

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

C.S.H.B. 697  
By: Rosenthal  
Defense & Veterans' Affairs  
Committee Report (Substituted)

### **BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE**

It has been suggested that military culture is unique and that specific training is required in order for those that do not have a military background to understand the intricacies of the military experience. C.S.H.B. 697 seeks to ensure that entities receiving grants to provide mental health services for veterans or veterans' families have proper training in this regard.

### **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**

C.S.H.B. 697 amends the Government Code and Health and Safety Code to condition the authority of a state agency, including the Department of State Health Services (DSHS), to award a grant to an entity for the provision of mental health services to veterans or veterans' families on the entity demonstrating one of the following:

- that it has previously received and successfully executed a grant from the agency; or
- that it provides training on military informed care or military cultural competency to its personnel who provide the mental health services or requires those personnel to complete military competency training provided by certain applicable state or federal agencies or nonprofit organizations.

The bill requires the Texas Veterans Commission and DSHS to jointly undertake to ensure that a state agency that may award these grants has adopted policies to ensure compliance with the bill's requirements.

### **EFFECTIVE DATE**

September 1, 2021.

### **COMPARISON OF ORIGINAL AND SUBSTITUTE**

While C.S.H.B. 697 may differ from the original in minor or nonsubstantive ways, the following summarizes the substantial differences between the introduced and committee substitute versions of the bill.

Whereas the original conditioned the award of a grant on the entity demonstrating that it provides military cultural competency training to its personnel providing the mental health

services to veterans, the substitute provides for the entity to demonstrate one of the following as alternative means to satisfy the condition for a grant award:

- that the entity has previously received and successfully executed a grant from the awarding agency;
- that the entity provides training on military informed care to its personnel providing the services; or
- that the entity requires those personnel to complete military competency training provided by an applicable agency or nonprofit organization.

The substitute specifies that the services to be provided under a grant are mental health services to veterans or veterans' families, whereas the original specified only those services to veterans.