

AN ACT

relating to the creation of a rural veterans mental health initiative within the mental health intervention program for veterans.

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

SECTION 1. Section 1001.202, Health and Safety Code, as added by Chapter 352 (H.B. 2392), Acts of the 83rd Legislature, Regular Session, 2013, and amended by S.B. No. 219, Acts of the 84th Legislature, Regular Session, 2015, is amended to read as follows:

Sec. 1001.202. GENERAL POWERS AND DUTIES. (a) The department shall develop a mental health intervention program for veterans. The program must include:

- (1) peer-to-peer counseling;
- (2) access to licensed mental health professionals for volunteer coordinators and peers;
- (3) training approved by the department for peers;
- (4) technical assistance for volunteer coordinators and peers;
- (5) grants to regional and local organizations providing services under this subchapter;
- (6) recruitment, retention, and screening of community-based therapists;
- (7) suicide prevention training for volunteer coordinators and peers; and

1 (8) veteran jail diversion services, including
2 veterans courts.

3 (a-2) As part of the mental health intervention program for
4 veterans, the department shall develop a rural veterans mental
5 health initiative.

6 (b) The department shall solicit and ensure that
7 specialized training is provided to persons who are peers and who
8 want to provide peer-to-peer counseling or other peer-to-peer
9 services under the program.

10 (c) The executive commissioner may adopt rules necessary to
11 implement this subchapter.

12 SECTION 2. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives
13 a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as
14 provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this
15 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this
16 Act takes effect September 1, 2015.

President of the Senate

Speaker of the House

I hereby certify that S.B. No. 1305 passed the Senate on April 29, 2015, by the following vote: Yeas 30, Nays 1; and that the Senate concurred in House amendment on May 28, 2015, by the following vote: Yeas 31, Nays 0.

Secretary of the Senate

I hereby certify that S.B. No. 1305 passed the House, with amendment, on May 22, 2015, by the following vote: Yeas 136, Nays 4, two present not voting.

Chief Clerk of the House

Approved:

Date

Governor