

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

Senate Research Center  
78R3856 YDB-D

S.B. 333  
By: Zaffirini  
Health & Human Services  
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As Filed

### **DIGEST AND PURPOSE**

Currently, Texas law sets the educational requirement to become a Licensed Chemical Dependency Counselor (LCDC) at a high school degree, or its equivalent, and there is little structure governing the registration of interns. Strengthened licensure requirements and rules governing interns will allow Texas to benefit from substance abuse counselors who are highly trained. As proposed, S.B. 333 increases the educational requirements for licensure as an LCDC by requiring an associate degree and course work that pertains to substance abuse. S.B. 333 also eliminates the requirement for a field work practicum and grants the Texas Commission on Alcohol and Drug Abuse authority over registering interns. The new requirements only apply to new applicants.

### **RULEMAKING AUTHORITY**

Rulemaking authority is expressly granted to the Texas Commission on Alcohol and Drug Abuse in SECTION 1 (Section 504.057, Occupations Code) of this bill. Rulemaking authority previously granted to the Texas Commission on Alcohol and Drug Abuse is modified in SECTION 1 (Section 504.057, Occupations Code) of this bill.

### **SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS**

SECTION 1. Amends Section 504.057, Occupations Code, as follows:

Sec. 504.057. New heading: COUNSELOR INTERNS. Requires the Texas Commission on Alcohol and Drug Abuse (TCADA) to adopt rules governing registration eligibility requirements for counselor interns.

(b) Authorizes TCADA to obtain criminal history information relating to a counselor intern or an applicant to be a counselor intern from the Department of Public Safety and the Federal Bureau of Investigation. Deletes text specifying to whom this section previously applied.

(c) Redesignates Subsection (b) as Subsection (c). Makes a conforming change.

SECTION 2. Amends Section 504.152, Occupations Code, to increase the licensing requirements from a high school diploma or equivalent to an associate or more advanced degree and to specify the completion of a commission-approved course load that relates to chemical dependency, rather than a specific number of approved hours. Deletes the requirement for 300 hours of supervised field work.

SECTION 3. Amends Section 504.153(a), Occupations Code, to include in the criteria for exemption from the requirement to have a commission approved course load, a degree beyond a baccalaureate degree. Makes nonsubstantive and conforming changes.

SECTION 4. Requires TCADA to establish and adopt rules called for in this Act not later than March 1, 2004.

SECTION 5. (a) Authorizes a chemical dependency counselor licensed before this Act's effective date to renew that license without complying with the changes made by this Act.

(b) Provides that the changes in this Act only apply to an initial license application, except as provided by Subsection (c) of this section. Continues the effectiveness of previously existing law for license applications made before this Act's effective date.

(c) Makes application of this Act prospective.

SECTION 6. Effective date: September 1, 2004.

Effective date, SECTIONS 1 and 4: September 1, 2003.