

By: J. Johnson of Harris

H.B. No. 1435

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to family liaison officers in county jails.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1. Chapter 511, Government Code, is amended by adding Section 511.024 to read as follows:

Sec. 511.024. FAMILY LIAISON OFFICER. (a) The commission shall require the sheriff of a county to designate at least one employee at the county jail to serve as a family liaison officer for the jail to facilitate the maintenance of ties between prisoners and their families for the purpose of reducing recidivism.

(b) In making a designation under Subsection (a), the sheriff shall give preference to employees with experience in social work, psychology, or a related field.

(c) A family liaison officer shall:

(1) provide prisoners' families with information about the classification status, location, and health of prisoners at the county jail; and

(2) notify prisoners within a reasonable time about emergencies involving their families, such as a medical emergency or death in the family, and provide prisoners with other necessary information relating to their families.

(d) A family liaison officer may not disclose information under Subsection (c)(1) about a prisoner's health unless the prisoner has authorized the release of the prisoner's medical

1 information to that family member.

2 SECTION 2. This Act takes effect September 1, 2023.