

By: Neave

H.B. No. 3553

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to a grant program for mobile crisis outreach teams.

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

SECTION 1. Subchapter B, Chapter 531, Government Code, is amended by adding Section 531.09915 to read as follows:

Sec. 531.09915. GRANT PROGRAM FOR MOBILE CRISIS OUTREACH TEAMS. (a) In this section, "mobile crisis outreach team" means a group of mental health professionals who assist adults and children who are experiencing a mental health crisis by providing a variety of services.

(b) The executive commissioner shall establish and administer a mobile crisis outreach team grant program to grant money to municipalities and counties to establish local agencies that, in partnership with local law enforcement and local mental health authorities, provide an alternate response program under which a mobile crisis outreach team may be deployed in the municipality or county to appropriate situations determined not to require police intervention, for the purpose of reducing the number of incarcerations by the municipality or county of individuals with:

(1) mental illness;

(2) substance use disorders; or

(3) intellectual or developmental disabilities.

(c) A grant application from a municipality or county to the

1 commission must be submitted on a form prescribed by the commission
2 and include a statement from the governing body of the municipality
3 or county regarding the municipal or county proposal to establish
4 an alternate response program that includes:

5 (1) training 9-1-1 emergency service dispatchers to
6 distinguish between situations in which the dispatcher must deploy
7 local law enforcement and situations in which a mobile crisis
8 outreach team may be deployed instead;

9 (2) creating collaborative training opportunities to
10 increase mental health and trauma awareness for emergency medical
11 services providers, local law enforcement, and mobile crisis
12 outreach teams;

13 (3) strengthening community engagement to raise
14 awareness about mobile crisis outreach teams, including by
15 establishing relationships between mobile crisis outreach teams
16 and:

17 (A) schools;

18 (B) child protective services providers;

19 (C) religious organizations;

20 (D) nonprofit food bank or food pantries;

21 (E) community health centers;

22 (F) recreation centers; and

23 (G) shelters designed to provide temporary
24 living accommodations, including:

25 (i) welfare hotels;

26 (ii) congregate shelters; and

27 (iii) transitional housing for persons with

1 mental illness;

2 (4) ensuring mobile crisis outreach teams provide
3 appropriate care to individuals, especially individuals who lack
4 adequate health insurance coverage, including by identifying
5 options for individuals to receive care through:

6 (A) shelters, as defined by Section 42.201, Human
7 Resources Code;

8 (B) crisis residential programs;

9 (C) treatment centers;

10 (D) after hours clinics; and

11 (E) inpatient and outpatient treatment programs;

12 (5) promoting access to any available free or
13 affordable care through community mental health services
14 providers;

15 (6) increasing the availability of public
16 transportation and other transportation options for individuals
17 who require mental health services;

18 (7) employing as mobile crisis outreach team members
19 individuals who:

20 (A) hold degrees in relevant behavioral health
21 fields and have received appropriate training to serve on a mobile
22 crisis outreach team; or

23 (B) are licensed mental health professionals;
24 and

25 (8) providing comprehensive and continuing training
26 to employees of mobile crisis outreach teams about:

27 (A) suicide;

- 1 (B) risk assessment;
- 2 (C) crisis intervention;
- 3 (D) issues relevant to marginalized populations;
- 4 and
- 5 (E) bias awareness.

6 (d) The executive commissioner shall develop criteria for
7 the evaluation of applications submitted under this section and the
8 selection of recipients for a grant under the mobile crisis
9 outreach team grant program. The executive commissioner shall award
10 grants on a competitive basis.

11 (e) A grant awarded under this section may not exceed \$5
12 million.

13 (f) A municipality or county that receives a grant under
14 this section is required to leverage funds in an amount:

15 (1) equal to 50 percent of the grant amount if:

16 (A) the county has a population of less than
17 250,000; or

18 (B) the municipality is located in a county with
19 a population of less than 250,000;

20 (2) equal to 100 percent of the grant amount if:

21 (A) the county has a population of 250,000 or
22 more; or

23 (B) the municipality is located in a county with
24 a population of 250,000 or more; and

25 (3) equal to the percentage of the grant amount
26 otherwise required by this subsection for the largest county in
27 which a mobile crisis outreach team is located if the mobile crisis

1 outreach team is located in more than one county.

2 (g) A municipality or county that receives a grant under
3 this section may also accept:

4 (1) gifts, grants, and donations;

5 (2) money donated from the budget of a law enforcement
6 agency;

7 (3) money donated from the budget of a municipality or
8 county; and

9 (4) money donated from the budget of a local mental
10 health authority.

11 (h) The executive commissioner shall adopt all rules
12 necessary for the establishment of the mobile crisis outreach team
13 grant program under this section.

14 SECTION 2. As soon as practicable after the effective date
15 of this Act, the executive commissioner of the Health and Human
16 Services Commission shall adopt rules necessary to implement
17 Section 531.09915, Government Code, as added by this Act.

18 SECTION 3. This Act takes effect September 1, 2021.