

Presentation to Senate Veteran Affairs & Border Security Committee

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Services

Veterans Mental Health Coordination and Programs



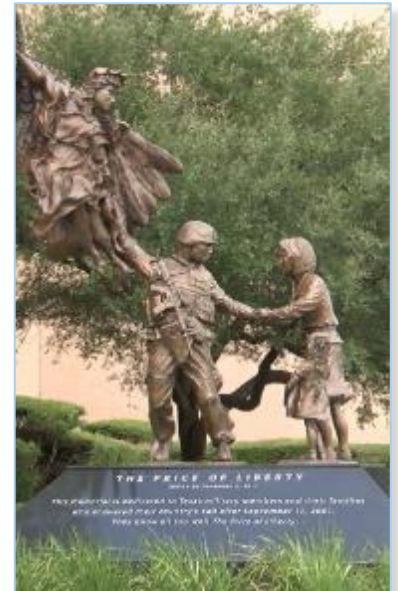
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Mission

Coordinate sustainable mental health services for Veterans and their families that are evidenced-based, results-driven, effective, efficient, and meet the client needs where they are

Vision

Texas Veterans and their families have access to appropriate and effective mental health services when and where they need them





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Mental Health Program for Veterans

Program Summary

The Mental Health Program for Veterans was established by House Bill 2392 (83-R) and directs HHSC to coordinate with the Texas Veterans Commission to provide:

- Peer-to-peer counseling
- Access to licensed mental health professionals (providers)
- Training to peers and providers, including suicide prevention training
- Training to community and faith-based organizations
- Jail diversion service coordination



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Texas Veterans + Family Alliance Grant

Program Summary

Senate Bill 55 (84-R) requires HHSC to administer a mental health grant program to provide funding to improve the quality of life for Texas veterans and their families in the community by:

- Expanding the availability of mental health treatment and services
- Increasing access to these treatment and services
- Enhancing the delivery of mental health treatment and services



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Veteran Suicide Data

- Nationally, 14 of 20 Veterans who die by suicide each day are not enrolled in VA Healthcare¹
- The national rates of suicide among male and female veterans is 1.4 times and 1.8 times greater respectively, than non-veteran suicides¹
- In Texas, a median average of 499 Veterans died by suicide each year from year 2000 through 2015²

¹ US Department of Veteran Affairs, 2019

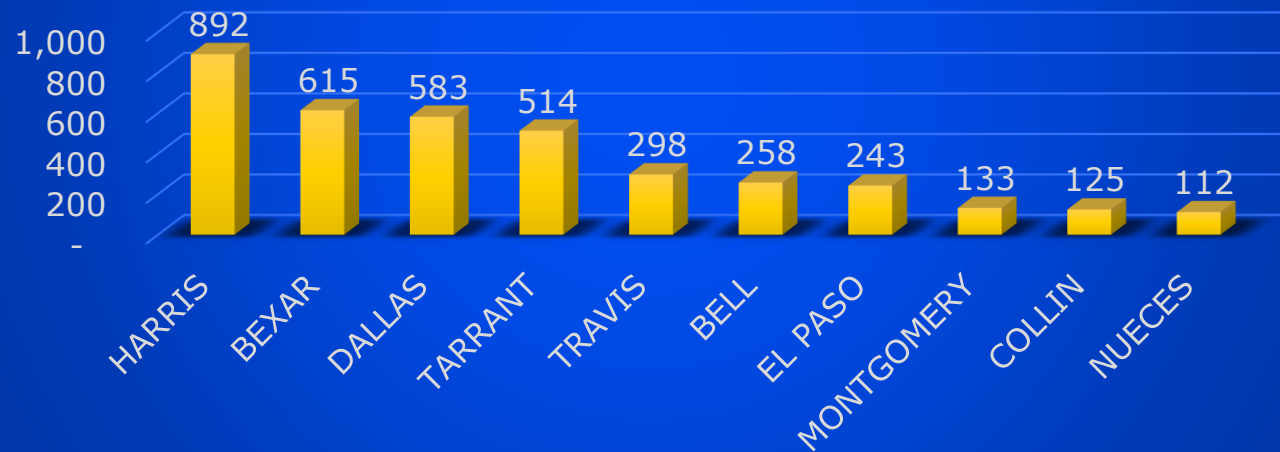
² Texas Department of State Health Services, 2018



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Prevalence: Years 2000-2015

Texas Veterans Deaths Due to Intentional Self-Harm (Suicide), 2000-2015: Ten Counties with Highest Counts





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Texas Veterans Suicide Prevention Action Plans

Senate Bill 578 (85-R) tasks HHSC to create short-term and long-term veteran suicide prevention action plans, including specific policy, administrative, and funding recommendations needed to achieve full implementation of the action plans

- The *Report on the Short-term Action Plan to Prevent Veteran Suicide* was published on September 1, 2019
- The *Report on the Long-term Action Plan to Prevent Veteran Suicide* is required to be published by September 1, 2021



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Texas Veterans Suicide Prevention Action Plans

Strategic Efforts

- The Short-term Action Plan to Prevent Veteran Suicide is to be fully implemented by September 1, 2021. The plan's focus is to:
 - Raise awareness among providers of the gaps in healthcare for service members, veterans, and their families (SMVF), which must be addressed to prevent suicide
 - Promote the use of evidence-based methods and best practices regarding suicide prevention efforts for services members, veterans, and their families
 - Normalize safety seeking behavior
- The Short-term Action Plan includes recommendations for statutory, administrative, and budget-related reforms



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Texas Veterans Suicide Prevention Action Plans

Strategic Efforts

The Long-term Action Plan to Prevent Veteran Suicide is to be fully implemented by September 1, 2027, and will align with:

- The Department of Veterans Affairs National Challenge to Prevent Veteran Suicides;
- The Centers for Disease Control's Technical Package for Preventing Suicides; and
- The Texas Suicide Prevention Council's Texas State Plan for Suicide Prevention



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Texas Veterans Suicide Prevention Action Plans

Strategic Partners

In addition to state partners, HHSC is collaborating with the following entities:

- U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration
- Department of Defense
- American Foundation for Suicide Prevention
- National Sports Shooting Foundation
- Wounded Warrior Project

Texas Veterans App



Overview & Functionality

- Provides Access to key statewide and local services
- Crisis line staffed round-the-clock
- Connects female veterans to targeted resources
- Map function connects users to local services
- Over 59,000 downloads over all operating systems

