

By: King of Taylor, Burkett

H.B. No. 19

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to a preventive services program and mental health programs for veterans and military families.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1. Subtitle E, Title 2, Human Resources Code, is amended by adding Chapter 53 to read as follows:

CHAPTER 53. PREVENTIVE SERVICES FOR VETERANS AND MILITARY FAMILIES

Sec. 53.001. DEFINITIONS. In this chapter:

(1) "Department" means the Department of Family and Protective Services.

(2) "Veteran" means a person who has served in:

(A) the army, navy, air force, coast guard, or marine corps of the United States;

(B) the state military forces as defined by Section 431.001, Government Code; or

(C) an auxiliary service of one of those branches of the armed forces.

Sec. 53.002. VETERANS AND MILITARY FAMILIES PREVENTIVE SERVICES PROGRAM. (a) The department shall develop and implement a preventive services program to serve veterans and military families who have committed or experienced or who are at a high risk of:

(1) family violence; or

(2) abuse or neglect.

(b) The program must:

1 (1) be designed to coordinate with community-based
2 organizations to provide prevention services;

3 (2) include a prevention component and an early
4 intervention component;

5 (3) include collaboration with services for child
6 welfare, services for early childhood education, and other child
7 and family services programs; and

8 (4) coordinate with the community collaboration
9 initiative developed under Subchapter I, Chapter 434, Government
10 Code, and committees formed by local communities as part of that
11 initiative.

12 (c) The program must be established initially as a pilot
13 program in areas of the state in which the department considers the
14 implementation practicable. The department shall evaluate the
15 outcomes of the pilot program and ensure that the program is
16 producing positive results before implementing the program
17 throughout the state.

18 (d) The department shall evaluate the program and prepare an
19 annual report on the outcomes of the program. The department shall
20 publish the report on the department's Internet website.

21 SECTION 2. Chapter 434, Government Code, is amended by
22 adding Subchapters H and I to read as follows:

23 SUBCHAPTER H. STATEWIDE COORDINATION OF MENTAL HEALTH

24 PROGRAM FOR VETERANS

25 Sec. 434.351. DEFINITIONS. In this subchapter:

26 (1) "Commission" means the Texas Veterans Commission.

27 (2) "Peer" means a person who is a veteran or a

1 veteran's family member.

2 (3) "Veteran" means a person who has served in:

3 (A) the army, navy, air force, coast guard, or
4 marine corps of the United States;

5 (B) the state military forces as defined by
6 Section 431.001; or

7 (C) an auxiliary service of one of those branches
8 of the armed forces.

9 (4) "Volunteer coordinator" means a person who
10 recruits and retains veterans, peers, and volunteers to participate
11 in the mental health program for veterans and related activities.

12 Sec. 434.352. DUTIES. (a) The commission and the
13 Department of State Health Services shall coordinate to administer
14 the mental health program for veterans developed under Chapter
15 1001, Health and Safety Code.

16 (b) For the mental health program for veterans, the
17 commission shall:

18 (1) provide training to volunteer coordinators and
19 peers in accordance with Section 434.353;

20 (2) provide technical assistance to volunteer
21 coordinators and peers;

22 (3) recruit, train, and communicate with
23 community-based therapists, community-based organizations, and
24 faith-based organizations; and

25 (4) coordinate services for justice involved
26 veterans.

27 (c) The executive director of the commission shall appoint a

1 program director to administer the mental health program for
2 veterans.

3 (d) The commission shall provide appropriate facilities in
4 support of the mental health program for veterans to the extent
5 funding is available for that purpose.

6 Sec. 434.353. TRAINING AND CERTIFICATION. (a) The
7 commission shall develop and implement methods for providing
8 volunteer coordinator certification training to volunteer
9 coordinators, including providing training for initial
10 certification and recertification and providing continuing
11 education.

12 (b) The commission shall manage and coordinate the peer
13 training program to include initial training, advanced training,
14 certification, and continuing education for peers associated with
15 the mental health program for veterans.

16 SUBCHAPTER I. COMMUNITY COLLABORATION INITIATIVE

17 Sec. 434.401. COMMUNITY COLLABORATION. (a) The commission
18 and the Department of State Health Services shall include as a part
19 of the mental health program for veterans described by Section
20 434.352(a) an initiative to encourage local communities to conduct
21 cross-sector collaboration to synchronize locally accessible
22 resources available for veterans and military service members.

23 (b) The initiative must be designed to encourage local
24 communities to form a committee that is tasked with developing a
25 plan to identify and support the needs of veterans and military
26 service members residing in their community. The commission may
27 designate general areas of focus for the initiative.

1 SECTION 3. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives
2 a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as
3 provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this
4 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this
5 Act takes effect September 1, 2015.