

By Senator Sobel

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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 Education to establish a mental health  
5 first aid training program; requiring the department  
6 to use a competitive procurement process to select a  
7 statewide association to develop, implement, and  
8 manage the program; providing course requirements;  
9 requiring instructors to be certified; requiring the  
10 department to submit a report to the Governor and the  
11 Legislature by a specified date; providing for  
12 expiration of the program; providing an appropriation;  
13 requiring the Office of Program Policy Analysis and  
14 Government Accountability to submit a report to the  
15 Legislature by a specified date; providing an  
16 effective date.

17  
18 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

19  
20 Section 1. Mental health first aid training program.—

21 (1) The Department of Education shall establish a mental  
22 health first aid training program to help the public identify  
23 and understand the signs of mental illness and substance use  
24 disorders and provide the public with skills to help a person  
25 who is developing or experiencing a mental health or substance  
26 use problem.

27 (2) The department shall use a competitive procurement  
28 process to select a statewide association for mental health or  
29 substance abuse awareness or treatment to develop, implement,

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30 and manage the program.

31 (3) The training program shall include, but is not limited  
32 to:

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

35 (b) Information on the potential risk factors and warning  
36 signs of mental illness or substance use disorders, including,  
37 but not limited to, depression, anxiety, psychosis, eating  
38 disorders, and self-injury, and common treatments for those  
39 conditions.

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

44 (4) The contractor shall administer the program in a way  
45 that maximizes the availability of mental health first aid  
46 training throughout the state, which may include, but is not  
47 limited to, contracting with trained instructors or training  
48 additional instructors. However, the contractor shall ensure  
49 that all instructors in the training program have current  
50 certification by a national authority on mental health first aid  
51 programs.

52 (5) The contractor shall prioritize training for staff in  
53 educational institutions, including all components of the K-20  
54 education system as defined in s. 1000.04, Florida Statutes,  
55 private schools as defined in s. 1002.42, Florida Statutes, and  
56 colleges and universities as defined in s. 1005.02, Florida  
57 Statutes. After training staff in educational institutions, the  
58 contractor shall prioritize training for first responders. The

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59 contractor may provide training to additional individuals.

60 (6) The department shall submit a report on the  
61 implementation and effectiveness of the mental health first aid  
62 training program provided pursuant to this act. The report shall  
63 describe the implementation of this program and include, but not  
64 be limited to, the number of individuals trained by geographic  
65 area, their employment or affiliation, the impact of the  
66 training, and recommendations regarding continued implementation  
67 of the program. The report shall be submitted to the Governor,  
68 the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of  
69 Representatives by February 1, 2018.

70 (7) This section expires June 30, 2018.

71 Section 2. For fiscal year 2015-2016, the sum of \$300,000  
72 in nonrecurring funds is appropriated from the Federal Grants  
73 Trust Fund to the Department of Education to implement the  
74 provisions of this act.

75 Section 3. The Office of Program Policy Analysis and  
76 Government Accountability shall conduct a study on mental health  
77 training programs in the state that help the public identify and  
78 understand the signs of mental illness and substance use  
79 disorders and provide the public with skills to help a person  
80 who is developing or experiencing a mental health or substance  
81 use problem. The study shall identify major providers of such  
82 mental health training programs, the cost of such programs to  
83 recipients, and the availability of such programs to the general  
84 public and specified groups, including employees of educational  
85 institutions, which comprise all components of the K-20  
86 education system as defined in s. 1000.04, Florida Statutes,  
87 private schools as defined in s. 1002.42, Florida Statutes, and

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88 colleges and universities as defined in s. 1005.02, Florida  
89 Statutes; first responders; and other personnel who are likely  
90 to have contact with individuals with mental health and  
91 substance use disorders who are in need of assistance. The  
92 Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability  
93 shall survey organizations, including, but not limited to,  
94 managing entities and not-for-profit organizations providing  
95 mental health training, in conducting its research. All state  
96 agencies and contractors receiving state funds shall comply with  
97 each request for data and information from the Office of Program  
98 Policy Analysis and Government Accountability. The study shall  
99 include recommendations for enhancing availability of such  
100 mental health training programs in the state. The Office of  
101 Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability shall  
102 report its findings to the President of the Senate and the  
103 Speaker of the House of Representatives by February 1, 2016.  
104       Section 4. This act shall take effect July 1, 2015.