

## ***“Office of Youth Affairs Act”***

Act No. 34 of July 13, 1978, as amended

(Contains amendments incorporated by:

Act No. 126 of June 13, 1980  
Act No. 68 of August 28, 1990  
Act No. 64 of August 12, 1994  
Act No. 8 of January 4, 2000  
Act No. 95 of August 7, 2001  
Act No. 26 of January 1, 2003  
Act No. 97 of March 27, 2003  
Act No. 40 of January 8, 2004  
Act No. 51 of January 13, 2004  
Act No. 76 of March 10, 2004  
Act No. 85 of August 26, 2005)

To create an Office of Youth Affairs ; to define its functions, duties and organization; to abolish the Youth Action Administration created by Act No. 81 of May 31 of 1973; to repeal Act No. 29 of May 6 of 1976, as amended; to provide for the transfer of functions and duties; to appropriate funds and for other purposes.

### STATEMENT OF MOTIVES

The aspirations and goals of the Puerto Rican youth, on whose achievements the future of our country depends, together with the complexity of modern life and the population growth, intensify the need to create a government structure which, in coordination and cooperation with other public agencies, with the collaboration of the citizenry and the participation of our youth, can make possible the training, employment, recreation, and spiritual enjoyment of our youth.

This administration recognizes that it is essential to render coordinated and integral attention to our youth, due to the impact of this demographic group because they shall be the ones to forge the destiny of our people.

At the present time, the general task of handling the demands and needs of our youth and of encouraging the achievement of their goals is spread out on several agencies, including the Youth Action Administration. The programs administered by said agencies have lacked adequate coordination and the creation of said administration, in good measure, gave rise to duplication of efforts and the transfer of functions, which have prevented the efficient use of resources and have caused an insignificant yield in connection with the projects and programs aimed at our youth.

The solution to this lack of functional efficiency and the duplication of efforts due to the absence of inter-agency coordination require the creation of an advisory body on public policy and coordination, which will serve as a vehicle for the integrated analysis of needs, the determination of goals, short- and long-term planning, and the constant evaluation of the programs that are carried out in behalf of our youth.

The creation of a Youth Affairs Advisory council that would encourage inter-agency coordination and cooperation and have the collaboration of the citizens and the participation of our youth will insure that the programs will be the answer to the needs of our youth in an effective and efficient way.

Said Advisory council is a rational coordinating body, that will have the overall function of changing the mass of highly-complicated and incongruent programs, the fiscal resources and the existing administrative organizations, into an integrated group of services designed to fulfill the aspirations and needs of our youth.

In this way, we would be working in harmony with the public policy directed to support all the administrative levels, through the most effective use possible of resources, to obtain the maximum yield from their efforts and the government programs.

*Be it enacted by the Legislature of Puerto Rico:*

**Section 1. — Title.** (3 L.P.R.A. § 1601)

This Act shall be known as the "Office of Youth Affairs Act".

**Section 1-A. — Definitions.** (3 L.P.R.A. § 1601a)

For the purposes of this Act, the following terms and phrases shall have the meaning stated below:

- (1) Young person. — Means any person who is between thirteen (13) and twenty-nine (29) years of age.
- (2) Youth. — Refers to the total population group between the age of thirteen (13) and twenty-nine (29) years.
- (3) Young people. — Shall have the same meaning as the term "Youth".

**Section 2. — Creation of the Office.** (3 L.P.R.A. § 1605)

The Office of Youth Affairs, henceforth denominated as the "Office", is hereby created, which shall be attached to the Governor's Office, and directed by an Executive Director.

**Section 3. — Appointment of Executive Director.** (3 L.P.R.A. § 1606)

The Governor, with the prior advice and consent of the Senate, shall appoint and fix the salary of the Executive Director who shall hold office at the will of the nominating authority.

The Executive Director shall be responsible for exercising the functions and duties assigned in this Act.

**Section 4. — Functions and Duties of the Office.** (3 L.P.R.A. § 1607)

The Office shall have the following functions and duties:

- (1) It shall prepare, with priority and in coordination with the government agencies concerned, organizations and the private sector, an effective program to provide work and other opportunities for development to unemployed youths between sixteen (16) and twenty-nine (29) years of age.
- (2) To establish mechanisms for the selection and referral to employment in the public and private sector of youths, with the participation and coordination of the Department of Labor and Human Resources.
- (3) To examine the government programs to determine their impact and effectiveness in handling and solving the problems of the young and recommend the corresponding corrective actions. It shall establish a center for collecting, studying, evaluating, analyzing and divulging statistical data regarding the various assistance, education and orientation programs and those of any other nature administered by government agencies. In compliance with the duties provided in this subsection, the Office shall give priority attention to those government programs directed to preparing and training Puerto Rican youth as a first step towards their full integration into the labor force. In that regard the Office shall prepare a statistical chart and conduct a study that would gather those government offerings that allow the young people of Puerto Rico to make a successful transition into the labor force. The results of the efforts set forth in this subsection shall be included in an annual report which the Office must submit to the Legislature.
- (4) To develop activities, participate in forums and establish mechanisms and procedures to guarantee the rights of the young and ensure their full participation in the way of life of our people.
- (5) To promote knowledge and a better understanding of the problems of our young and conduct information and orientation activities directed to preparing the young in matters of leadership, civic awareness, parliamentary procedures, oratory and others, so they may develop positive attitudes towards themselves, their families and their communities.
- (6) To establish mechanisms to improve the coordination of programs and projects of the various government agencies pertaining to the youth of Puerto Rico and to submit recommendations to the agencies that develop youth related programs.
- (7) To serve as liaison between the government agencies that provide services and develop programs for our youth.
- (8) To encourage a study of youth legislation in force and to sponsor the measures considered necessary and convenient to advance the conditions and opportunities of our youth in all phases.
- (9) To encourage the establishment and participation of the young in youth organizations.
- (10) To promote the development of a good-citizenship program with the participation of the appropriate government agencies and civic and religious organizations.
- (11) To offer incentives, assistance and stimulus directly to our youths, as well as to the private organizations, so that they will provide youth services, and promote their development.
- (12) To take the necessary steps before the Government of the United States to increase the allocation of federal funds that are set aside specially for youth programs.

- (13) To establish through regulations the general operating guidelines and any other guidelines necessary for the framing of the public policy directed to solve youth problems.
- (14) Promote interactive information centers on jobs, education, prevention, drugs and recreation for youths.
- (15) To promote the offering of incentives to employers who hire young students between the ages of sixteen (16) and twenty-nine (29) years.
- (16) Create awareness in our youths of the need to conserve our environment.
- (17) Promote the participation of youths in reforestation programs throughout Puerto Rico.
- (18) Promote recreational activities that are free of drugs and alcohol.
- (19) Promote the representation of youths on the governing boards of existing educational entities.
- (20) Establish consortiums and agreements with other countries so that youths can acquire skills in the fields of commerce, tourism and languages at an international level.
- (21) Foster, enable and support the creation of youth cooperatives in the schools, public housing projects, special communities and other sectors of the community of the country. This function shall be executed in coordination with the Cooperative Development Administration and the Puerto Rico League of Cooperatives.
- (22) To represent youth in international organisms, and achieve their participation in same.
- (23) To hold the convenient and necessary activities and programs to efficiently achieve the goals supposed by the public policy stated in this Act, or by the Government of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico.
- (24) To draft and adopt a plan setting forth the standards to coordinate and guide government organizations concerning the development and implementation of youth related programs and projects.
- (25) To recommend programs and projects through the development and execution of affirmative action plans to ensure the integral implementation of the public policy related to the young.
- (26) To establish systems and procedures to evaluate the effectiveness of the government programs for solving the problems and meeting the needs of the young.
- (27) To draft and implement through diverse activities and the communications media, an orientation and consciousness-raising plan on traffic safety with special emphasis on the dangers of drag racing, speed contests and/or motor vehicle races prohibited in the public roads of Puerto Rico, known also as *la fiebre*, as well as the use of four track vehicles and the consequences of driving motor vehicles under the influence of drugs or intoxicating or controlled substances.

**Section 5. — Personnel.** (3 L.P.R.A. § 1608)

The Office shall appoint and hire, with the approval of the Governor or his delegated official, the executive, technical, administrative, secretarial and any other type of personnel needed to carry out the functions established in this chapter. The Office shall be considered as an Individual Administrator pursuant to Act No. 5 of October 14, 1975.

**Section 6. — Authorization to Enter into Agreements and Contracts.** (3 L.P.R.A. § 1609)

The Office is authorized to enter into covenants, agreements and contracts with government agencies or private entities or employers so as to achieve the purposes of this Act. Provided That, it may transfer funds to other bodies to carry out projects and activities for the benefit of our youth.

**Section 7. — Appropriation of Funds.** (3 L.P.R.A. § 1601 note)

The amount of \$1,250,000 is hereby appropriated from unencumbered funds in the Commonwealth Treasury, for the operation and functioning of the bodies hereby created for the 1978-79 fiscal year.

In the following years, the amounts for the operation and functioning of the Office shall be appropriated in the Regular Budget of Operating Expenses for government agencies and instrumentalities.

**Section 8. — Incompatibility.** (3 L.P.R.A. § 1601 note)

Any guideline, order, decree, bylaw or statute that is in conflict with the purposes of this Act is hereby repealed.

**Section 9. — Severability Clause.** (3 L.P.R.A. § 1601 note)

If any provision of this Act, or the application thereof to any person or circumstance, is held to be invalid, the validity of the provisions of the Act that remain in force without recourse to the annulled provision shall not be affected.

**Section 10. — Transfer of Programs and Repeal of Legislation.** (3 L.P.R.A. § 1610)

(a) To abolish the Job and Progress Corps Program, created by Act No. 115 of June 21, 1968, and transferred to the Youth Action Administration through Act No. 81 of May 31, 1973.

(b) To abolish the Youth Action Administration created by Act No. 81 of May 31, 1973, and to repeal Act No. 29 of May 6, 1976, as amended.

(c) The Child Commission's powers that were transferred to the Youth Action Administration are hereby transferred to the Office of Youth Affairs.

(d) The effective date for the transfer of programs and the abolition of the Youth Action Administration shall be fixed by the Governor through an Executive Order no later than ninety (90) days after the enacting of this act.

(e) The Governor shall appoint an official to perform the transfer of property, files, records, documents, funds, appropriations, and surplus, licenses, permits, and other authorizations and contracts to the Right to Employment Administration, as well as to the Office of Youth Affairs, provided herein.

**Section 11. — Effective Date.** — This act shall take effect immediately after its approval.

**Note.** This compilation was prepared by the Puerto Rico OMB staff who have striven to ensure it is complete and accurate. However, this is not an official compilation and may not be completely free of error. It contains all amendments incorporated for reading purposes only. For accuracy and exactitude please refer to the act original text. Compiled by the Office of Management and Budget Library.