

STATE OF FLORIDA

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

EXECUTIVE ORDER NUMBER 13-284

Reaffirming Commitment to Employment for Floridians with Disabilities

WHEREAS, employment is the most direct and cost-effective means in helping an individual achieve independence and self-fulfillment, which should be the primary objective of public assistance programs wherever possible; and

WHEREAS, persons with disabilities share the same aspirations to work and live successfully in their communities as everyone else; and

WHEREAS, unique barriers to employment confronting persons with disabilities present lost opportunities for employers to hire and retain talented employees in this state; and

WHEREAS, by Executive Order 11-161, I created the Governor's Commission on Jobs for Floridians with Disabilities to develop public policy solutions and strategies to address these barriers and improve employment opportunities for persons with disabilities; and

WHEREAS, the Commission recommended the state establish a single-point of contact to assist employers in hiring persons with disabilities who are ready and able to work, create a long-term communications plan that would promote a consistent message to employers about the value these individuals offer Florida's economy, and increase firsthand work experiences, such as internships, to help persons with disabilities better compete in the workforce and improve perceptions among employers; and

WHEREAS, several state agencies and disability service organizations formed an employment coalition to identify ways to implement the Commission's recommendations and improve employment outcomes for persons with disabilities; and

WHEREAS, for Fiscal Year 2013-2014, the state budget prioritizes supported employment and internship opportunities for young individuals with developmental disabilities transitioning out of the public education system; and

WHEREAS, the 2013 Legislature passed and I signed the Career and Professional Education Act to ensure students have multiple pathways, including career-technical options, to a high school diploma, which will improve employment prospects for future generations of Floridians with disabilities; and

WHEREAS, the creation of an interagency cooperative agreement among state agencies and other organizations serving persons with disabilities is important to ensure the continuation of a long-term commitment to improving employment outcomes for this population.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, RICK SCOTT, as Governor of Florida, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the laws and Constitution of the State of Florida, do hereby promulgate the following Executive Order, effective immediately:

Section 1.

I hereby reaffirm my commitment to employment for persons with disabilities established by Executive Order 11-161. An interagency cooperative agreement shall be created among state agencies and other disabilities service organizations to ensure the continuation of this long-term commitment to improving employment outcomes for this population.

Section 2.

“Employment” for purposes of this Executive Order is defined as integrated employment, including supported employment, customized employment, and self-employment, where an individual is paid by an employer at minimum wage or greater or receives earnings through one’s self-employment business, fully integrated in the community workforce, with a goal of maximum self-sufficiency. Employment outcomes shall be based on each individual’s measureable vocational goals, skills, and abilities, with the intent to also meet the expectations and hiring needs of the employer.

Section 3.

The interagency cooperative agreement shall formalize the efforts that have been accomplished to improve employment opportunities for persons with disabilities and continue the following objectives:

- a. Establish a commitment among the agencies’ leadership to maximize resources and coordinate with each other to improve employment outcomes for persons with disabilities seeking publically funded services;
- b. Develop strategic goals and reasonable benchmarks to assist the agencies in implementing this agreement;
- c. Identify financing and contracting methods that will prioritize employment among the array of services paid for or provided by agencies;
- d. Identify ways training opportunities can be better utilized by agency employees and contracted providers to ensure effectiveness of employment services;
- e. Ensure collaboration occurs during the development of service plans, including the Individual Plan for Employment, when individuals are served by multiple agencies to achieve their employment goals;
- f. Promote service innovation; and
- g. Identify accountability measures to ensure sustainability.

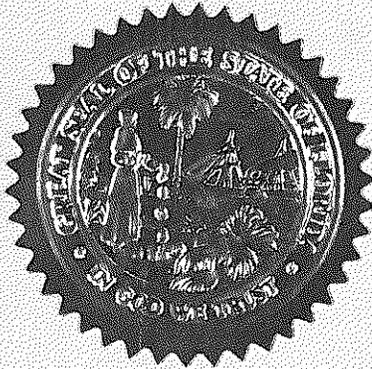
Section 4.

The following agencies shall develop and implement the interagency cooperative agreement:

- a. The Department of Education-Division of Vocational Rehabilitation;
- b. The Department of Education-Division of Blind Services;
- c. The Department of Education-Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services;
- d. The Agency for Persons with Disabilities;
- e. The Department of Children and Families-Mental Health and Substance Abuse Program;
- f. The Department of Economic Opportunity;
- g. Workforce Florida, Inc.; and
- h. The Florida Developmental Disabilities Council.

Other state agencies and disability service organizations may participate in this agreement as necessary.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of Florida to be affixed, at Tallahassee, this 8th day of October, 2013.



RICK SCOTT, GOVERNOR

ATTEST:

SECRETARY OF STATE

2013 OCT - 8 PM 6:00
DEPARTMENT OF STATE
TALLAHASSEE, FLORIDA

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