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H.B. No. 2237

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to the establishment of the child first grant program.

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

SECTION 1. Chapter 265, Family Code, is amended by adding Subchapter E to read as follows:

SUBCHAPTER E. CHILD FIRST GRANT PROGRAM

Sec. 265.201. OPERATION OF CHILD FIRST GRANT PROGRAM. (a)

The department shall operate a child first grant program through which the department will award grants to implement, expand, and maintain child first programs in the state.

(b) To be considered for a grant under this subchapter, an applicant must, at a minimum:

(1) be a nonprofit organization that is exempt from federal income taxation under Section 501(a), Internal Revenue Code of 1986, by being listed as an exempt entity under Section 501(c)(3) of that code;

(2) demonstrate a commitment to a family-centered, system of care approach to providing comprehensive, coordinated services to children and families;

(3) have experience providing successful early childhood mental health or prevention services for low-income, high-risk families; and

(4) have experience in providing home-based services to children and families.

1 Sec. 265.202. CHILD FIRST PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS. A child
2 first program awarded a grant under this subchapter must:

3 (1) be based on the program model developed by the
4 Child First National Service Office; and

5 (2) require that a team consisting of a master's level
6 licensed mental health or developmental clinician and a bachelor's
7 level care coordinator regularly visit the homes of families to:

8 (A) improve child and parent mental health;

9 (B) promote school readiness;

10 (C) decrease child abuse and neglect; and

11 (D) improve the immediate and long-term health
12 and well-being of families.

13 Sec. 265.203. CHILD FIRST PROGRAM STANDARDS. The
14 commissioner, with the assistance of the Child First National
15 Service Office, shall adopt standards for programs awarded grants
16 under this subchapter.

17 Sec. 265.204. GRANT PROGRAM FUNDING. The department may
18 solicit, contract for, receive, accept, or administer gifts,
19 grants, and donations of money or property from any source for
20 purposes of this subchapter.

21 SECTION 2. This Act takes effect September 1, 2023.