



# **Mental Health First Aid Annual Report**

**As Required By  
Health and Safety Code Section 1001.205**



**Department of State Health Services  
August 2014**

- This page is intentionally left blank -

## Table of Contents

<b>Executive Summary .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Introduction.....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Background .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Results to Date.....</b>	<b>2</b>

- This page is intentionally left blank -

## **Executive Summary**

House Bill 3793, 83<sup>rd</sup> Legislature, Regular Session, 2013, directs the Department of State Health Services (DSHS) to provide grants to local mental health authorities (LMHA) to train their staff and contractors as instructors of mental health first aid (MHFA). Additionally, these MHFA instructors are then to provide training in the MHFA protocols to educators at no cost to the educator or their employers.

Texas Health and Safety Code Section 1001.205 (b) requires DSHS to compile the information submitted by the LMHAs and submit a report to the Legislature, which provides the number of: LMHA employees and contractors trained as MHFA instructors, educators who completed a MHFA training program provided by an LMHA, and individuals who are not educators who completed a MHFA training program provided by an LMHA.

The intent of the legislation is to provide participants with the skills necessary to help an individual experiencing a mental health crisis until the individual is able to obtain appropriate professional care and to maximize the number of youth exposed to professionals trained in MHFA.

Since the MHFA program was implemented in December 2013, 363 LMHA employees and contractors have been trained as MHFA instructors, 917 educators have received MHFA training, and 1,588 non-educators have received MHFA training.

## **Introduction**

As a result of this program, a group of trained instructors from the LMHAs will be available to provide training to educators located within their local service areas; thereby increasing the exposure of school aged children to professionals trained and certified in MHFA.

Under Section 1001.205 of the Texas Health and Safety Code, an annual report is required to the Legislature, which contains the number of: LMHA employees and contractors trained as MHFA instructors, educators who completed a MHFA training program provided by an LMHA, and individuals who are not educators who completed a MHFA training program provided by an LMHA.

## **Background**

House Bill 3793, 83<sup>rd</sup> Legislature, Regular Session, 2013 establishes trainer requirements and outlines how funds will be distributed to implement the MHFA program.

The statute specifies that MHFA training must be conducted by a trained instructor and provide participants with the skills necessary to help an individual experiencing a mental health crisis until the individual is able to obtain appropriate professional care. It also requires that the training include instruction in a five-step strategy for helping an individual experiencing a mental health crisis, and introduction to the risk factors and warning signs for mental illness and substance abuse problems. The training must also provide experiential activities to increase participants' understanding of the impact of mental illness, and a presentation of evidence-supported treatment and self-help strategies. The legislation stipulates each center is eligible to

receive a maximum allocation of \$1,000 per staff member or contractor who becomes a certified instructor of MHFA and an additional \$100 per educator who successfully completes the MHFA training. These allocations are not to exceed \$30,000 per center for staff and contractor certification or \$40,000 per center for educator trainings.

MHFA is an evidence-based practice according to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's National Registry of Evidence-Based Programs and Practices. This designation requires extensive research to document the intervention's effectiveness.

To receive grant funding, LMHAs must submit a plan to DSHS each fiscal year that demonstrates the manner in which the resources will be used.

### **Results to Date**

During the first year of implementation, DSHS disbursed \$1,537,650 to LMHAs and the Local Behavioral Health Authority (LBHA) to implement their plans. LMHAs/LBHA are eligible to participate as a single center initiative or they may pool resources with surrounding centers to form a regional collaborative. All 37 LMHAs and one LBHA participated as either a direct contractor with DSHS or as part of a multi-center collaboration. DSHS worked closely with the Texas Council of Community Centers to encourage and support the LMHAs/LBHA in carrying out this program. At one point, the Texas initiative overwhelmed the ability for the National Council for Behavioral Health to provide enough training sessions to meet the state's demand for MHFA trainers; however, due to active communication on the part of the Texas Council of Community Centers, additional training classes were added.

As a result, there are now 363 certified trainers available to the LMHAs/LBHA, 917 educators trained, and 1,588 non-educator community members trained in MHFA. To date, eight participating LMHAs have requested the maximum amount of funding allowable under the statute for staff and contractor certification; twenty two centers requested the maximum amount for educator trainings (including six that also requested the maximum allotment for staff and contractor certification). Several of these centers requested additional funding as they are able to train above the maximum; however, DSHS was unable to authorize additional funding due the funding parameters set forth in statute.