

## 2011 Florida Statutes

[Title XXIX PUBLIC HEALTH](#)

[Chapter 403 ENVIRONMENTAL CONTROL](#) [Entire Chapter](#)

### **SECTION 70605**

#### **Solid waste collection services in competition with private companies.**

403.70605 Solid waste collection services in competition with private companies.—

(1) SOLID WASTE COLLECTION SERVICES IN COMPETITION WITH PRIVATE COMPANIES.—

(a) A local government that provides specific solid waste collection services in direct competition with a private company:

1. Shall comply with the provisions of local environmental, health, and safety standards that also are applicable to a private company providing such collection services in competition with the local government.

2. Shall not enact or enforce any license, permit, registration procedure, or associated fee that:

a. Does not apply to the local government and for which there is not a substantially similar requirement that applies to the local government; and

b. Provides the local government with a material advantage in its ability to compete with a private company in terms of cost or ability to promptly or efficiently provide such collection services. Nothing in this sub-subparagraph shall apply to any zoning, land use, or comprehensive plan requirement.

(b)1. A private company with which a local government is in competition may bring an action to enjoin a violation of paragraph (a) against any local government. No injunctive relief shall be granted if the official action which forms the basis for the suit bears a reasonable relationship to the health, safety, or welfare of the citizens of the local government unless the court finds that the actual or potential anticompetitive effects outweigh the public benefits of the challenged action.

2. As a condition precedent to the institution of an action pursuant to this paragraph, the complaining party shall first file with the local government a notice referencing this paragraph and setting forth the specific facts upon which the complaint is based and the manner in which the complaining party is affected. The complaining party may provide evidence to substantiate the claims made in the complaint. Within 30 days after receipt of such a complaint, the local government shall respond in writing to the complaining party explaining the corrective action taken, if any. If no response is received within 30 days or if appropriate corrective action is not taken within a reasonable time, the complaining party may institute the judicial proceedings authorized in this paragraph. However, failure to comply with this subparagraph shall not bar an action for a temporary restraining order to prevent immediate and irreparable harm from the conduct or activity complained of.

3. The court may, in its discretion, award to the prevailing party or parties costs and reasonable attorneys' fees.

(c) This subsection does not apply when the local government is exclusively providing the specific solid waste collection services itself or pursuant to an exclusive franchise.

(2) SOLID WASTE COLLECTION SERVICES OUTSIDE JURISDICTION.—

(a) Notwithstanding s. [542.235](#), or any other provision of law, a local government that provides solid waste collection services outside its jurisdiction in direct competition with private companies is subject to the same prohibitions against predatory pricing applicable to private companies under ss. [542.18](#) and [542.19](#).

(b) Any person injured by reason of violation of this subsection may sue therefor in the circuit courts of this state and shall be entitled to injunctive relief and to recover the damages and the costs of suit. The court may, in its discretion, award to the prevailing party or parties reasonable attorneys' fees. An action for damages under this subsection must be commenced within 4 years. No person may obtain injunctive relief or recover damages under this subsection for any injury that results from actions taken by a local government in direct response to a natural disaster or similar occurrence for which an emergency is declared by executive order or proclamation of the Governor pursuant to s. [252.36](#) or for which such a declaration might be reasonably anticipated within the area covered by such executive order or proclamation.

(c) As a condition precedent to the institution of an action pursuant to this subsection, the complaining party shall first file with the local government a notice referencing this subsection and setting forth the specific facts upon which the complaint is based and the manner in which the complaining party is affected. Within 30 days after receipt of such complaint, the local government shall respond in writing to the complaining party explaining the corrective action taken, if any. If the local government denies that it has engaged in conduct that is prohibited by this subsection, its response shall include an explanation showing why the conduct complained of does not constitute predatory pricing.

(d) For the purposes of this subsection, the jurisdiction of a county, special district, or solid waste authority shall include all incorporated and unincorporated areas within the county, special district, or solid waste authority.

(3) DISPLACEMENT OF PRIVATE WASTE COMPANIES.—

(a) As used in this subsection, the term "displacement" means a local government's provision of a collection service which prohibits a private company from continuing to provide the same service that it was providing when the decision to displace was made. The term does not include:

1. Competition between the public sector and private companies for individual contracts;
2. Actions by which a local government, at the end of a contract with a private company, refuses to renew the contract and either awards the contract to another private company or decides for any reason to provide the collection service itself;

3. Actions taken against a private company because the company has acted in a manner threatening to the public health or safety or resulting in a substantial public nuisance;

4. Actions taken against a private company because the company has materially breached its contract with the local government;

5. Refusal by a private company to continue operations under the terms and conditions of its existing agreement during the 3-year notice period;

6. Entering into a contract with a private company to provide garbage, trash, or refuse collection which contract is not entered into under an ordinance that displaces or authorizes the displacement of another private company providing garbage, trash, or refuse collection;

7. Situations in which a majority of the property owners in the displacement area petition the governing body to take over the collection service;

8. Situations in which the private companies are licensed or permitted to do business within the local government for a limited time and such license or permit expires and is not renewed by the local government. This subparagraph does not apply to licensing or permitting processes enacted after May 1, 1999, or to occupational licenses; or

9. Annexations, but only to the extent that the provisions of s. [171.062\(4\)](#) apply.

(b) A local government or combination of local governments may not displace a private company that provides garbage, trash, or refuse collection service without first:

1. Holding at least one public hearing seeking comment on the advisability of the local government or combination of local governments providing the service.

2. Providing at least 45 days' written notice of the hearing, delivered by first-class mail to all private companies that provide the service within the jurisdiction.

3. Providing public notice of the hearing.

(c) Following the final public hearing held under paragraph (b), but not later than 1 year after the hearing, the local government may proceed to take those measures necessary to provide the service. A local government shall provide 3 years' notice to a private company before it engages in the actual provision of the service that displaces the company. As an alternative to delaying displacement 3 years, a local government may pay a displaced company an amount equal to the company's preceding 15 months' gross receipts for the displaced service in the displacement area. The 3-year notice period shall lapse as to any private company being displaced when the company ceases to provide service within the displacement area. Nothing in this paragraph prohibits the local government and the company from voluntarily negotiating a different notice period or amount of compensation.

(4) DEFINITIONS.—As used in this section:

(a) "In competition" or "in direct competition" means the vying between a local government and a private company to provide substantially similar solid waste collection services to the same customer.

(b) "Private company" means any entity other than a local government or other unit of government that provides solid waste collection services.

**History.**—s. 1, ch. 2000-304; s. 3, ch. 2002-23.