

By: Bryant

H.B. No. 3427

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to the ombudsman office for the Texas Department of Criminal Justice.

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

SECTION 1. Chapter 493, Government Code, is amended by adding Section 493.0165 to read as follows:

Sec. 493.0165. OMBUDSMAN OFFICE; REPORT. (a) The department shall establish an ombudsman office to assist the department in performing its duties under Section 493.016.

(b) The ombudsman office shall:

(1) establish a process by which an employee of the department may anonymously submit a complaint regarding:

(A) the department;

(B) an inmate;

(C) another employee; or

(D) a facility operated by or under contract with the department;

(2) investigate complaints submitted under Subdivision (1); and

(3) refer complaints submitted under Subdivision (1) involving criminal conduct to the appropriate agency for investigation.

(c) The identity of an employee who submits a complaint under Subsection (b) must remain anonymous unless the employee

1 chooses to disclose the employee's identity.

2 (d) Not later than December 1 of each even-numbered year,
3 the ombudsman office shall prepare and publish on the department's
4 Internet website a report that includes:

5 (1) the number of complaints submitted under
6 Subsection (b) during the two-year period preceding the date of the
7 report;

8 (2) a summary of any trends regarding the complaints;
9 and

10 (3) a description of the actions taken in response to
11 the complaints.

12 (e) The report described by Subsection (d) may not include
13 identifying information about any person involved in a complaint.

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