

LEGISLATURE OF NEBRASKA  
ONE HUNDRED THIRD LEGISLATURE  
SECOND SESSION

**LEGISLATIVE BILL 931**

Introduced by Bolz, 29; Scheer, 19.

Read first time January 15, 2014

Committee: Health and Human Services

A BILL

- 1 FOR AN ACT relating to health and human services; to adopt the
- 2 Nebraska Mental Health First Aid Training Act; and to
- 3 state intent relating to appropriations.
- 4 Be it enacted by the people of the State of Nebraska,

1           Section 1. Sections 1 to 5 of this act shall be known and  
2 may be cited as the Nebraska Mental Health First Aid Training Act.

3           Sec. 2. The Legislature finds that:

4           (1) National statistics show that one in four Americans  
5 will face a mental illness in his or her lifetime; and

6           (2) Mental health first aid builds an understanding of  
7 how mental illness affects Nebraskans, provides an overview of common  
8 treatments, and teaches basic skills for providing assistance to a  
9 person who may be developing symptoms or experiencing a crisis.

10          Sec. 3. For purposes of the Nebraska Mental Health First  
11 Aid Training Act, mental health first aid means the help provided to  
12 a person who is experiencing a mental health or substance abuse  
13 problem or in a mental health crisis before appropriate professional  
14 assistance or other supports are secured.

15          Sec. 4. (1) The Department of Health and Human Services  
16 shall establish a mental health first aid training program to help  
17 the public identify and understand the signs of a mental illness or  
18 substance abuse problem or a mental health crisis and to provide the  
19 public with skills to help a person who is developing or experiencing  
20 a mental health or substance abuse problem or a mental health crisis  
21 and to de-escalate crisis situations if needed. The training program  
22 shall provide an interactive mental health first aid training course  
23 through the state's regional behavioral health authorities.  
24 Instructors in the training program shall be certified by a national  
25 authority for Mental Health First Aid USA or a similar organization.

1 The training program shall work cooperatively with local entities to  
2 provide training for individuals to become instructors.

3 (2) The mental health first aid training program shall be  
4 designed to train individuals to accomplish the following objectives  
5 as deemed appropriate considering the trainee's age:

6 (a) Help the public identify, understand, and respond to  
7 the signs of mental illness and substance abuse;

8 (b) Emphasize the need to reduce the stigma of mental  
9 illness; and

10 (c) Assist a person who is believed to be developing or  
11 has developed a mental health or substance abuse problem or who is  
12 believed to be experiencing a mental health crisis.

13 Sec. 5. The Department of Health and Human Services shall  
14 ensure that evaluative criteria are established which measure the  
15 efficacy of the training program, including trainee feedback, with  
16 the objective of helping the public identify, understand, and respond  
17 to the signs of mental illness and alcohol and substance abuse. The  
18 department shall submit an annual report electronically to the  
19 Legislature on trainee demographics and outcomes of the established  
20 criteria.

21 Sec. 6. The Department of Health and Human Services shall  
22 offer services to agencies and organizations, including, but not  
23 limited to, schools, universities, colleges, the State Department of  
24 Education, the Department of Veterans' Affairs, law enforcement  
25 agencies, local health departments, and regional behavioral health

1 authorities, to implement the Nebraska Mental Health First Aid  
2 Training Act.

3           Sec. 7. It is the intent of the Legislature to  
4 appropriate one hundred thousand dollars annually to the Department  
5 of Health and Human Services to carry out the Nebraska Mental Health  
6 First Aid Training Act.