

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
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S.B. 397
By: Kolkhorst
Health & Human Services
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As Filed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Local law enforcement increasingly find themselves at the nexus of mental health issues in the state. Individuals with mental health issues often find themselves at the county jailhouse after an episode related to their condition. Law enforcement are required to conduct extensive screenings related to suicide and mental health issues and are often unaware or unable to access mental health services offered by local mental health authorities (LMHA).

S.B. 397 promotes cooperation with local law enforcement officials in order to facilitate communication between those on the front lines of mental health issues and those who coordinate the variety of services currently offered by LMHAs.

S.B. 397, as filed, requires an LMHA to include one representative of a local law enforcement agency of a county or municipality in the local authority's service area on their governing board. If a local mental health authority does not have a governing body, S.B. 397 requires a local authority to consult with a designated representative of a local law enforcement agency of a county or municipality in the local authority's service area regarding the use of the funds at their disposal.

As proposed, S.B. 397 amends current law relating to the composition of the governing bodies of and the consultation policies of local mental health authorities with respect to local law enforcement agencies.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

This bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, institution, or agency.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Section 533.035, Health and Safety Code, by adding Subsection (b-1), as follows:

(b-1) Requires a governing body of a local mental health authority, if there is a local governing body, to include one representative of a local law enforcement agency of a county or municipality in the local authority's service area. Requires the local authority, if there is not a local governing body, to consult with a designated representative of a local law enforcement agency of a county or municipality in the local authority's service area regarding the use of the funds received under Subsection (b) (relating to the disbursement to a local mental health authority federal and state funds to spend in the local service area for certain services).

SECTION 2. Effective date: September 1, 2017.