

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 1896
By: Cole
Public Health
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

During the 88th Legislative Session, the Texas Legislature enacted H.B. 1486 to require each state agency and agency of a political subdivision that employs a full-time telecommunicator to develop and adopt a policy allowing the use of mental health leave by its telecommunicators who experience a traumatic event in the scope of their employment. The bill author has informed the committee, however, that the current definition for "telecommunicator" under this law does not include the telecommunications staff of certain other first responder agencies, such as the Austin-Travis County EMS. H.B. 1896 seeks to rectify this issue by expanding the scope of this statutory requirement to include all telecommunicators authorized to act under the Emergency Health Care Act.

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. 1896 amends the Government Code to expand the definition of "telecommunicator" for purposes of statutory provisions governing mental health leave policies adopted by each state agency and agency of a political subdivision of the state for full-time telecommunicators who experience a traumatic event in the scope of employment to include a person authorized to act in a similar capacity as a telecommunicator under the Emergency Health Care Act. The bill requires each agency required to adopt an applicable mental health leave policy under the bill to adopt a mental health leave policy as prescribed by the bill as soon as practicable after the bill's effective date.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2025.