

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

H.B. 1916  
By: Miller  
Juvenile Justice & Family Issues  
Committee Report (Unamended)

### **BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE**

Reports indicate a clear desire across Texas for the child welfare system to become more trauma-informed. It has been suggested that the most prevalent inadequacy seen within the Department of Family and Protective Services in providing trauma-informed care is the lack of education and training of staff, courts, and caregivers with regard to recognizing and distinguishing the behaviors that children exhibit. There have been calls to improve system knowledge of the brain and body as affected by trauma and insecure attachment for the purpose of improving the delivery of trauma-informed care. H.B. 1916 seeks to address this issue by requiring evidence-based trauma training for certain attorneys.

### **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 rulemaking authority is expressly granted to the Texas Supreme Court in SECTION 1 of this bill.

### **ANALYSIS**

H.B. 1916 amends the Family Code to require an attorney who is on the court-maintained list as being qualified for appointment as an attorney ad litem for a child in a child protection case to provide proof that the attorney has completed a training program regarding trauma-informed care and the effect of trauma on children in the conservatorship of the Department of Family and Protective Services. The bill sets out the information required to be included in the training and requires the Texas Supreme Court to adopt rules to provide for the training not later than December 1, 2019, and to consult with specified entities in adopting the rules. The bill requires an attorney to complete the training before being so appointed and requires an attorney who is on the court-maintained list on the bill's effective date to complete the training not later than September 1, 2020.

H.B. 1916 amends the Government Code to require the State Bar of Texas to count the hours of trauma-informed care training a state-licensed attorney completes toward its minimum continuing legal education requirements for the reporting year in which the training is completed.

### **EFFECTIVE DATE**

September 1, 2019.