

**By** the Committee on Military and Veterans Affairs, Space, and Domestic Security; and Senator Young

583-01510-18

2018326c1

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 that  
4       the Department of Children and Families establish the  
5       Florida Veterans' Care Coordination Program to provide  
6       veterans and their families with behavioral health  
7       care referral and care coordination services;  
8       requiring that the department contract with managing  
9       entities to enter into agreements with Florida 211  
10      Network participants for such services; providing  
11      program goals; providing for the statewide delivery of  
12      specified services by program teams; requiring Florida  
13      211 Network participants to collect certain data on  
14      the implementation of the program and submit the data  
15      to the department; requiring the department to submit  
16      a report on the program's implementation to the  
17      Governor and Legislature by a specified date;  
18      requiring a minimum percentage of funds annually  
19      appropriated for the administration of the program to  
20      be used for the promotion and advertising of the  
21      program; requiring the department to use public  
22      service announcements; providing an appropriation;  
23      providing an effective date.

24  
25 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

26  
27       Section 1. Section 394.9087, Florida Statutes, is created  
28 to read:

29       394.9087 Florida Veterans' Care Coordination Program.—

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30 (1) As used in this section, the term "veteran" means a  
31 wartime veteran as defined in s. 1.01(14).

32 (2) The Department of Children and Families, in  
33 consultation with the Florida Alliance of Information and  
34 Referral Services, shall establish the Florida Veterans' Care  
35 Coordination Program. The department shall contract with  
36 managing entities, as defined in s. 394.9082(2), to enter into  
37 agreements with Florida 211 Network participants to provide  
38 veterans and their families in this state with dedicated  
39 behavioral health care referral services, especially mental  
40 health and substance abuse services. The department shall model  
41 the program after the proof-of-concept pilot program established  
42 in Hillsborough, Pasco, Pinellas, Polk, and Manatee Counties in  
43 2014 by the Crisis Center of Tampa Bay and the Florida  
44 Department of Veterans' Affairs.

45 (3) The goals of the program are to:

46 (a) Prevent suicides by veterans.

47 (b) Increase the use of United States Department of  
48 Veterans Affairs programs and services by veterans.

49 (c) Increase the number of veterans who use other available  
50 community-based programs and services.

51 (4) The program must be available statewide. Program  
52 services must be provided by program teams operated by Florida  
53 211 Network participants, as authorized by s. 408.918. A Florida  
54 211 Network participant may provide services in more than one  
55 managing entity's geographic area under a single contract.

56 (5) The program teams shall provide referral and care  
57 coordination services to veterans and their families and expand  
58 the existing Florida 211 Network to include the optimal range of

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59 veterans' service organizations and programs. Program services  
60 shall be provided by individuals who are veterans, as defined in  
61 s. 1.01(14), and must include:

62 (a) Telephonic peer support, crisis intervention, and  
63 referral services. Crisis intervention and referral services  
64 shall be available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

65 (b) Treatment coordination, including coordination of  
66 followup care.

67 (c) Suicide-risk assessment.

68 (d) Promotion of the safety and wellness of veterans and  
69 their families, including continuous support.

70 (e) Coordination of resources to facilitate acceptance,  
71 enrollment, and attendance of veterans and their families in  
72 United States Department of Veterans Affairs programs and  
73 services and other available community-based programs and  
74 services.

75 (f) Immediate needs assessments, including safety planning  
76 and support.

77 (g) Data analysis to improve the efficiency of referral and  
78 care coordination services to veterans and their families.

79 (6) To enhance program services, program teams shall:

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

82 (b) Follow up with callers or their family members to  
83 determine whether they have acted on the referrals or received  
84 the assistance needed, and if additional referral or advocacy is  
85 needed.

86 (c) Develop and implement communication strategies, such as  
87 media promotions, public service announcements, print and

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88 Internet articles, and community presentations, to inform  
89 veterans and their families about available United States  
90 Department of Veterans Affairs programs and services and other  
91 available community-based programs and services.

92 (d) Document all calls and capture all necessary data to  
93 improve outreach to veterans and their families and report such  
94 data to the managing entity.

95 (7) Florida 211 Network participants shall collect and  
96 submit data on the implementation of the program to the  
97 department in the format prescribed by the department. The  
98 department shall use such data to prepare a report for submittal  
99 to the Governor, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of  
100 the House of Representatives by December 15, 2019. The report  
101 must include:

102 (a) The number of calls received.

103 (b) Demographic information for each caller, including, but  
104 not limited to, the caller's military affiliation, the caller's  
105 veteran status, and if the caller is receiving services through  
106 United States Department of Veterans Affairs programs and  
107 services or other available community-based programs and  
108 services.

109 (c) The nature of each call, including, but not limited to,  
110 the concerns prompting the call and the services requested.

111 (d) The outcome of each call, including, but not limited  
112 to, the service referrals made and the organizations to which  
113 the caller was referred.

114 (e) Services received as a result of each call.

115 (f) Followup by the program team, including, but not  
116 limited to, the percentage of calls receiving followup and the

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117 amount of time between initial contact and followup.

118 (g) The program's impact on each caller's quality of life  
119 and on the avoidance of negative outcomes, including arrest and  
120 suicide.

121 (h) Each caller's satisfaction with program services.

122 (8) A minimum of 5 percent of the funds appropriated  
123 annually by the Legislature to the department for the  
124 administration of the program shall be used for the promotion  
125 and advertising of the program. The department shall use public  
126 service announcements to the greatest extent possible in its  
127 promotion and advertising of the program.

128 Section 2. For the 2018-2019 fiscal year, the sum of  
129 \$2,000,155 in recurring funds is appropriated from the General  
130 Revenue Fund to the Department of Children and Families for the  
131 purpose of implementing this act.

132 Section 3. This act shall take effect July 1, 2018.