

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 3483
By: Turner
Defense & Veterans' Affairs
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, in 2017, our nation was home to about 21 million veterans. Veterans constitute a significant amount of the Texas workforce, but they struggle with mental health issues at a higher rate than nonveterans, especially with post-traumatic stress disorder. A leading cause of veteran deaths is suicide, with veterans accounting for 18 percent of the nation's gun suicide deaths according to the Brady organization. To compound this problem, there is no easy or accessible way for veterans to view what services are available to them to help them find jobs or assist with mental health issues.

Currently, there is a lack of standardization regarding workplace postings of informational material relevant to veterans. Many programs exist to help veterans who struggle with mental health and unemployment. There are also many programs available to veterans to help ease their transition back into civilian life and ensure they have support, but without knowledge of these programs or how to access them, the programs may not reach every veteran.

H.B. 3483 seeks to address this issue by requiring the Texas Workforce Commission, in consultation with the Texas Veterans Commission, to develop and distribute a mandatory veterans benefits and services informational poster for certain employers to display in a conspicuous place.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE IMPACT

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly create a criminal offense, increase the punishment for an existing criminal offense or category of offenses, or change the eligibility of a person for community supervision, parole, or mandatory supervision.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, department, agency, or institution.

ANALYSIS

H.B. 3483 amends the Labor Code to require the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC), in consultation with the Texas Veterans Commission (TVC) and not later than December 1, 2023, to create and distribute to each person who employs at least 50 employees in Texas a veterans benefits and services poster containing information relating to the following:

- how an employee may:
 - apply for unemployment compensation benefits under the Texas Unemployment Compensation Act and benefits that may be offered under a federal program;
 - contact TVC, including the TVC website and the veterans crisis hotline established by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs;
 - exercise any tax benefits or preferences offered to veterans under the Tax Code or the federal Internal Revenue Code of 1986; and

- obtain a driver's license or personal identification card issued by the Department of Public Safety; and
- services that may be available to veterans in Texas, including education, workforce placement, and training programs; legal assistance; and substance abuse and mental health treatment.

The bill requires each employer to display the veterans benefits and services poster distributed by TWC in a conspicuous place in the employer's place of business that is accessible to all employees.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2023.