

HB 0897

2004

A bill to be entitled

An act relating to suicide prevention; creating the Office for Suicide Prevention within the Office of Drug Control; providing a purpose; providing duties and responsibilities of the office; authorizing the director of the Office of Drug Control to hire a coordinator as head of the Office for Suicide Prevention; providing minimum qualifications; providing duties and responsibilities; creating the Suicide Prevention Coordinating Council within the Office of Drug Control; providing a purpose; providing duties and responsibilities; providing for membership qualification and guidelines; providing for appointment of members by the director of the office and the Governor; providing for compensation and funding; providing an appropriation; providing an effective date.

Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

Section 1. Office for Suicide Prevention.--

(1) The Office for Suicide Prevention is created within the Office of Drug Control for the purpose of developing a network of community-based programs for suicide prevention, including groups advocating suicide prevention or related areas, nonprofit organizations, faith-based organizations, law enforcement agencies and first responders, community coalitions, schools and universities, and mental health agencies, to identify and address the barriers that interfere with providing services to persons who are at risk of suicide, including adolescents, elderly persons, persons with Alzheimer's disease

HB 0897

2004

30 or other chronic diseases, residents of multicultural and rural  
 31 communities, and other high-risk groups.

32 (2) Within available resources, the Office for Suicide  
 33 Prevention must:

34 (a) Implement the statewide plan developed by the Suicide  
 35 Prevention Coordinating Council.

36 (b) Build community networks to integrate initiatives  
 37 across organizations.

38 (c) Create public awareness for issues relating to suicide  
 39 prevention.

40 (d) Coordinate education and training programs for suicide  
 41 prevention for law enforcement personnel, providers of health  
 42 care, school employees, and other persons who have contact with  
 43 persons at risk of suicide.

44 (e) Coordinate an interagency workgroup that is a subset  
 45 of the council to streamline programs and develop a  
 46 communication plan across agencies.

47 (3) Contingent upon an appropriation, the director of the  
 48 Office of Drug Control shall employ a coordinator of the Office  
 49 for Suicide Prevention. Unless waived by the director of Office  
 50 of Drug Control, the coordinator must:

51 (a) Have the following education and experience:

52 1. A bachelor's degree in social work, psychology,  
 53 sociology, or counseling, or a closely related field, and 5  
 54 years or more of work experience in behavioral health or a  
 55 closely related field; or

56 2. A master's or doctoral degree in social work,  
 57 psychology, sociology, counseling, or public health, or a  
 58 closely related field, and 2 years or more of work experience in

HB 0897

2004

59 behavioral health or a closely related field.

60 (b) Demonstrate the following skills:

61 1. Significant professional experience in social services,  
 62 mental health, or a closely related field.

63 2. Knowledge of group behavior and dynamics, methods of  
 64 facilitation, community development, behavioral health treatment  
 65 and prevention programs, and community-based behavioral health  
 66 problems.

67 3. Experience in working with diverse community groups and  
 68 constituents.

69 4. Experience in writing grants and technical reports.

70 (4) The coordinator of the Office for Suicide Prevention  
 71 shall work under the direction of the director of the Office of  
 72 Drug Control to meet the purpose of the office. To the extent  
 73 that funding is available, the coordinator shall:

74 (a) Staff an interagency workgroup to incorporate agency  
 75 programs into the statewide plan.

76 (b) Conduct a best practices review on local, state, and  
 77 national innovative suicide prevention programs for possible  
 78 statewide implementation to be evaluated by the Suicide  
 79 Prevention Coordinating Council.

80 (c) Develop and maintain an Internet or network site with  
 81 links to appropriate resource documents, suicide hotlines, state  
 82 and local mental health agencies, and appropriate national  
 83 organizations.

84 (d) Identify and disseminate information regarding crisis  
 85 services relating to suicide prevention.

86 (e) Work to develop public awareness and media campaigns  
 87 in each county targeting groups of persons who are at risk of

HB 0897

2004

88 suicide.

89 (f) Coordinate educational activities for the general  
 90 public relating to suicide prevention.

91 (g) Work with school districts to develop suicide  
 92 prevention training and counseling program in schools and  
 93 develop an evaluation of the program.

94 (h) Work with representatives of organizations, including,  
 95 but not limited to, providers of health care, mental health  
 96 agencies, social service agencies, faith-based organizations,  
 97 public health clinics, organizations that represent the elderly,  
 98 and community organizations to coordinate education and training  
 99 relating to suicide prevention.

100 (i) Coordinate education and training for persons who, as  
 101 part of their usual routine, have face to face contact with  
 102 persons who may be at risk of suicide, including, but not  
 103 limited to, law enforcement, health care providers, school  
 104 personnel, and mental health professionals, training them to  
 105 recognize persons at risk of suicide and providing information  
 106 on how to refer those persons for treatment or supporting  
 107 services, as appropriate.

108 (j) Review current research to identify at-risk  
 109 populations, factors relating to suicide and suicide prevention  
 110 methodology, and disseminate such research to the Suicide  
 111 Prevention Coordination Council to develop strategies for  
 112 preventing suicide.

113 (k) Develop and submit proposals for funding to agencies  
 114 of the State and Federal Government and nongovernmental  
 115 organizations.

116 Section 2. Suicide Prevention Coordinating Council;

HB 0897

2004

117 creation; membership, duties.--

118 (1) The Suicide Prevention Coordinating Council is created  
119 within the Office of Drug Control. The primary purpose of the  
120 council is to develop strategies for preventing suicide.

121 (2) The council shall:

122 (a) Develop a statewide plan for suicide prevention  
123 recognizing suicide as a preventable problem. The plan must  
124 address at least the following:

125 1. Concerns regarding specific populations who are at risk  
126 for suicide.

127 2. A strategy to align and provide direction for statewide  
128 suicide prevention initiatives.

129 3. A strategy to establish partnerships with state and  
130 private agencies.

131 4. A strategy to promote public awareness of suicide  
132 prevention.

133 5. A strategy to improve access to help for persons in  
134 acute situations.

135 6. A strategy to identify the resources to support the  
136 implementation of the plan.

137 (b) Establish an interagency workgroup that is a subset of  
138 the council to incorporate agency suicide prevention plans into  
139 the statewide plan. The interagency workgroup shall include, but  
140 is not limited to, representatives from the Department of  
141 Elderly Affairs, the Department of Health, the Department of  
142 Education, the Agency for Health Care Administration, the  
143 Department of Juvenile Justice, and the Department of Children  
144 and Family Services.

HB 0897

2004

145 (c) Meet as least quarterly and at other times upon the  
146 call of the chair. The council meetings may be held via  
147 teleconference or other electronic means.

148 (d) Assemble committees with membership outside the  
149 council on an as-needed basis in order to obtain advice and  
150 assistance in carrying out its duties.

151 (e) Advise the Office for Suicide Prevention.

152 (f) Make recommendations regarding suicide prevention to  
153 the Governor, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and  
154 the President of the Senate, in the form of an annual report, no  
155 later than January 1, 2005, and each year thereafter. The report  
156 must address the status of initiatives identified in the  
157 statewide plan for suicide prevention.

158 (3) The council shall consist of 20 members.

159 (a) Eighteen members shall be appointed by the director of  
160 the Office of Drug Control and represent the following entities:  
161 the Florida Substance Abuse and Mental Health Corporation, Inc.,  
162 identified in s. 394.655, the Florida Association of School  
163 Psychologists, the Florida Sheriff's Association, the Suicide  
164 Prevention Action Network USA, the Florida Initiative of Suicide  
165 Prevention, the Alzheimer's Association, the Department of  
166 Education, the Agency for Health Care Administration, the  
167 Department of Health, the Department of Elderly Affairs, the  
168 Department Children and Family Services, the Department of  
169 Juvenile Justice, the Department of Corrections, the Department  
170 of Veterans' Affairs, and a representative from the Governor's  
171 Mentoring Initiative.

172 (b) The Governor may appoint five additional members who  
173 have expertise critical to the issue of suicide prevention or

HB 0897

2004

174 who represent organizations that are not already represented by  
 175 the membership.

176 (4) The director of the Office of Drug Control shall serve  
 177 as chair of the council.

178 (a) Members of the council shall be appointed by the  
 179 organizations identified for membership unless otherwise  
 180 specified.

181 (b) Members shall serve without compensation. Any member  
 182 of the committee who is a public employee is entitled to  
 183 reimbursement for per diem and travel expenses by his or her  
 184 employer, and the cost of each member's participation must be  
 185 borne by the organization that appointed the member.

186 (c) Public organizations shall participate and cooperate  
 187 with the council.

188 (5) The council may seek and accept grants or funds from  
 189 any source, federal, state, or local, to support its operation  
 190 and defray the expenses incurred in its operation and  
 191 implementation of this section.

192 Section 3. For the 2004-2005 fiscal year, the sum of  
 193 \$100,000 in recurring general revenue and 1 FTE position is  
 194 appropriated to the Office of Drug Control for the purpose of  
 195 paying salaries and other administrative expenses necessary to  
 196 carry out the provisions of this act.

197 Section 4. This act shall take effect July 1, 2004.