

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
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H.B. 2904
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Health & Human Services
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Engrossed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Community resource coordination groups (CRCGs) are county-based groups comprised of public and private agencies who work with individuals and families to develop a customized, integrated individual service plan for children and youth with complex needs. They are made up of representatives from public and private health and human services agencies, schools, juvenile justice agencies, private sector providers, families and caregivers. CRCGs were established by the Texas Legislature in 1987, but their program model has not been significantly updated since its inception. As a result, CRCG coverage is inconsistent across the state. Some counties have robust CRCGs that meet regularly, some CRCGs meet infrequently, and some counties are no longer served by a CRCG. These inconsistencies, coupled with the fact that there are too many instances in which efforts are being duplicated by state agencies, suggest a need for improved cooperation, so to provide better assistance for our Texas children.

H.B. 2904 addresses this by tasking the Health and Human Services Commission, the Department of Family and Protective Services, the Department of State Health Services, and the Texas Education Agency to coordinate services administered to our Texas children. As part of this coordination effort, the agencies shall provide guidance to local agencies and service providers participating in CRCGs on the range of programs and services available across systems, best practices for service planning and delivery, information sharing, resource development, and promoting the delivery of effective services in the least restrictive setting appropriate.

H.B. 2904 amends current law relating to the memorandum of understanding among certain agencies to coordinate services provided to persons needing multiagency services.

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 Section 531.055, Government Code, by amending Subsections (a), (b), and (e) and adding Subsection (f), as follows:

(a) Requires the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC), the Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS), the Department of State Health Services (DSHS), and the Texas Education Agency (TEA), rather than each health and human services agency, the Texas Correctional Office on Offenders with Medical or Mental Impairments (TCOOMMI), the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ), the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs (TDHCA), the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC), and the Texas Juvenile Justice Department (TJJD) to enter into a joint memorandum of understanding to promote a system of local-level interagency staffing groups to identify and coordinate services for persons needing multiagency services to be provided in the least restrictive setting appropriate, using residential, institutional, or congregate care settings only as a last resort. Requires the division within HHSC that coordinates the policy and delivery of mental health services to oversee the development and implementation of the joint memorandum of understanding.

(b) Requires that the memorandum:

(1) clarify the statutory responsibilities of each agency in relation to persons needing multiagency services, including subcategories for different services such as:

(A) family preservation and strengthening, rather than prevention, family preservation, and strengthening;

(B) physical and behavioral health care;

(C) prevention and early intervention services, including services designed to prevent child abuse, neglect, or delinquency, truancy, or school dropout;

(D) diversion from juvenile or criminal justice involvement;

(E) housing;

(F) and (G) makes nonsubstantive changes;

(H) residential care, rather than diagnosis and evaluation, residential care;

(I) makes a nonsubstantive change;

(J) information and referral, rather than information and referral, medical care; and

(K) investigation services;

(2) through (13) makes no changes to these subdivisions.

(e) Requires the agencies to ensure that a state-level interagency staffing group provides:

(1) information and guidance to local-level interagency staffing groups regarding the availability of programs and resources in the community and best practices for addressing the needs of persons with complex needs in the least restrictive setting appropriate; and

(2) creates this subdivision from existing text and redesignates Subdivisions (1), (2), and (3) as Paragraphs (A), (B), and (C), respectively.

(f) Defines "least restrictive setting."

SECTION 2. Requires that HHSC, DFPS, DSHS, TEA, TCOOMMI, TDCJ, TDHCA, TWC, and TJJD, as soon as practicable after the effective date of this Act, but not later than December 1, 2017, update the joint memorandum of understanding required under Section 531.055, Government Code, as amended by this Act.

SECTION 3. Effective date: September 1, 2017.