88R6084 MM-D

By:  Plesa H.B. No. 2610

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to trauma-informed care for children in the conservatorship of the Department of Family and Protective Services and trauma-informed care training for certain department employees.

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

SECTION 1.  Section 264.015, Family Code, is amended by amending Subsection (a) and adding Subsections (a-1), (a-2), (a-3), (a-4), (a-5), and (d) to read as follows:

(a)  The department shall require [~~include training in trauma-informed programs and services in any training the department provides to~~] foster parents, adoptive parents, kinship caregivers, department caseworkers, [~~and~~] department supervisors, and personnel at agencies that provide services to children in the department's conservatorship to receive training regarding the impact of trauma on children and the use of a trauma-informed approach for interacting with a child or making decisions that affect a child. The training may include faith-based programs that meet the criteria described by this subsection and must:

(1)  be comprehensive and use relevant research-supported or evidence-based content;

(2)  train individuals to:

(A)  understand the components of trauma; and

(B)  apply the principles of a trauma-informed approach to the individual's interactions with or decision-making regarding a child;

(3)  address:

(A)  the symptoms of trauma, including trauma triggers;

(B)  the effect of trauma on a child's brain development, overall ability to function, and behavior;

(C)  the ability of trauma-informed strategies to support the success of children who have experienced trauma;

(D)  attachment and how a lack of attachment may affect a child; and

(E)  the risks and benefits associated with the use of psychotropic medication;

(4)  include current research that addresses methods for assisting a child to heal from childhood trauma, including current trauma-informed treatments and services; and

(5)  include methods for the practical application of the training to the specific role the individual being trained has in the child's life.

(a-1)  The department shall seek and use [~~pay for the training provided under this subsection with~~] gifts, donations, and grants and any available state or federal money, including money available through the Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008 (Pub. L. No. 110-351) and the Family First Prevention Services Act (Title VII, Div. E, Pub. L. No. 115-123), to pay for the training required by Subsection (a).

(a-2)  The department shall develop a plan to implement the training required by Subsection (a) that includes specific, measurable goals. The department shall annually report to the legislature regarding the department's [~~evaluate the effectiveness of the training provided under this subsection to ensure~~] progress toward a trauma-informed system of care.

(a-3)  The training requirements of this section do not require the use of any specific training model or program. The department may exempt from the training required by Subsection (a) an individual who submits proof to the department that the individual has received training that meets the requirements of Subsection (a).

(a-4)  In areas of the state where a single source continuum contractor provides foster care or case management services, the department shall ensure that the single source continuum contractor carries out the training required by Subsection (a).

(a-5)  The department shall provide to department employees required to complete the training under Subsection (a) access to ongoing training to ensure continuous progress toward a trauma-informed system of care.

(d)  In this section, "trauma" and "trauma-informed" have the meanings described by 40 T.A.C. Section 702.701.

SECTION 2.  Section 264.015(b), Family Code, is repealed.

SECTION 3.  The Department of Family and Protective Services shall:

(1)  ensure that each person required to complete the training under Section 264.015, Family Code, as amended by this Act, completes the training not later than September 1, 2025; and

(2)  develop the plan required under Section 264.015(a-2), Family Code, as added by this Act, not later than December 1, 2023.

SECTION 4.  This Act takes effect September 1, 2023.