

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
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S.B. 1356
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Criminal Justice
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As Filed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Each year, roughly half of youth referred to Texas's juvenile justice facilities have experienced trauma. Trauma may include emotional, physical, and sexual abuse; neglect; and deprivation. Traumatized youth often have over-reactive responses to 'triggers,' which can be mistaken for disobedience by untrained staff in juvenile facilities, leading to disciplinary actions such as seclusions and restraints, which can in turn re-trigger these traumatized youth. This negative cycle pushes many traumatized youth into increasingly severe placements in secure facilities. In fact, research in Texas shows that a youth's past experience with trauma is the single largest predictor of how deeply involved that youth will become in the Texas juvenile justice system.

Current law does not require the Texas Juvenile Justice Department (TJJD) or county juvenile departments to train appropriate staff in trauma-informed care. This bill requires TJJD and county juvenile departments to include trauma-informed care in their existing training programs for appropriate staff.

As proposed, S.B. 1356 amends current law relating to requiring trauma-informed care training for certain staff of county and state juvenile facilities.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

Rulemaking authority previously granted to the Texas Juvenile Justice Board is modified in SECTION 1 (Section 221.002, Human Resources Code) of this bill.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Section 221.002, Human Resources Code, by adding Subsection (c-1), as follows:

(c-1) Requires the Texas Juvenile Justice Board (TJJB), in adopting rules under Subsection (a)(3) (relating to requiring TJJB to adopt reasonable rules that provide certain training and certification standards for certain officers and personnel), to require probation officers, detention officers, and court-supervised community-based program personnel to receive trauma-informed care training. Requires that the training provide specialized skill for working with juveniles who have experienced traumatic events.

SECTION 2. Amends Subchapter A, Chapter 221, Human Resources Code, by adding Section 221.0061, as follows:

Sec. 221.0061. TRAUMA-INFORMED CARE TRAINING. Requires the Texas Juvenile Justice Department (TJJD) to include trauma-informed care training in the preservice or in-service training TJJD provides for juvenile probation officers.

SECTION 3. Amends Section 242.009(b), Human Resources Code, as follows:

(b) Requires that the training provided by TJJD provide each juvenile correctional officer employed by TJJD with information and instruction related to the officer's duties, including information and instruction concerning certain topics, including trauma-informed care. Makes nonsubstantive changes.

SECTION 4. Effective date: September 1, 2013.