

By: West

S.B. No. 1463

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to a grant program for a nonprofit organization or political subdivision to establish or expand a behavioral health crisis response program.

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

SECTION 1. Subchapter B, Chapter 531, Government Code, is amended by adding Section 531.09916 to read as follows:

Sec. 531.09916. GRANT PROGRAM FOR BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CRISIS RESPONSE PROGRAMS. (a) In this section:

(1) "Behavioral health crisis response program" means a program operated under a grant awarded under this section.

(2) "Multidisciplinary response team" means a group composed of three or more persons that includes at least one paramedic, one law enforcement officer, and one behavioral health professional, who together provide services to persons experiencing a behavioral health crisis.

(3) "Nonprofit organization" means an 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.

(4) "Political subdivision" means a county or municipality in this state.

(b) The executive commissioner shall establish and administer a grant program to award money to nonprofit

organizations and political subdivisions for the purpose of establishing or expanding a behavioral health crisis response program to:

(1) operate one or more multidisciplinary response teams in the region in which the nonprofit organization is located or within the political subdivision, as applicable; and

(2) employ one or more behavioral health professionals to:

(A) assist in screening telephone calls made to a 9-1-1 emergency call center dispatcher for law enforcement or emergency medical assistance;

(B) assist in determining whether to dispatch a multidisciplinary response team to service a call; and

(C) provide consultation and information to the dispatched multidisciplinary response team.

(c) A behavioral health crisis response program that is awarded a grant under this section must operate in accordance with best practices for jail diversion and managing behavioral health crises.

(d) A nonprofit organization that is awarded a grant under this section must collaborate with one or more political subdivisions to operate the behavioral health crisis response program. A county that is awarded a grant under this section must collaborate with one or more municipalities in the county to operate the behavioral health crisis response program.

(e) A grant application from a nonprofit organization or political subdivision must:

1 (1) be submitted on a form prescribed by the
2 commission;

3 (2) include, if the applicant is required to
4 collaborate with a political subdivision under Subsection (d), a
5 statement from the governing body of the political subdivision
6 providing information about the collaboration; and

7 (3) include, if the applicant is required to
8 collaborate with a political subdivision under Subsection (d), data
9 from each collaborating political subdivision on:

10 (A) the number of behavioral health-related
11 telephone calls for assistance received by the political
12 subdivision's 9-1-1 emergency call center;

13 (B) the number of paramedics and behavioral
14 health professionals available to serve on a political
15 subdivision's multidisciplinary response team; and

16 (C) the political subdivision's capacity to
17 accurately collect and report information concerning:

18 (i) the frequency and outcomes of
19 behavioral health-related calls for assistance; and

20 (ii) the number of telephone calls for
21 assistance primarily identified as involving a criminal offense
22 that also involved a demonstrated need for behavioral health
23 intervention services, crisis care referrals to community-based
24 providers, or de-escalation for the person making the call or for a
25 person who was the subject of a call made by another.

26 (f) In addition to funding received under a grant under this
27 section, a nonprofit organization or political subdivision grant

1 applicant, or a political subdivision collaborating with a grant
2 applicant under Subsection (d), may contribute local funds to the
3 operation of the behavioral health crisis response program.

4 (g) The commission may use any available state and federal
5 money and may accept gifts, grants, and donations from any source
6 for the purpose of awarding grants under this section.

7 (h) The executive commissioner shall adopt all rules
8 necessary for the establishment and governance of the grant program
9 under this section.

10 SECTION 2. As soon as practicable after the effective date
11 of this Act, the executive commissioner of the Health and Human
12 Services Commission shall adopt rules necessary to implement
13 Section 531.09916, Government Code, as added by this Act.

14 SECTION 3. This Act takes effect September 1, 2023.