

Committee on Children, Families, and Elder Affairs

CS/SB 7012 — Substance Abuse and Mental Health

by Appropriations Committee; and Children, Families, and Elder Affairs Committee; and
Senator Rouson

The bill makes several changes to laws relating to suicide prevention and substance abuse and mental health services. Specifically, the bill:

- Broadens the scope and duties of the Statewide Office of Suicide Prevention (Statewide Office) in the Department of Children and Families (DCF) by requiring the Statewide Office to coordinate education and training curricula on suicide prevention efforts for law enforcement personnel, first responders to emergency calls, veterans, military service members, health care providers, and school employees.
- Creates the First Responders Suicide Deterrence Task Force within the Statewide Office to assist in the reduction of suicide rates of first responders, such as law enforcement officers and firefighters.
- Broadens the scope and duties of the Suicide Prevention Coordinating Council by requiring the Council to make recommendations on the implementation of evidence-based mental health programs and suicide risk identification training and adds five new members to the Council.
- Requires Baker Act receiving facilities to provide information regarding the availability of local mobile response services and suicide prevention resources to minors being released from a facility.
- Redefines “mental illness” related to the Baker Act and post-adjudication commitment to exclude dementia and traumatic brain injury.
- Defines “coordinated specialty care programs” as an essential element of a coordinated system of care and requires the DCF to report annually on any gaps in availability or access in the state. Makes coordinated specialty care programs eligible for Criminal Justice, Mental Health, and Substance Abuse Reinvestment grants.
- Allows licensed health care professionals and facilities to contract with the DCF and managing entities to provide mental health services without obtaining a separate license from the DCF.
- Removes the requirement for substance abuse prevention coalitions to be certified by the DCF.
- Requires county jails to administer the psychotropic medications prescribed by the DCF when a forensic client is discharged and returned to the county jail to stand trial, unless the jail physician documents the need to change or discontinue such medication.
- Requires the DCF treating physician to consult with the jail physician and consider prescribing medication included in the jail’s drug formulary.
- Requires county jails to send to the DCF all medical information on individuals in their custody who will be admitted to a state mental health treatment facility for restoration of competency. Requires the DCF to request this information immediately upon receipt of a completed commitment packet and requires the county jail to provide such information within three business days of the request.

If approved by the Governor, these provisions take effect July 1, 2020.

Vote: Senate 38-0; House 118-0