

BILL ANALYSIS

S.B. 133
By: Schwertner
Public Education
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Mental health first aid is an evidence-based training program that educates non-medical professionals in strategies and resources to be used in responding to an individual who is developing a mental health problem or experiencing a crisis. According to informed parties, participants in the training program learn how to assess risk, listen to and support the individual in crisis, and identify professional resources and supports. The program can be taught to anyone, although it is especially relevant for professionals who regularly interact with Texas youth, such as teachers, health care workers, police officers, and faith leaders. Recent legislation provided voluntary, no-cost mental health first aid training to educators. S.B. 133 seeks to expand the availability of this training.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE IMPACT

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly create a criminal offense, increase the punishment for an existing criminal offense or category of offenses, or change the eligibility of a person for community supervision, parole, or mandatory supervision.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, department, agency, or institution.

ANALYSIS

S.B. 133 amends the Health and Safety Code to specify that the educators provided training in mental health first aid through a Department of State Health Services (DSHS) grant program are school district employees and school resource officers. The bill defines "school district employee" as a person employed by a school district who regularly interacts with students through the course of the person's duties, including an educator, a secretary, a school bus driver, or a cafeteria worker, and defines "school resource officer" as a peace officer who is assigned by the officer's employing political subdivision to provide a police presence at a public school, safety or drug education to students of a public school, or other similar services. The bill specifies that it is these same employees and officers whose successful completion of such training provided by a local mental health authority triggers the requirement for grants to be awarded by DSHS to the authority.

S.B. 133 authorizes DSHS, for each state fiscal year, to allocate any unobligated money appropriated for making grants for training mental health first aid trainers and training certain educators in mental health first aid for supplemental grants, which DSHS may give to a local mental health authority that submits to DSHS a revised plan for mental health first aid training programs that demonstrates how the additional grant money would be used if made available to the authority. The bill changes from not later than October 1 of each state fiscal year to not later than July 1 of each state fiscal year the deadline by which a local mental health authority must submit such a plan to DSHS.

S.B. 133 changes the deadline by which a local mental health authority must provide certain information regarding mental health first aid training programs to DSHS from not later than July 1 of each year to not later than September 30 of each year and changes the time frame to which the information applies from the preceding calendar year to the preceding fiscal year. The bill specifies that the information provided to DSHS regarding the number of employees and contractors of the authority who were trained as mental health first aid trainers must include the number of such individuals who were trained during the preceding fiscal year. The bill changes the deadline by which DSHS must compile the information submitted by local mental health authorities and submit that information in a report to the legislature from not later than August 1 of each year to not later than December 1 of each year.

S.B. 133 repeals provisions capping the amount of grants DSHS may award for each state fiscal year to a local mental health authority for training of mental health first aid trainers and for training certain educators in mental health first aid and instead caps the amount DSHS may give to a local mental health authority for each state fiscal year in the form of such grants at the lesser of \$70,000 or three percent of the total amount appropriated to DSHS for making those grants.

S.B. 133 repeals the following Health and Safety Code provisions, as added by Chapter 1306 (H.B. 3793), Acts of the 83rd Legislature, Regular Session, 2013:

- Section 1001.202(c)
- Section 1001.203(b)

EFFECTIVE DATE

On passage, or, if the bill does not receive the necessary vote, September 1, 2015.