027, the department shall make the
346 pamphlet available electronically to hospitals licensed under
347 chapter 395 to provide neonatal intensive care services. The
348 pamphlet must include, but need not be limited to, information

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349 on preterm infants relating to all of the following:

350 1. The specific nutritional needs of preterm infants;

351 2. The health risks associated with nutritional deficits
352 and the potential need for nutritional supplementation;

353 3. Different nutritional sources for infants, including
354 maternal breast milk, pasteurized human donor milk, infant
355 formula, human-milk-derived fortifiers, and bovine-milk-derived
356 fortifiers and the recommended uses for each type of nutritional
357 source;

358 4. The importance of maternal breast milk for meeting the
359 nutritional and developmental needs of infants, and the
360 alternative of pasteurized human donor milk if maternal breast
361 milk is not available;

362 5. The potential risks associated with the use of infant
363 formula, including preterm infant formula, as a sole or primary
364 nutrition source; and

365 6. Necrotizing enterocolitis, the risk factors for
366 necrotizing enterocolitis, and the potential for a human-milk-
367 based diet, including maternal and pasteurized donor breast milk
368 and human-milk-derived infant fortifiers, to reduce the risk of
369 necrotizing enterocolitis.

370
371 All provisions of this subsection must be coordinated with the
372 provisions and plans established under this chapter, chapter
373 411, and Pub. L. No. 99-457.

374 Section 4. Paragraphs (a) and (j) of subsection (2) and
375 paragraphs (a) and (b) of subsection (7) of section 391.308,
376 Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

377 391.308 Early Steps Program.—The department shall implement

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378 and administer part C of the federal Individuals with
379 Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), which shall be known as the
380 "Early Steps Program."

381 (2) DUTIES OF THE DEPARTMENT.—The department shall:

382 (a) Annually prepare a grant application to the Federal
383 Government requesting the United States Department of Education
384 ~~for~~ funding for early intervention services for infants and
385 toddlers with disabilities and their families pursuant to part C
386 of the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

387 (j) Establish procedures for dispute resolution and
388 mediation as outlined in part C of the federal Individuals with
389 Disabilities Education Act ~~Provide a mediation process and if~~
390 ~~necessary, an appeals process for applicants found ineligible~~
391 ~~for developmental evaluation or early intervention services or~~
392 ~~denied financial support for such services.~~

393 (7) TRANSITION TO EDUCATION.—

394 (a) The department shall establish statewide uniform
395 protocols and procedures for transition to a school district
396 program for children with disabilities or to another program as
397 part of an individual family support plan pursuant to part C of
398 the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act ~~At least~~
399 ~~90 days before a child reaches 3 years of age, the local program~~
400 ~~office shall initiate transition planning to ensure the child's~~
401 ~~successful transition from the Early Steps Program to a school~~
402 ~~district program for children with disabilities or to another~~
403 ~~program as part of an individual family support plan.~~

404 (b) ~~At least 90 days before a child reaches 3 years of age,~~
405 ~~the local program office shall:~~

406 1. ~~Notify the local school district in which the child~~

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407 ~~resides and the Department of Education that the child may be~~
408 ~~eligible for special education or related services as determined~~
409 ~~by the local school district pursuant to ss. 1003.21 and~~
410 ~~1003.57, unless the child's parent or legal guardian has opted~~
411 ~~out of such notification; and~~

412 ~~2. Upon approval by the child's parent or legal guardian,~~
413 ~~convene a transition conference that includes participation of a~~
414 ~~local school district representative and the parent or legal~~
415 ~~guardian to discuss options for and availability of services.~~

416 Section 5. Subsection (5) of section 391.3081, Florida
417 Statutes, is amended to read:

418 391.3081 Early Steps Extended Option.—

419 (5) TRANSITION TO EDUCATION.—The department shall establish
420 statewide uniform protocols and procedures for transition to a
421 school district program for children with disabilities or to
422 another program as part of an individual family support plan
423 pursuant to part C of the federal Individuals with Disabilities
424 Education Act.

425 ~~(a) At least 90 days before the beginning of the school~~
426 ~~year following the fourth birthday of a child enrolled in the~~
427 ~~Early Steps Extended Option, the local program office shall~~
428 ~~initiate transition planning to ensure the child's successful~~
429 ~~transition from the Early Steps Extended Option to a school~~
430 ~~district program under part B of the federal Individuals with~~
431 ~~Disabilities Education Act or to another program as part of an~~
432 ~~individual family support plan. Specifically, the local program~~
433 ~~office shall:~~

434 ~~1. Notify the Department of Education and the local school~~
435 ~~district in which the child resides that the eligible child is~~

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436 ~~exiting the Early Steps Extended Option, unless the child's~~
437 ~~parent or legal guardian has opted out of such notification; and~~

438 ~~2. Upon approval by the child's parent or legal guardian,~~
439 ~~convene a transition conference that includes participation of a~~
440 ~~local school district representative and the parent or legal~~
441 ~~guardian to discuss options for and availability of services.~~

442 ~~(b) The local program office, in conjunction with the local~~
443 ~~school district, shall modify a child's individual family~~
444 ~~support plan, or, if applicable, the local school district shall~~
445 ~~develop or review an individual education plan for the child~~
446 ~~pursuant to ss. 1003.57, 1003.571, and 1003.5715 which~~
447 ~~identifies special education or related services that the child~~
448 ~~will receive and the providers or agencies that will provide~~
449 ~~such services.~~

450 ~~(c) If a child is found to be no longer eligible for part B~~
451 ~~of the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act~~
452 ~~during the review of an individual education plan, the local~~
453 ~~program office and the local school district must provide the~~
454 ~~child's parent or legal guardian with written information on~~
455 ~~other available services or community resources.~~

456 Section 6. Present paragraphs (d) through (hh) of
457 subsection (5) of section 456.074, Florida Statutes, are
458 redesignated as paragraphs (e) through (ii), respectively, and a
459 new paragraph (d) is added to that subsection, to read:

460 456.074 Certain health care practitioners; immediate
461 suspension of license.—

462 (5) The department shall issue an emergency order
463 suspending the license of any health care practitioner who is
464 arrested for committing or attempting, soliciting, or conspiring

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465 to commit any act that would constitute a violation of any of
466 the following criminal offenses in this state or similar
467 offenses in another jurisdiction:

468 (d) Section 782.04, relating to murder.

469 Section 7. Paragraph (c) of subsection (2) of section
470 464.0156, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

471 464.0156 Delegation of duties.—

472 (2)

473 (c) A registered nurse may not delegate the administration
474 of any controlled substance listed in Schedule II, Schedule III,
475 or Schedule IV of s. 893.03 or 21 U.S.C. s. 812, except that a
476 registered nurse may delegate:

477 1. For The administration of an insulin syringe that is
478 prefilled with the proper dosage by a pharmacist or an insulin
479 pen that is prefilled by the manufacturer; and

480 2. To a home health aide for medically fragile children as
481 defined in s. 400.462 the administration of a Schedule IV
482 controlled substance prescribed for the emergency treatment of
483 an active seizure.

484 Section 8. Paragraph (c) of subsection (3) of section
485 491.005, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

486 491.005 Licensure by examination.—

487 (3) MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERAPY.—Upon verification of
488 documentation and payment of a fee not to exceed \$200, as set by
489 board rule, the department shall issue a license as a marriage
490 and family therapist to an applicant whom the board certifies
491 has met all of the following criteria:

492 (c)1. Attained one of the following:

493 a. A minimum of a master's degree in marriage and family

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494 therapy from a program accredited by the Commission on
495 Accreditation for Marriage and Family Therapy Education.

496 b. A minimum of a master's degree with a major emphasis in
497 marriage and family therapy or a closely related field from a
498 university program accredited by the Council on Accreditation of
499 Counseling and Related Educational Programs and graduate courses
500 approved by the board.

501 c. A minimum of a master's degree with an emphasis in
502 marriage and family therapy or a closely related field, with a
503 degree conferred before September 1, 2032 ~~2027~~, from an
504 institutionally accredited college or university and graduate
505 courses approved by the board.

506 2. If the course title that appears on the applicant's
507 transcript does not clearly identify the content of the
508 coursework, the applicant provided additional documentation,
509 including, but not limited to, a syllabus or catalog description
510 published for the course. The required master's degree must have
511 been received in an institution of higher education that, at the
512 time the applicant graduated, was fully accredited by an
513 institutional accrediting body recognized by the Council for
514 Higher Education Accreditation or its successor organization or
515 was a member in good standing with Universities Canada, or an
516 institution of higher education located outside the United
517 States and Canada which, at the time the applicant was enrolled
518 and at the time the applicant graduated, maintained a standard
519 of training substantially equivalent to the standards of
520 training of those institutions in the United States which are
521 accredited by an institutional accrediting body recognized by
522 the Council for Higher Education Accreditation or its successor

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523 organization. Such foreign education and training must have been
524 received in an institution or program of higher education
525 officially recognized by the government of the country in which
526 it is located as an institution or program to train students to
527 practice as professional marriage and family therapists or
528 psychotherapists. The applicant has the burden of establishing
529 that the requirements of this provision have been met, and the
530 board shall require documentation, such as an evaluation by a
531 foreign equivalency determination service, as evidence that the
532 applicant's graduate degree program and education were
533 equivalent to an accredited program in this country. An
534 applicant with a master's degree from a program that did not
535 emphasize marriage and family therapy may complete the
536 coursework requirement in a training institution fully
537 accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Marriage and
538 Family Therapy Education recognized by the United States
539 Department of Education.

540
541 For the purposes of dual licensure, the department shall license
542 as a marriage and family therapist any person who meets the
543 requirements of s. 491.0057. Fees for dual licensure may not
544 exceed those stated in this subsection.

545 Section 9. Paragraph (f) of subsection (1) of section
546 1004.551, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

547 1004.551 University of Florida Center for Autism and
548 Neurodevelopment.—There is created at the University of Florida
549 the Center for Autism and Neurodevelopment.

550 (1) The center shall:

551 (f) Develop an autism micro-credential to provide

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552 specialized training in supporting students with autism.

553 1. The micro-credential must be stackable with the autism
554 endorsement and be available to:

555 a. Instructional personnel as defined in s. 1012.01(2);

556 b. Prekindergarten instructors as specified in ss. 1002.55,
557 1002.61, and 1002.63; ~~and~~

558 c. Child care personnel as defined in ss. 402.302(3) and
559 1002.88(1)(e); and

560 d. Early intervention service providers credentialed
561 through the Early Steps Program.

562 2. The micro-credential must require participants to
563 demonstrate competency in:

564 a. Identifying behaviors associated with autism.

565 b. Supporting the learning environment in both general and
566 specialized classroom settings.

567 c. Promoting the use of assistive technologies.

568 d. Applying evidence-based instructional practices.

569 3. The micro-credential must:

570 a. Be provided at no cost to eligible participants.

571 b. Be competency-based, allowing participants to complete
572 the credentialing process either in person or online.

573 c. Permit participants to receive the micro-credential at
574 any time during training once competency is demonstrated.

575 4. Individuals eligible under subparagraph 1. who complete
576 the micro-credential are eligible for a one-time stipend, as
577 determined in the General Appropriations Act. The center shall
578 administer stipends for the micro-credential.

579 Section 10. This act shall take effect July 1, 2026.