

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

C.S.H.B. 3225  
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Human Services  
Committee Report (Substituted)

### **BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE**

The International Certification & Reciprocity Consortium (IC&RC) sets the international standards of practice in addiction counseling, prevention, and clinical supervision through testing and credentialing of addiction professionals. The IC&RC exam used in Texas has been redesigned to test in a written format the skills previously tested in the oral exam. Because IC&RC no longer requires the written examination, there is no longer a need to keep the oral examination requirement in Texas to ensure reciprocity with other states. Current law also requires chemical dependency counselors to have access to an approved peer assistance network to receive or renew a chemical dependency counseling license, but the Department of State Health Services does not require applicants or licensees to provide substantiating documentation of such access.

C.S.H.B. 3225 removes the requirement that a person pass an oral examination approved by the Department of State Health Services to be eligible for a chemical dependency counseling license, requires verification of enrollment or membership in a peer assistance program, and reduces the period of ineligibility for certain applicants.

### **RULEMAKING AUTHORITY**

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, department, agency, or institution.

### **ANALYSIS**

C.S.H.B. 3225 amends the Occupations Code to remove the requirement that a person pass an oral examination approved by the Department of State Health Services (DSHS) to be eligible for a chemical dependency counseling license. The bill requires a person seeking a license to provide a certificate, rather than written assurance, verifying to the department that the applicant is enrolled in or is a member of, rather than has access to, a peer assistance program. The bill requires the department to waive the verifying certificate requirement if the license holder is not actively engaged in the practice of chemical dependency counseling.

C.S.H.B. 3225 reduces from five years to three years before the date of application the period of ineligibility for a chemical dependency counseling license, registration, or certification issued by the department for a person who has been convicted or placed under community supervision for an offense equal to a Class B misdemeanor specified by rule of the executive commissioner of the Health and Human Services Commission. The bill makes conforming changes.

C.S.H.B. 3225 provides that an applicant for a license who, on or after June 1, 2008, passes a written examination approved by DSHS is not required to pass the oral examination required before the effective date of the bill.

**EFFECTIVE DATE**

On passage, or, if the act does not receive the necessary vote, the act takes effect September 1, 2009.

**COMPARISON OF ORIGINAL AND SUBSTITUTE**

C.S.H.B. 3225 adds a provision not in the original requiring the Department of State Health Services to waive the requirement that a person provide a certificate verifying the person's enrollment or membership in a peer assistance program as a condition of eligibility for a chemical dependency license if the license holder is not actively engaged in the practice of chemical dependency counseling.