

CHAPTER 2022-39

Senate Bill No. 1712

An act relating to the Veteran Suicide Prevention Training Pilot Program; creating s. 292.115, F.S.; requiring the Department of Veterans' Affairs to establish the pilot program; providing the purpose of the pilot program; requiring pilot program participants to receive certain training; requiring the department to contract with an organization to develop the curriculum for such training; requiring the department to establish and oversee the participant certification process; requiring the department to adopt rules; requiring the department to submit an annual report to the Legislature by a specified date; providing an appropriation; providing an effective date.

Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

Section 1. Section 292.115, Florida Statutes, is created to read:

292.115 Veteran Suicide Prevention Training Pilot Program.—

(1) The Department of Veterans' Affairs shall establish the Veteran Suicide Prevention Training Pilot Program. The purpose of the pilot program is to offer to each Department of Veterans' Affairs claims examiner and each county and city veteran service officer, as described in s. 292.11, specialized training and certification in the prevention of veteran suicide.

(2) Individuals electing to participate in the pilot program must be trained to identify indicators of elevated suicide risk and provide emergency crisis referrals for veterans expressing or exhibiting symptoms of emotional or psychological distress. The Department of Veterans' Affairs shall contract with an organization having proven experience developing and implementing veteran-relevant and evidence-based suicide prevention training to develop the curriculum for such training. The department shall establish and oversee the process for certifying program participants who successfully complete such training.

(3) The Department of Veterans' Affairs shall adopt rules necessary to implement the pilot program.

(4) The Department of Veterans' Affairs shall submit a report to the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives by June 30 of each year which includes information concerning the pilot program and whether any changes should be made to the pilot program which would increase its effectiveness. In its report submitted by June 30, 2026, the department shall include a recommendation of whether the pilot program should be continued.

Section 2. The sum of \$500,000 in nonrecurring funds is appropriated from the General Revenue Fund to the Department of Veterans' Affairs for the purpose of implementing this act.

Section 3. This act shall take effect July 1, 2022.

Approved by the Governor April 6, 2022.

Filed in Office Secretary of State April 6, 2022.