



HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

FISCAL NOTE

HOUSE BILL NO. 43

PRINTERS NO. 3541

PRIME SPONSOR: Harper

COST / (SAVINGS)

FUND	FY 2013/14	FY 2014/15
General Fund	\$0	\$0
Corporation Bureau Restricted Account	\$0	See "Fiscal Impact"
Professional Licensure Augmentation Account	\$0	Minimal

SUMMARY: Allows licensed mental health professionals to obtain volunteer licenses and provide free mental health services to military personnel and their families outside of clinic settings. This legislation would take effect immediately.

ANALYSIS: This legislation amends the Volunteer Health Services Act (Act 141 of 1996) to:

- clarify that volunteer licensees are allowed to provide mental health services in approved clinics;
- allow volunteer licensees to provide mental health services to military personnel and their families outside of approved clinics upon referral from approved organizations; and
- allow psychologists, social workers, marriage and family therapists and professional counselors to obtain a volunteer license.

The following are major provisions of the legislation:

- A definition of "Approved organization" is added and means a nonprofit organization whose purpose is to refer military personnel and their families who are in need of mental health services to licensed volunteers who provide free services whether or not the services are provided at an approved clinic and which organization is approved by the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs (DMVA).
- The definition of "Board" is amended to include the State Board of Psychology and the State Board of Social Workers, Marriage and Family Therapists and Professional Counselors.
- A definition of "Mental health services" is added and provides that "The term includes, but is not limited to, providing social work, marital and family therapy, substance abuse counseling and treatment for post-traumatic stress disorder and traumatic brain injury."

- The definition of “Primary health care services” is amended to specifically include mental health services.
- The definition of “Volunteer license” is amended to allow practice upon referral from approved organizations.
- Establishes a procedure by which the DMVA shall designate approved organizations.
- Clarifies that volunteer licensees may only provide services that are within their individual scope of practice.

FISCAL IMPACT: This legislation would have no adverse fiscal impact on the General Fund. The Department of Military and Veteran Affairs indicates that they will utilize documentation that is submitted to other departments.

According to the Department of State, there could be some minimal costs to the Bureau of Corporations and Charitable Organizations, funded out of the Corporation Bureau Restricted Account, depending on what level of “coordination” is contemplated during the approval process for nonprofit organizations. These costs could be absorbed within currently available funds.

The department indicates that minimal costs would be incurred within the Professional Licensure Augmentation Account for the State Boards of Psychology, Social Workers, Marriage and Family Therapists and Professional Counselors to promulgate regulations to provide volunteer licenses. The State Boards of Medicine, Osteopathic Medicine, Dentistry, Podiatry, Nursing, Optometry and Chiropractic would also incur some minimal costs to amend current regulations to reflect changes made by this legislation. These costs could be absorbed within currently available funds.

PREPARED BY: Tim Rodrigo
House Appropriations Committee (R)

DATE: June 18, 2014

Estimates are calculated using the best information available. Actual costs and revenue impact incurred may vary from estimates.