

AN ACT

relating to the availability of and access to certain programs and services for persons in the custody of the Texas Department of Criminal Justice.

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

SECTION 1. Chapter 493, Government Code, is amended by adding Section 493.032 to read as follows:

Sec. 493.032. AVAILABILITY OF PEER SUPPORT SERVICES. (a) The department shall adopt a policy to increase the availability of formal and informal peer support services, including certified peer specialist services, to a person confined in a facility operated by or under contract with the department, including a state jail felony facility, substance abuse felony punishment facility, or intermediate sanction facility.

(b) The policy adopted under Subsection (a) must:

(1) allow for persons who have previously been convicted of an offense, including releasees on parole or mandatory supervision and defendants on community supervision, to serve as certified peer specialists in a facility described by Subsection (a);

(2) specify the conditions under which a person described by Subdivision (1) may serve as a certified peer specialist; and

(3) allow for persons confined in a facility described

1 by Subsection (a) to serve in a peer support role, provided that the
2 persons are trained and supervised by a community-based
3 organization described by Subsection (c).

4 (c) In implementing the policy adopted under Subsection
5 (a), the department shall:

6 (1) collaborate with community-based organizations
7 that provide peer specialist training, including training in any of
8 the following peer support specialties:

9 (A) certified peer specialist;

10 (B) certified peer reentry specialist;

11 (C) certified peer recovery specialist; or

12 (D) any other peer support specialty recognized
13 by the Health and Human Services Commission; and

14 (2) encourage and assist persons described by
15 Subsection (b)(3), with particular emphasis on persons who have
16 been involved with programs or services relating to substance abuse
17 or behavioral health, to participate in training described by
18 Subdivision (1).

19 SECTION 2. Subchapter A, Chapter 501, Government Code, is
20 amended by adding Section 501.026 to read as follows:

21 Sec. 501.026. ACCESS TO PROGRAMS BY FEMALE INMATES. (a)
22 The department shall develop and implement policies that increase
23 and promote a female inmate's access to programs offered to inmates
24 in the custody of the department, including educational,
25 vocational, substance use treatment, rehabilitation, life skills
26 training, and prerelease programs. The department may not reduce
27 or limit a male inmate's access to a program to meet the

1 requirements of this section.

2 (b) Not later than December 31 of each year, the department
3 shall:

4 (1) prepare and submit to the governor, the lieutenant
5 governor, the speaker of the house of representatives, each
6 standing committee of the legislature having primary jurisdiction
7 over the department, and the reentry task force described by
8 Section 501.098 a written report that includes:

9 (A) a description of any department policies that
10 were created, modified, or eliminated during the preceding year to
11 meet the requirements of this section; and

12 (B) a list of programs available to female
13 inmates in the custody of the department during the preceding year;
14 and

15 (2) publish the report on the department's Internet
16 website.

17 SECTION 3. Not later than September 1, 2020, the Texas
18 Department of Criminal Justice shall adopt and implement the policy
19 required by Section 493.032, Government Code, as added by this Act.

20 SECTION 4. (a) As soon as practicable after the effective
21 date of this Act, the Texas Department of Criminal Justice shall
22 develop and implement the policies required by Section 501.026,
23 Government Code, as added by this Act.

24 (b) The Texas Department of Criminal Justice shall submit
25 the first report required by Section 501.026, Government Code, as
26 added by this Act, not later than December 31, 2020.

27 SECTION 5. This Act takes effect September 1, 2019.

President of the Senate

Speaker of the House

I certify that H.B. No. 3227 was passed by the House on April 17, 2019, by the following vote: Yeas 143, Nays 0, 1 present, not voting; and that the House concurred in Senate amendments to H.B. No. 3227 on May 24, 2019, by the following vote: Yeas 140, Nays 2, 2 present, not voting.

Chief Clerk of the House

I certify that H.B. No. 3227 was passed by the Senate, with amendments, on May 22, 2019, by the following vote: Yeas 31, Nays 0.

Secretary of the Senate

APPROVED: _____

Date

Governor