

1 A bill to be entitled
 2 An act relating to services for combat veterans and
 3 their families; creating s. 394.9087, F.S.; defining
 4 the term "combat veteran"; requiring that the
 5 Department of Children and Families establish the
 6 Florida Combat Veterans' Care Coordination Program to
 7 provide combat veterans and their families with
 8 behavioral health care referral and care coordination
 9 services; requiring that the department contract with
 10 managing entities to enter into agreements with
 11 Florida 211 Network participants for such services;
 12 providing program goals; providing for the delivery of
 13 services by program teams; requiring Florida 211
 14 Network participants to collect data on the
 15 implementation of the program and submit such data to
 16 the department; requiring the department to submit a
 17 report on such implementation to the Governor and
 18 Legislature; providing an appropriation; providing an
 19 effective date.

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

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 23 Section 1. Section 394.9087, Florida Statutes is created
 24 to read:

25 394.9087 Florida Combat Veterans' Care Coordination
 26 Program.—

27 (1) As used in this section, the term "combat veteran"
28 means a wartime veteran as defined in s. 1.01(14).

29 (2) The Department of Children and Families, in
30 consultation with the Florida Alliance of Information and
31 Referral Services, shall establish the Florida Combat Veterans'
32 Care Coordination Program. The department shall contract with
33 managing entities, as defined in s. 394.9082(2)(d), to enter
34 into agreements with Florida 211 Network participants to provide
35 combat veterans and their families in this state with dedicated
36 behavioral health care referral services, especially mental
37 health and substance abuse services. The department shall model
38 the program after the proof-of-concept pilot program established
39 in 2014 by the Crisis Center of Tampa Bay and the Florida
40 Department of Veterans' Affairs in Hillsborough, Pasco,
41 Pinellas, Polk, and Manatee Counties.

42 (3) The goals of the program are to:

43 (a) Prevent suicides by combat veterans.

44 (b) Increase the use of United States Department of
45 Veterans Affairs' programs and services by combat veterans.

46 (c) Increase the number of combat veterans who use other
47 available community-based programs and services.

48 (4) The program must be available statewide. Program
49 services must be provided by program teams operated by Florida
50 211 Network participants, authorized by s. 408.918. A Florida
51 211 Network participant may provide services in more than one
52 managing entity's geographic area under a single contract.

53 (5) The program teams shall provide referral and care
54 coordination services to combat veterans and their families and
55 expand the existing Florida 211 Network to include the optimal
56 range of veterans' service organizations and programs. Program
57 services must include:

58 (a) Telephonic peer support, crisis intervention, and the
59 communication of information and referral resources.

60 (b) Treatment coordination, including coordination of
61 followup care.

62 (c) Suicide assessment.

63 (d) Promotion of the safety and wellness of combat
64 veterans and their families, including continuous safety
65 planning and support.

66 (e) Resource coordination, including data analysis, to
67 facilitate acceptance, enrollment, and attendance by combat
68 veterans and their families in United States Department of
69 Veterans Affairs' programs and services and other available
70 community-based programs and services.

71 (f) Immediate needs assessments, including safety planning
72 and support.

73 (6) To enhance program services, program teams shall:

74 (a) Track the number of requests from callers who are
75 combat veterans or their family members.

76 (b) Follow up with callers or their family members to
77 determine whether they have acted on the referrals or received
78 the assistance needed, or if additional referral or advocacy is

79 needed.

80 (c) Develop and implement communication strategies, such
81 as media promotions, public service announcements, print and
82 Internet articles, and community presentations, to inform combat
83 veterans and their families about available United States
84 Department of Veterans Affairs' programs and services and other
85 available community-based programs and services.

86 (d) Document all calls and capture all necessary data to
87 improve outreach to combat veterans and their families and
88 report such data to the managing entity.

89 (7) Florida 211 Network participants shall collect and
90 submit data on the implementation of the program to the
91 department in the format prescribed by the department. The
92 department shall use such data to prepare a report and provide
93 such report to the Governor, the President of the Senate, and
94 the Speaker of the House of Representatives by December 15,
95 2016. The report must include:

96 (a) The number of calls received.

97 (b) Demographic information for each caller, including,
98 but not limited to, the caller's military affiliation, the
99 caller's veteran status, and if the caller is receiving services
100 through United States Department of Veterans Affairs' programs
101 and services or other available community-based programs and
102 services.

103 (c) The nature of each call, including, but not limited
104 to, the concerns prompting the call and the services requested.

105 (d) The outcome of each call, including, but not limited
 106 to, the service referrals made and the organizations to which
 107 the caller was referred.

108 (e) Services received as a result of each call.

109 (f) Follow up by the program team, including, but not
 110 limited to, the percentage of calls receiving follow up and the
 111 period of time between initial contact and follow up.

112 (g) The impact of the program on each caller's quality of
 113 life and on the avoidance of negative outcomes, including arrest
 114 and suicide.

115 (h) The satisfaction of each caller with program services.

116 Section 2. For the 2015-2016 fiscal year, the sum of
 117 \$2,000,155 in recurring funds is appropriated from the General
 118 Revenue Fund to the Department of Children and Families for the
 119 purpose of implementing this act.

120 Section 3. This act shall take effect July 1, 2015.