

AN ACT

relating to the mental health program for veterans and to the authority to establish a trauma affected veterans clinical care and research center at The University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio.

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

SECTION 1. Subchapter D, Chapter 74, Education Code, is amended by adding Section 74.155 to read as follows:

Sec. 74.155. NATIONAL CENTER FOR WARRIOR RESILIENCY.

(a) In this section:

(1) "Board" means the board of regents of The University of Texas System.

(2) "Center" means the National Center for Warrior Resiliency.

(b) The board may establish the National Center for Warrior Resiliency at The University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio for purposes of:

(1) researching issues relating to the detection, prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of combat-related post-traumatic stress disorder and comorbid conditions; and

(2) providing clinical care to enhance the psychological resiliency of military personnel and veterans.

(c) The board may solicit, accept, and administer gifts and grants from any public or private source for the use and benefit of

1 the center.

2 SECTION 2. Section 434.351, Government Code, is amended by
3 adding Subdivision (2-a) to read as follows:

4 (2-a) "Peer service coordinator" means a person who
5 recruits and retains veterans, peers, and volunteers to participate
6 in the mental health program for veterans and related activities.

7 SECTION 3. Section 434.352(b), Government Code, is amended
8 to read as follows:

9 (b) For the mental health program for veterans, the
10 commission shall:

11 (1) provide training to peer service [~~volunteer~~]
12 coordinators and peers in accordance with Section 434.353;

13 (2) provide technical assistance to peer service
14 [~~volunteer~~] coordinators and peers;

15 (3) identify [~~recruit~~], train, and communicate with
16 community-based licensed mental health professionals [~~therapists~~],
17 community-based organizations, and faith-based organizations; and

18 (4) coordinate services for justice involved
19 veterans.

20 SECTION 4. Section 434.353(a), Government Code, is amended
21 to read as follows:

22 (a) The commission shall develop and implement methods for
23 providing peer service [~~volunteer~~] coordinator certification
24 training to peer service [~~volunteer~~] coordinators, including
25 providing training for initial certification and recertification
26 and providing continuing education.

27 SECTION 5. Section 1001.221, Health and Safety Code, is

1 amended by adding Subdivision (1-a) to read as follows:

2 (1-a) "Peer service coordinator" means a person who
3 recruits and retains veterans, peers, and volunteers to participate
4 in the mental health program for veterans and related activities.

5 SECTION 6. Section 1001.222(a), Health and Safety Code, is
6 amended to read as follows:

7 (a) The department shall develop a mental health
8 intervention program for veterans. The program must include:

9 (1) peer-to-peer counseling;

10 (2) access to licensed mental health professionals for
11 peer service [~~volunteer~~] coordinators and peers;

12 (3) training approved by the department for peer
13 service coordinators, licensed mental health professionals, and
14 peers;

15 (4) technical assistance for peer service [~~volunteer~~]
16 coordinators, licensed mental health professionals, and peers;

17 (5) identification [~~grants to regional and local~~
18 ~~organizations providing services under this subchapter,~~

19 [~~(6) recruitment~~], retention, and screening of
20 community-based licensed mental health professionals [~~therapists~~];

21 (6) [~~(7)~~] suicide prevention training for peer
22 service [~~volunteer~~] coordinators and peers; and

23 (7) [~~(8)~~] veteran jail diversion services, including
24 veterans treatment courts.

25 SECTION 7. Section 1001.224, Health and Safety Code, is
26 amended to read as follows:

27 Sec. 1001.224. ANNUAL REPORT. Not later than December 1 of

1 each year, the department shall submit a report to the governor and
2 the legislature that includes:

3 (1) the number of veterans who received services
4 through the mental health program for veterans;

5 (2) the number of peers and peer service [~~volunteer~~]
6 coordinators trained;

7 [~~a summary of the grants awarded and services~~
8 ~~provided through those grants;~~

9 [~~(4)~~] an evaluation of the services provided under
10 this subchapter; and

11 (4) [~~(5)~~] recommendations for program improvements.

12 SECTION 8. The following laws are repealed:

13 (1) Section 434.351(4), Government Code;

14 (2) Section 1001.221(3), Health and Safety Code; and

15 (3) Section 1001.223, Health and Safety Code.

16 SECTION 9. This Act takes effect September 1, 2017.

President of the Senate

Speaker of the House

I hereby certify that S.B. No. 27 passed the Senate on March 28, 2017, by the following vote: Yeas 31, Nays 0; May 25, 2017, Senate refused to concur in House amendments and requested appointment of Conference Committee; May 26, 2017, House granted request of the Senate; May 28, 2017, Senate adopted Conference Committee Report by the following vote: Yeas 31, Nays 0.

Secretary of the Senate

I hereby certify that S.B. No. 27 passed the House, with amendments, on May 18, 2017, by the following vote: Yeas 137, Nays 8, two present not voting; May 26, 2017, House granted request of the Senate for appointment of Conference Committee; May 28, 2017, House adopted Conference Committee Report by the following vote: Yeas 147, Nays 0, two present not voting.

Chief Clerk of the House

Approved:

Date

Governor