

By: King of Taylor

H.B. No. 19

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to mental health and preventive services 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. PREVENTION 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

1           (2) abuse or neglect.

2           (b) The program must:

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

5           (2) include a home-visiting program component;

6           (3) include a prevention component and an early  
7 intervention component;

8           (4) include collaboration with services for child  
9 welfare, early childhood education, and other child and family  
10 services programs; and

11           (5) coordinate with the community collaboration  
12 initiative developed under Subchapter I, Chapter 434, Government  
13 Code, and committees formed by local communities as part of that  
14 initiative.

15           (c) The program may be established initially as a pilot  
16 program, at the discretion of the department, in areas of the state  
17 in which the department considers the implementation practicable.

18           Sec. 53.003. INFORMATION COORDINATION. The department  
19 shall undertake to automate and upgrade computerized research  
20 systems and database systems for the purposes of prevention and  
21 early intervention components of the program established under  
22 Section 53.002, including coordination and data matching with the  
23 Department of State Health Services.

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

26           SUBCHAPTER H. STATEWIDE COORDINATION OF THE MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAM  
27   FOR VETERANS

1        Sec. 434.351. DEFINITIONS. In this subchapter:

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

3            (2) "Peer" means a person who is a veteran or a  
4 veteran's family member.

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

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

8                    (B) the state military forces as defined by  
9 Section 431.001; or

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

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

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

19            (b) For the mental health intervention program for  
20 veterans, the commission shall:

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

23                   (2) provide technical assistance to volunteer  
24 coordinators and peers;

25                   (3) recruit, train, and communicate with  
26 community-based therapists, community-based organizations, and  
27 faith-based organizations; and

1           (4) coordinate services for justice involved  
2 veterans.

3           (c) The executive director of the commission shall appoint a  
4 program director to administer the mental health program for  
5 veterans.

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

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

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

19           SUBCHAPTER I. COMMUNITY COLLABORATION INITIATIVE

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

26           (b) The initiative must be designed to encourage local  
27 communities to form a committee that is tasked with developing a

1 plan to identify and support the needs of veterans and military  
2 services members residing in their community.

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