

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
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H.B. 2903
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Veteran Affairs & Border Security
5/17/2021
Engrossed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Many veterans in Texas face mental health consequences as a result of their service. Consequently, loved ones of these veterans may feel ill-equipped or overwhelmed as they attempt to provide support, as caring for someone with a mental illness can take a physical, mental, and emotional toll.

H.B. 2903 would require the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) and the Texas Veterans Commission (TVC) to jointly produce and make publicly available an instruction guide for family members and caregivers of veterans who have mental health illnesses. The bill would require the instruction guide to include general education about different mental health disorders; techniques for handling crisis situations and administering mental health first aid; techniques for coping with the stress of living with a person with a mental health disorder; and information about related services available for family members and caregivers of veterans who have mental health illnesses provided by HHSC, TVC, other state agencies, community organizations, and mental health services providers.

H.B. 2903 amends current law relating to an instruction guide for family members and caregivers of veterans who have mental health disorders.

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 Subchapter B, Chapter 531, Government Code, by adding Section 531.0932, as follows:

Sec. 531.0932. INSTRUCTION GUIDE FOR FAMILY MEMBERS AND CAREGIVERS OF VETERANS WHO HAVE MENTAL HEALTH DISORDERS. (a) Requires the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) and the Texas Veterans Commission (TVC) jointly to produce and make publicly available an instruction guide for family members and caregivers of veterans who have mental health disorders.

(b) Requires that the instruction guide produced under this section include:

- (1) general education about different mental health disorders, including instruction intended to improve understanding about the experience of persons suffering from those mental health disorders;
- (2) techniques for handling crisis situations and administering mental health first aid to persons suffering from mental health disorders;
- (3) techniques for coping with the stress of living with a person with a mental health disorder; and

(4) information about related services available for family members and caregivers of veterans who have mental health disorders that are provided by HHSC, TVC, other state agencies, community organizations, and mental health services providers.

(c) Requires HHSC and TVC each to publish the guide produced under this section on the respective agency's Internet website.

SECTION 2. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2021.