

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
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H.B. 1191
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Health & Human Services
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Engrossed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Using recent census data, the Department of State Health Services has estimated that there are nearly half a million adults and more than 150,000 children living with a mental illness in Texas. There is a great need in Texas for better resources and information regarding housing for persons with mental illness. Without a roof over their heads, this population experiences heightened levels of physical health problems and substance use conditions. These persons commonly cycle in and out of costly criminal justice facilities and hospital emergency rooms. It is necessary to increase the accessibility of information related to the housing options that are available for individuals with mental illness.

While the mission of the Texas Information and Referral Network Internet site is to assist Texas citizens in obtaining necessary health and human services, the site does not provide information about housing for persons with mental illness. This bill provides a central location defining the different housing options and/or facilities for persons with mental illness that may be available within a geographic area.

H.B. 1191 requires the state's 2-1-1 Internet site to contain a searchable listing of available housing options for persons with mental illness with a definition for each type of housing and an explanation of the populations of persons with mental illness generally served by that type of housing. It will help persons and families navigate the system and will increase the capacity of professionals to provide appropriate linkages to housing. It will make it possible for persons to find the specific type of housing they are looking for, helping to meet the particular needs of Texans with mental illness.

H.B. 1191 amends current law relating to certain information about housing for persons with mental illness provided through the Texas Information and Referral Network Internet site.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

This bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, institution, or agency.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Subchapter B, Chapter 531, Government Code, by adding Section 531.03132, as follows:

Sec. 531.03132. ELECTRONIC ACCESS TO REFERRAL INFORMATION ABOUT HOUSING OPTIONS FOR PERSONS WITH MENTAL ILLNESS. (a) Requires the Health and Human Services Commission to make available through the Texas Information and Referral Network Internet site established under Section 531.0313 (Electronic Access to Health and Human Services Referral Information) information regarding housing options for persons with mental illness provided by public or private entities throughout the state. Provides that the Internet site will serve as a single point of access through which a person may be directed on how or where to apply for housing for persons with mental illness in the person's community. Provides that, in this subsection, "private entity" includes any provider of housing specifically for persons with mental illness other than a state agency, municipality, county, or other political subdivision of

this state, regardless of whether the provider accepts payment for providing housing for persons with mental illness.

(b) Requires that the Internet site, to the extent resources are available, be geographically indexed and designed to inform a person about the housing options for persons with mental illness provided in the area where the person lives.

(c) Requires that the Internet site contain a searchable listing of available housing options for persons with mental illness by type, with a definition for each type of housing and an explanation of the populations of persons with mental illness generally served by that type of housing. Requires that the list contain at a minimum certain types of housing for persons with mental illness. Sets forth minimum types of housing for persons with mental illness that the list must include.

(d) Requires that the Internet site, for each housing facility named in the listing of available housing options for persons with mental illness, indicate whether the provider that operates the housing facility is licensed by the state.

(e) Requires that the Internet site display a disclaimer that the information provided is for informational purposes only and is not an endorsement or recommendation of any type of housing or any housing facility.

(f) Requires that each entity providing housing specifically for persons with mental illness in this state, including the Department of State Health Services, municipalities, counties, other political subdivisions of this state, and private entities, cooperate with the Texas Information and Referral Network as necessary in the administration of this section.

SECTION 2. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2013.