

HB 1193

2015

1 A bill to be entitled  
2 An act relating to services for veterans and their  
3 families; creating s. 394.9087, F.S.; requiring the  
4 Department of Children and Families to establish the  
5 Florida Veterans' Care Coordination Program; providing  
6 goals of the program; requiring the designation of  
7 implementation teams; providing a list of required  
8 services; providing an appropriation; providing an  
9 effective date.

10  
11 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

12  
13 Section 1. Section 394.9087, Florida Statutes is created  
14 to read:

15 394.9087 Florida Veterans' Care Coordination Program.—

16 (1) The Department of Children and Families, in  
17 cooperation with the Agency for Health Care Administration and  
18 pursuant to the requirements of s. 408.913, shall establish the  
19 Florida Veterans' Care Coordination Program in all department  
20 service districts to provide veterans and their families in this  
21 state with dedicated behavioral healthcare referral services,  
22 especially mental health and substance abuse services. The  
23 department shall model the program after the proof-of-concept  
24 pilot program conducted in 2014 by the Crisis Center of Tampa  
25 Bay and the Department of Veterans' Affairs in Hillsborough,  
26 Pasco, Pinellas, Polk, and Manatee Counties.

- 27        (2) The goals of the program are to:
- 28        (a) Prevent suicides by veterans in this state.
- 29        (b) Increase the number of veterans who make use of agency  
30 services.
- 31        (c) Increase the level of Veterans Administration funding  
32 for needed services to veterans in this state, thereby saving  
33 money for the state.
- 34        (3) The department shall designate care coordination teams  
35 to implement the program statewide. The teams shall provide  
36 referral services to veterans and their families and expand the  
37 existing Florida 211 Network, authorized by s. 408.918, to  
38 include the optimal range of veterans' service organizations and  
39 programs.
- 40        (4) Services provided by the program must include:
- 41        (a) Telephonic peer support, crisis intervention, and the  
42 communication of information and referral resources.
- 43        (b) Treatment coordination, including followup care.
- 44        (c) Suicide assessment.
- 45        (d) Promotion of the safety and wellness of veterans and  
46 their families, including continuous safety planning and  
47 support.
- 48        (e) Resource coordination, including data analysis, to  
49 ensure acceptance, enrollment, and attendance by veterans and  
50 their families in Veterans Administration programs and services  
51 and community-based programs and services.
- 52        (f) Immediate needs assessments, including safety

53 planning.

54 (5) To enhance program services, program teams shall:

55 (a) Track the number of requests from callers who are  
56 veterans or their family members.

57 (b) Follow up with callers to determine whether they have  
58 acted on the referrals or received the assistance needed, or if  
59 additional referrals or advocacies are needed.

60 (c) Develop communication strategies, such as media  
61 promotions, public service announcements, print and Internet  
62 stories, or community presentations, to inform veterans and  
63 their families about available services.

64 (d) Document all calls and capture all data to improve  
65 outreach to veterans and their families.

66 Section 2. For the 2015-2016 fiscal year, the sum of \$2  
67 million in recurring funds is appropriated from the General  
68 Revenue Fund to the Department of Children and Families for the  
69 purpose of implementing this act.

70 Section 3. This act shall take effect July 1, 2015.