

FIRST RESPONDER MENTAL HEALTH AMENDMENTS

2023 GENERAL SESSION

STATE OF UTAH

Chief Sponsor: Ryan D. Wilcox

Senate Sponsor: _____

LONG TITLE

Committee Note:

The Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice Interim Committee recommended this bill.

Legislative Vote: 13 voting for 0 voting against 4 absent

General Description:

This bill adds provisions relating to spouses of retired first responders and addresses access to mental health services.

Highlighted Provisions:

This bill:

▶ adds spouses of retired first responders to the list of those who qualify for mental health services; and

▶ provides that mental health services shall be provided on a regular and continuing basis.

Money Appropriated in this Bill:

None

Other Special Clauses:

None

Utah Code Sections Affected:

AMENDS:

53-21-102, as enacted by Laws of Utah 2022, Chapter 114

53-21-103, as enacted by Laws of Utah 2022, Chapter 114



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Be it enacted by the Legislature of the state of Utah:

Section 1. Section **53-21-102** is amended to read:

53-21-102. Mental health services -- Requirement to provide --- Confidentiality.

(1) Every first responder agency within the state shall provide or make available mental health resources to:

- (a) all first responders;
- (b) the spouse and children of first responders;
- (c) surviving spouses of first responders whose death is classified as a line-of-duty death under Title 49, Utah State Retirement and Insurance Benefit Act; [~~and~~]
- (d) first responders who have retired from the agency; and
- (e) spouses of retired first responders.

(2) All access by first responders and their families to mental health resources shall be kept confidential.

Section 2. Section **53-21-103** is amended to read:

53-21-103. Grants to first responder agencies -- Rulemaking.

(1) The department may award grants to first responder agencies to provide mental health resources in response to a:

- (a) request for proposal;
- (b) request for qualifications; or
- (c) program description that meets the criteria in Subsection (2).

(2) The request for proposal, request for qualifications, or program description received by the department shall require mental health providers contracted or employed by the first responder agency to have training and experience in working with first responders and provide, at a minimum, the following services:

- (a) regular periodic screenings for all employees within the first responder agency;
- (b) assessments and availability to mental health services for personnel directly involved in a critical incident within 12 hours of the incident; and
- (c) regular and continuing access to the mental health program for:
 - (i) spouses and children of first responders; and
 - (ii) first responders who have retired from the agency and their spouses.

59 (3) An application from a first responder agency for a grant under this chapter shall
60 provide the following details:

61 (a) a proposed plan to provide mental health resources to first responders in the first
62 responder agency;

63 (b) the number of first responders to be served by the proposed plan;

64 (c) how the proposed plan will ensure timely and effective provision of mental health
65 resources to first responders in the first responder agency;

66 (d) the cost of the proposed plan; and

67 (e) the sustainability of the proposed plan.

68 (4) In evaluating a project proposal for a grant under this section, the department shall
69 consider:

70 (a) the extent to which the first responders that will be served by the proposed plan are
71 likely to benefit from the proposed plan;

72 (b) the cost of the proposed plan; and

73 (c) the viability of the proposed plan.

74 (5) A first responder agency may not apply for a grant to fund a program already in
75 place. However, a request for proposal to fund an expansion of an already existing program
76 shall, in addition to the requirements of Subsection (4), provide:

77 (a) the scope and cost of the agency's current program;

78 (b) the number of additional first responders the expansion will serve; and

79 (c) whether the expansion will provide services under Subsection (2) that the current
80 program does not provide.

81 (6) The department shall prioritize grant funding for:

82 (a) counties of the 3rd, 4th, 5th, and 6th class;

83 (b) cities of the 3rd, 4th, and 5th class; and

84 (c) towns.

85 (7) The department may adopt rules in accordance with Title 63G, Chapter 3, Utah
86 Administrative Rulemaking Act, to:

87 (a) set parameters for services for retirees and their spouses; and

88 (b) administer this chapter.