

27 Florida Unique Abilities Partner program; requiring
 28 the department to provide the Florida Tourism Industry
 29 Marketing Corporation with certain information;
 30 requiring the department to identify employment
 31 opportunities posted by employers that receive the
 32 Florida Unique Abilities Partner designation on the
 33 workforce information system; requiring the department
 34 to provide a specified report to the Legislature by a
 35 specified date; requiring the department to adopt
 36 rules; providing an effective date.

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

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 40 Section 1. (1) The Department of Economic Opportunity
 41 shall establish the Florida Unique Abilities Partner program to
 42 designate a business entity as a Florida Unique Abilities
 43 Partner if the business entity demonstrates commitment, through
 44 employment and support, to the independence of individuals who
 45 have a disability. The department shall consult with the Agency
 46 for Persons with Disabilities, the Division of Vocational
 47 Rehabilitation of the Department of Education, the Division of
 48 Blind Services of the Department of Education, and Workforce
 49 Florida, Inc., in creating the program. As used in this section,
 50 the term "individuals who have a disability" means persons who
 51 have a physical or intellectual impairment that substantially
 52 limits one or more major life activities; persons who have a

53 history or record of such an impairment; or persons who are
 54 perceived by others as having such an impairment.

55 (2) A business entity may apply to the Department of
 56 Economic Opportunity to be designated as a Florida Unique
 57 Abilities Partner, based on the business entity's achievements
 58 in at least one of the following categories:

59 (a) Employment of individuals who have a disability.

60 (b) Contributions to local or national disability
 61 organizations or the establishment of a program that contributes
 62 to the independence of individuals who have a disability.

63 (3) As an alternative to application by a business entity,
 64 the Department of Economic Opportunity must consider nominations
 65 from members of the community in which the business entity is
 66 located. The nomination must identify the business entity's
 67 achievements in one or both of the categories as provided in
 68 subsection (2).

69 (4) The Department of Economic Opportunity shall adopt
 70 procedures for the application and designation processes for the
 71 Florida Unique Abilities Partner program. Designation as a
 72 Florida Unique Abilities Partner does not establish or involve
 73 licensure, does not affect the substantial interests of a party,
 74 and does not constitute a final agency action. The Florida
 75 Unique Abilities Partner program and designation are not subject
 76 to chapter 120, Florida Statutes.

77 (5) In determining the eligibility for the designation of
 78 a business entity as a Florida Unique Abilities Partner, the

79 Department of Economic Opportunity must consider, at a minimum,
 80 the following criteria:

81 (a) For a designation based on an application by a
 82 business:

83 1. A business entity must certify that it employs at least
 84 one individual who has a disability. Such employees must be
 85 residents of this state and must have been employed by the
 86 business entity for at least 9 months before the business
 87 entity's application for the designation. The department may not
 88 require the employer to provide personally identifiable
 89 information about its employees; or

90 2. A business entity must certify that it has made
 91 contributions to local and national disability organizations or
 92 contributions in support of individuals who have a disability.
 93 Contributions may be accomplished through financial or in-kind
 94 contributions, including employee volunteer hours, or
 95 accomplished through the establishment of a program that
 96 contributes to the independence of individuals who have a
 97 disability. Contributions must be documented by providing copies
 98 of written receipts or letters of acknowledgment from recipients
 99 or donees. A business entity with 100 or fewer employees must
 100 make a financial or in-kind contribution of at least \$1,000, and
 101 a business entity with more than 100 employees must make a
 102 financial or in-kind contribution of at least \$5,000.

103 (b) For a designation based upon receipt of a nomination
 104 of a business entity, the Department of Economic Opportunity

105 shall determine whether the nominee, based on the information
 106 provided by the nominating person or entity, meets the
 107 requirements of paragraph (a). If the designee appears to meet
 108 the requirements, the Department of Economic Opportunity shall
 109 provide notice to the nominee, including the qualification
 110 criteria asserted in the nomination. The nominee shall be
 111 provided 30 days from the receipt of the notice to decline the
 112 nomination. After 30 days, if the nomination has not been
 113 declined, the business must be awarded the designation.

114 (6) After an initial designation as a Florida Unique
 115 Abilities Partner, a business entity must certify each year that
 116 it continues to meet the criteria for the designation. If a
 117 business entity does not submit yearly certification of
 118 continued eligibility, the Department of Economic Opportunity
 119 shall remove the designation. A business entity may elect to
 120 discontinue its use of the designation at any time by notifying
 121 the department of such decision.

122 (7) The Department of Economic Opportunity, in
 123 consultation with members of the disability community, must
 124 develop a logo that identifies a business entity that is
 125 designated as a Florida Unique Abilities Partner.

126 (8) The Department of Economic Opportunity must adopt
 127 guidelines and requirements for use of the logo, including how
 128 the logo may be used in advertising. The department may allow a
 129 business entity to display a Florida Unique Abilities Partner
 130 logo upon designation. A business entity that has not been

131 designated as a Florida Unique Abilities Partner or has elected
 132 to discontinue its designated status may not display the logo.

133 (9) The Department of Economic Opportunity must maintain a
 134 website that provides the public with a list of business
 135 entities, by county, which currently have the Florida Unique
 136 Abilities Partner designation and which provides information
 137 regarding the eligibilities for the designation. At least once a
 138 year, the department must publish on its website the best ways
 139 for business entities to facilitate the inclusion of individuals
 140 who have a disability. The Agency for Persons with Disabilities
 141 must provide a link on its website to the department's website
 142 that makes available the information on the Florida Unique
 143 Abilities Partner program and designation.

144 (10) On a quarterly basis, the Department of Economic
 145 Opportunity must provide the Florida Tourism Industry Marketing
 146 Corporation with a current list of all businesses that are
 147 designated as Florida Unique Abilities Partners. The Florida
 148 Tourism Industry Marketing Corporation must consider the Florida
 149 Unique Abilities Partner program in the development of marketing
 150 campaigns, and specifically in any targeted marketing campaign
 151 for individuals who have a disability or their families.

152 (11) The Department of Economic Opportunity shall identify
 153 employment opportunities posted by business entities that
 154 currently have the Florida Unique Abilities Partner designation
 155 on the workforce information system under s. 445.011, Florida
 156 Statutes.

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157 (12) By January 1, 2016, the Department of Economic
158 Opportunity must provide a report to the President of the Senate
159 and the Speaker of the House of Representatives on the status of
160 the implementation of this section, including the adoption of
161 rules, development of the logo, and development of application
162 procedures.

163 (13) The Department of Economic Opportunity shall adopt
164 rules to administer this section.

165 Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2015.