

**334.351 Youth work experience program; findings and intent; authority to contract; limitation.--**

(1) The Legislature finds and declares that young men and women of the state should be given an opportunity to obtain public service work and training experience that protects and conserves the valuable resources of the state and promotes participation in other community enhancement projects. Notwithstanding the requirements of chapters 287 and 337, the Department of Transportation is authorized to contract with public agencies and nonprofit organizations for the performance of work related to the construction and maintenance of transportation-related facilities by youths enrolled in youth work experience programs. The total amount of contracts entered into by the department under this section in any fiscal year may not exceed the amount specifically appropriated by the Legislature for this program.

(2) Each nonprofit youth organization that provides services under a contract with the department must certify that each young person enrolled in its work experience program is a resident of this state and possesses a valid Florida driver's license or identification card.

(3) When selecting a nonprofit youth organization to perform work on transportation-related facilities and before awarding a contract under this section, the department must consider the following criteria:

(a) The number of participants receiving life management skills training;

(b) The number of participants receiving high school diplomas or GEDs;

(c) The number of participants receiving scholarships;

(d) The number of participants receiving bonuses;

(e) The number of participants who have secured full-time jobs; and

(f) The other programs or services that support the development of disadvantaged youths.

(4) Each nonprofit youth organization under contract with the department must:

(a) Submit an annual report to the department by January 1 of each year. The report must include, but need not be limited to, the applicable performance of the organization when measured by the criteria in subsection (3) for the organization's most recently completed fiscal year.

(b) Submit an independent audit of the organization's financial records to the department each year. The organization's contract with the department must allow the department the right to inspect the organization's financial and program records.

(c) Demonstrate participation in a peer assessment or review process, such as the Excellence in Corps Operations of the National Association of Service and Conservation Corps.

**History.**--s. 13, ch. 97-280; s. 2, ch. 2007-66; s. 27, ch. 2007-196.