

HB 159

2014

1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to the establishment of a mental
3 health first aid training program; requiring the
4 Department of Children and Families to establish a
5 mental health first aid training program; providing
6 for a mental health first aid course to be offered by
7 behavioral health managing entities or other community
8 providers; providing course requirements; requiring
9 instructors to be certified; requiring the department
10 to submit a report to the Governor and Legislature;
11 providing for expiration of the program; providing an
12 effective date.

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

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16 Section 1. Mental health first aid training program.—

17 (1) The Department of Children and Families shall
18 establish a mental health first aid training program to help the
19 public identify and understand the signs of mental illness and
20 substance use disorders and provide the public with skills to
21 help a person who is developing or experiencing a mental health
22 or substance use problem.

23 (2) The training program shall provide an interactive
24 mental health first aid training course through contracts with
25 behavioral health managing entities or other appropriate
26 community providers. The contracting entity shall work
27 cooperatively with local schools to provide for training to the
28 staff in schools as a first priority, when appropriate.

29 (3) The training program shall include, but is not limited
30 to:

31 (a) An overview of mental illnesses and substance use
32 disorders and the need to reduce the stigma of mental illness.

33 (b) Information on the potential risk factors and warning
34 signs of mental illness or substance use disorders, including
35 depression, anxiety, psychosis, eating disorders, and self-
36 injury, and common treatments for those conditions.

37 (c) An action plan that encompasses the skills, resources,
38 and knowledge required to assess the situation, select and
39 implement appropriate interventions, and help an individual with
40 appropriate professional, peer, social, or self-help care.

41 (4) The department shall ensure that instructors in the
42 training program have been certified by a national authority
43 representing Mental Health First Aid USA.

44 (5) The department shall submit a report on the
45 effectiveness of the mental health first aid training program
46 provided pursuant to this act, with recommendations regarding
47 continued implementation of the program. The report shall be
48 submitted to the Governor, the President of the Senate, and the
49 Speaker of the House of Representatives by December 31, 2016.

50 (6) This section expires June 30, 2017.

51 Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2014.