By: Bell of Montgomery H.B. No. 4147

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to required mental health awareness training for first responders.

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

SECTION 1. Subtitle B, Title 9, Health and Safety Code, is amended by adding Chapter 786 to read as follows:

CHAPTER 786. MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS TRAINING FOR FIRST RESPONDERS

Sec. 786.0001. DEFINITIONS. In this chapter:

(1) "First responder" has the meaning assigned by Section 421.095, Government Code.

(2) "First responder training program" means a program that provides training required for certification or licensure as a first responder, including the training required under:

(A) Chapter 773;

(B) Chapter 419, Government Code; and

(C) Chapter 1701, Occupations Code.

Sec. 786.0002. MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS TRAINING REQUIRED. (a) A person who provides to first responders and first responder trainees a first responder training program shall:

(1) include as part of the program at least six hours of training on mental health awareness that covers:

(A) basic mental health issues for first responders;

(B) the impact of chronic trauma on a first responder's duties;

(C) signs and symptoms of mental illness; and

(D) strategies for first responders to attain wellness and resiliency; and

(2) require first responders and first responder trainees to complete the training described by Subdivision (1) as part of the training program.

(b) In providing the training described by Subsection (a), a person who provides a first responder training program must use a mental health awareness training curriculum developed or adopted under Section 786.0003.

Sec. 786.0003. MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS TRAINING CURRICULUM. (a) The Health and Human Services Commission shall develop or adopt a curriculum for the first responder mental health awareness training required by Section 786.0002. The commission shall collaborate with agencies that license or certify first responders in the development or adoption of the curriculum.

(b) Each state agency that licenses or certifies first responders shall ensure that the applicable first responder training programs provided to first responders and first responder trainees use the mental health awareness training curriculum developed or adopted by the commission under this section.

SECTION 2. As soon as practicable after the effective date of this Act:

(1) the Health and Human Services Commission shall develop or adopt the first responder mental health awareness

training curriculum required by Section 786.0003, Health and Safety Code, as added by this Act; and

(2) each state agency that licenses or certifies first responders subject to Chapter 786, Health and Safety Code, as added by this Act, shall ensure that:

(A) each first responder training program subject to the chapter includes the mental health awareness training and curriculum required by that chapter; and

(B) each first responder and first responder trainee subject to the chapter completes the required training.

SECTION 3. This Act takes effect September 1, 2019.