

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
78R2721 YDB-D

H.B. 861
By: McReynolds (Madla)
Health & Human Services
4/30/2003
Engrossed

DIGEST AND PURPOSE

Emergency Care Attendants (ECA) in the state of Texas are the first level of emergency medical care. They are only allowed to deliver non-invasive emergency medical services such as reading blood pressure, checking pulse rates, dispersing oxygen, applying pressure bandages, repositioning victims, and transporting victims to medical care facilities. Under current law, an individual may become an Emergency Care Attendant by receiving certification through the Texas Department of Health (TDH). In order to get this certificate, TDH requires a person to be at least 18 years of age, successfully complete approved courses, pass a written test, and pay all applicable fees. TDH also requires that an ECA should have either a GED or a high school diploma. Currently, TDH has the authority to provide a waiver on the above-mentioned department requirements. However, many in the community are not aware of this waiver process. H.B. 861 allows an individual who serves as a volunteer emergency care attendant to be exempt from the high school diploma or degree requirement.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

Rulemaking authority is expressly granted to the Texas Department of Health in SECTION 1 (Section 773.046, Health and Safety Code) of this bill.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Section 773.046, Health and Safety Code, as follows:

- (a) Created from existing text.
- (b) Prohibits the Texas Department of Health (TDH) from requiring an individual to have a high school diploma or a high school equivalency certificate for certification as an emergency care attendant under this chapter if the individual certifies that the individual will serve only as an emergency care attendant volunteer during the certification period.
- (c) Requires TDH to adopt rules as necessary to administer this section.

SECTION 2. Requires TDH to adopt the rules necessary under Section 773.046, Health and Safety Code, as amended by this Act, not later than January 1, 2004.

SECTION 3. Makes application of this Act prospective to January 1, 2004.

SECTION 4. Effective date: September 1, 2003.