

By: West

S.B. No. 530

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to a peer support network for law enforcement officers.

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

SECTION 1. Chapter 105, Education Code, is amended by adding Subchapter K, and a heading is added to that subchapter to read as follows:

SUBCHAPTER K. CARUTH POLICE INSTITUTE

SECTION 2. Sections 1701.621, 1701.622, 1701.624, and 1701.626, Occupations Code, are transferred to Subchapter K, Chapter 105, Education Code, as added by this Act, redesignated as Sections 105.601, 105.602, 105.603, and 105.604, Education Code, respectively, and amended to read as follows:

Sec. 105.601 [~~1701.621~~]. DEFINITIONS. In this subchapter:

(1) "Institute" means the Caruth Police Institute located at the University of North Texas at Dallas.

(2) "Law enforcement officer" means a person identified as a peace officer under Article 2.12(1), (2), (3), or (4), Code of Criminal Procedure.

(3) [~~(2)~~] "Peer" means a person who is a law enforcement officer or retired law enforcement officer.

Sec. 105.602 [~~1701.622~~]. GENERAL POWERS AND DUTIES. (a) The institute [~~commission~~] shall develop a peer support network for law enforcement officers. The network must include:

1 (1) peer-to-peer support;

2 (2) training for peer service coordinators and peers
3 that includes suicide prevention training;

4 (3) technical assistance for program development,
5 peer service coordinators, licensed mental health professionals,
6 and peers; and

7 (4) identification, retention, and screening of
8 licensed mental health professionals.

9 (b) As part of the peer support network for law enforcement
10 officers, the institute [~~commission~~] shall ensure law enforcement
11 officers have support in both urban and rural jurisdictions.

12 (c) The institute [~~commission~~] shall solicit and ensure
13 that specialized training is provided to persons who are peers and
14 who want to provide peer-to-peer support and other peer-to-peer
15 services under the network.

16 [~~(d) The commission may adopt rules necessary to implement~~
17 ~~this subchapter.~~]

18 Sec. 105.603 [~~1701.624~~]. CONFIDENTIALITY OF PARTICIPANT
19 INFORMATION. Information relating to a law enforcement officer's
20 participation in peer-to-peer support and other peer-to-peer
21 services under the network is confidential and [~~may~~] not subject to
22 disclosure [~~be disclosed~~] under Chapter 552, Government Code [~~, by:~~

23 [~~(1) the commission,~~

24 [~~(2) a law enforcement agency that employs a law~~
25 ~~enforcement officer participant, or~~

26 [~~(3) any other state agency or political subdivision~~
27 ~~in this state that employs a law enforcement officer participant].~~

1 Sec. 105.604 [~~1701.626~~]. ANNUAL REPORT. Not later than
2 December 1 of each year, the institute [~~commission~~] shall submit a
3 report to the governor and the legislature that includes:

4 (1) the number of law enforcement officers who
5 received peer support through the peer support network for law
6 enforcement officers;

7 (2) the number of peers and peer service coordinators
8 trained;

9 (3) an evaluation of the services provided under this
10 subchapter; and

11 (4) recommendations for program improvements.

12 SECTION 3. Section 1701.625, Occupations Code, is
13 transferred to Subchapter K, Chapter 1701, Occupations Code,
14 redesignated as Section 1701.5015, Occupations Code, and amended to
15 read as follows:

16 Sec. 1701.5015 [~~1701.625~~]. PROTECTIONS RELATED TO
17 LICENSURE. The commission may not take disciplinary action under
18 Section 1701.501 against an officer based solely on the [A law
19 enforcement] officer's participation in peer-to-peer support and
20 other peer-to-peer services and [~~under the network~~] may not
21 consider the officer's participation during [+

22 [~~(1) serve as the basis for a revocation, suspension, or~~
23 ~~denial of a license issued under this chapter, or~~

24 [~~(2) be considered in]~~ any disciplinary proceeding [~~related~~
25 ~~to the officer's licensure]~~ under this chapter.

26 SECTION 4. The following provisions of the Occupations Code
27 are repealed:

1 (1) Section 1701.623; and

2 (2) the heading to Subchapter M-1, Chapter 1701.

3 SECTION 5. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives
4 a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as
5 provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this
6 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this
7 Act takes effect September 1, 2023.