

By the Committees on Appropriations; and Health Policy; and
Senators Wright, Book, and Cruz

576-04601-19

20191518c2

1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to alternative treatment options for
3 veterans; creating s. 295.156, F.S.; providing
4 definitions; authorizing the Department of Veterans'
5 Affairs, subject to appropriation, to contract with a
6 state university or Florida College System institution
7 to furnish specified alternative treatment options for
8 certain veterans; providing requirements as to the
9 provision of alternative treatment options and related
10 assessment data; specifying eligibility to receive
11 alternative treatment; requiring direction and
12 supervision by certain licensed providers; requiring
13 the department to annually prepare a report for
14 submission to the Governor and Legislature;
15 authorizing the department to adopt rules; providing
16 an effective date.

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

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20 Section 1. Section 295.156, Florida Statutes, is created to
21 read:

22 295.156 Alternative treatment options for veterans.-

23 (1) As used in this section, the term:

24 (a) "Posttraumatic stress disorder" means a mental health
25 disorder that is developed after having experienced or witnessed
26 a life-threatening event, including but not limited to, military
27 sexual trauma.

28 (b) "Traumatic brain injury" means an acquired injury to
29 the brain. This term does not include brain dysfunction caused

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30 by congenital or degenerative disorders or by birth trauma.

31 (2) Subject to legislative appropriation, the Department of
32 Veterans' Affairs may contract with a state university or
33 Florida College System institution to furnish alternative
34 treatment options for veterans who have been certified by the
35 United States Department of Veterans Affairs or any branch of
36 the United States Armed Forces as having a traumatic brain
37 injury or posttraumatic stress disorder. The university or
38 institution shall manage, monitor, and ensure the compliance of
39 contracted providers who provide any of the following
40 alternative treatment options:

41 (a) Accelerated resolution therapy.

42 (b) Equine therapy.

43 (c) Hyperbaric oxygen therapy, which must be provided at a
44 registered hyperbaric oxygen facility.

45 (d) Music therapy.

46 (e) Service animal training therapy.

47 (3) A veteran qualifies to receive alternative treatment
48 under this section if he or she:

49 (a) Has been diagnosed by a health care practitioner with
50 service-connected posttraumatic stress disorder or a traumatic
51 brain injury;

52 (b) Voluntarily agrees to such alternative treatment; and

53 (c) Can demonstrate that he or she has previously sought
54 services for a posttraumatic stress disorder or a traumatic
55 brain injury through the federal Veterans Affairs service
56 delivery system or through private health insurance, if such
57 coverage is available to the veteran.

58 (4) (a) The provision of alternative treatment must be under

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59 the direction and supervision of an individual licensed under
60 chapter 458, chapter 459, chapter 460, chapter 464, chapter 490,
61 or chapter 491.

62 (b) The supervising licensed provider must agree to
63 cooperate with the Department of Veterans' Affairs to provide
64 data sufficient to assess the efficacy of alternative treatment
65 modalities.

66 (5) By January 1 of each year, beginning in 2020, the
67 Department of Veterans' Affairs shall prepare a report detailing
68 each alternative treatment provided pursuant to this section,
69 the provider type, the number of veterans served, and the
70 treatment outcomes. The department shall submit the report to
71 the Governor, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of
72 the House of Representatives.

73 (6) The Department of Veterans' Affairs may adopt rules to
74 implement this section.

75 Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2019.