

By Senator Calatayud

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1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to the Mental Health and Substance Use
3 Disorder Awareness and Assistance Training Program;
4 creating s. 394.9088, F.S.; defining terms; requiring
5 the Department of Children and Families, by a
6 specified date, to establish the training program for
7 a specified purpose; specifying requirements for the
8 training program; requiring the department to select a
9 coordinating agency to administer the training program
10 by a specified date; specifying eligibility
11 requirements for the coordinating agency; providing
12 that the coordinating agency is responsible for all
13 aspects of administering the training program;
14 requiring the coordinating agency to submit a 5-year
15 statewide, phase-in implementation plan to the
16 department; specifying requirements for the plan;
17 requiring the coordinating agency to submit an annual
18 report to the department by a specified date;
19 specifying requirements for the report; providing an
20 effective date.

21
22 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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24 Section 1. Section 394.9088, Florida Statutes, is created
25 to read:

26 394.9088 Mental Health and Substance Use Disorder Awareness
27 and Assistance Training Program.—

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

29 (a) "Coordinating agency" means a nonprofit organization

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30 that is exempt from federal income tax under s. 501(c)(3) of the
31 Internal Revenue Code, governed by a board of directors, and
32 selected by the department to administer the training program.

33 (b) "Mental health" means a state of mental well-being that
34 enables a person to cope with the stresses of life, realize his
35 or her abilities, learn and work well, and contribute to his or
36 her community.

37 (c) "National authority" means a national organization that
38 has developed an evidence-based training program using
39 nationally certified trainers and that promotes a greater
40 understanding of mental well-being as a core component of
41 comprehensive health and health care.

42 (d) "Substance use disorder" means a treatable mental
43 health disorder that affects a person's brain and behavior
44 leading to an inability to control the use of substances,
45 including legal or illegal drugs, alcohol, or medications.

46 (e) "Training program" means a department-approved,
47 statewide mental health and substance use disorder training
48 program created by a national authority on mental health that
49 incorporates strategies to reduce the stigma associated with
50 mental illness, provides an overview of mental illness and
51 substance use disorders, and provides participants with skills
52 to use when experiencing a crisis.

53 (2) (a) Beginning July 1, 2024, the department shall
54 establish the Mental Health and Substance Use Disorder Awareness
55 and Assistance Training Program with the goal of training people
56 whose occupations have a high level of daily interaction with
57 the public, including, but not limited to, first responders,
58 health care professionals, educators, business employees, and

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59 clergy, to recognize the signs of mental illness and substance
60 use disorders.

61 (b) The training program shall provide:

62 1. An overview of mental illnesses and substance use
63 disorders, including risk factors and warning signs, strategies
64 for how to help a person who is experiencing a mental health- or
65 substance use-related crisis, and how to seek help.

66 2. Practical strategies to help reduce the stigma
67 associated with mental illness and substance use disorders.

68 (3) (a) By September 1, 2024, the department shall select a
69 coordinating agency to administer the training program
70 statewide.

71 (b) The coordinating agency shall meet all of the following
72 criteria:

73 1. Have at least 5 years of experience providing mental
74 health and substance use disorder training in the state to at
75 least 10,000 people.

76 2. Be accredited by a national accrediting organization.

77 3. Provide financial statements audited by a nationally
78 recognized auditing firm.

79 4. Submit a 5-year, statewide, phase-in implementation plan
80 for administering the training program.

81 (4) (a) The coordinating agency shall be responsible for all
82 aspects of administering the training program based on its 5-
83 year, statewide, phase-in implementation plan. The plan must set
84 a goal for the number of people to be trained each year.

85 Targeted populations must include first responders and citizens
86 of high-risk neighborhoods and rural communities. The plan must
87 recommend a detailed budget to accomplish these goals, including

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88 metrics and reporting requirements.

89 (b) By June 30, 2025, and annually thereafter by June 30,
90 the coordinating agency shall provide agreed-upon reporting
91 metrics, including the number of people trained and the results
92 of surveys of the people trained which document their knowledge
93 of mental health first aid taught in the training. The report
94 must also document the number of first responders trained. The
95 coordinating agency shall also provide success stories from
96 trainees who successfully used the training program to help
97 someone with a mental health- or substance use-related crisis.

98 Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2024.