



General Assembly

February Session, 2020

**Raised Bill No. 303**

LCO No. 2111



Referred to Committee on HIGHER EDUCATION AND  
EMPLOYMENT ADVANCEMENT

Introduced by:  
(HED)

**AN ACT IMPLEMENTING THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE TASK  
FORCE REGARDING THE PREVENTION AND TREATMENT OF  
MENTAL ILLNESS AT INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION.**

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General  
Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2020*) (a) As used in this section and  
2 sections 2 to 5, inclusive, of this act:

3 (1) "Services" or "mental health services" means counseling, therapy,  
4 rehabilitation, crisis intervention or emergency services for the  
5 screening, diagnosis or treatment of mental illness; and

6 (2) "Programs" or "mental health programming" means education,  
7 outreach, research or training initiatives aimed at students for the  
8 prevention of mental illness, including, but not limited to, poster and  
9 flyer campaigns, electronic communications, films, guest speakers,  
10 conferences or other campus events.

11 (b) Not later than January 1, 2021, each institution of higher education  
12 shall establish a campus mental health coalition responsible for and with

13 representatives from each of its campuses. The campus mental health  
14 coalition shall consist of individuals appointed by the president of each  
15 institution of higher education who are reflective of the demographics  
16 of the student body at such institution, including, but not limited to, at  
17 least one member from such institution's (1) administration, (2)  
18 counseling services office, if any, (3) health services office, if any, (4)  
19 senior and mid-level staff, (5) student body, (6) residential life office, if  
20 any, (7) faculty, and (8) any other individuals designated by the  
21 president.

22 (c) Each institution of higher education shall ensure that every  
23 member of the campus mental health coalition is educated in (1) the  
24 services and programs offered at each campus by such institution to  
25 address student mental illness, (2) the role and function of the campus  
26 mental health coalition at such institution, and (3) responses to student  
27 mental illness that are sensitive to students of diverse race, cultural  
28 backgrounds, sexual orientation or gender identity or status as a veteran  
29 or service member of the armed forces of the United States.

30 (d) Each campus mental health coalition shall (1) conduct an  
31 evaluation every four years of the effectiveness of the services and  
32 programs offered by the institution of higher education to address  
33 student mental illness in accordance with section 2 of this act, (2) review  
34 the results of such evaluation and develop a plan to address any  
35 weaknesses in the services and programs offered by the institution, and  
36 (3) review and recommend improvements for (A) institutional polices  
37 regarding student mental health, (B) the variety of mental health  
38 services available to students at the institution, including on-campus  
39 services, telehealth services provided in accordance with section 19a-906  
40 of the general statutes or services offered through community-based  
41 mental health care providers or emergency mobile psychiatric service  
42 providers in accordance with any memorandum of understanding  
43 entered into pursuant to section 3 of this act, (C) the quality of mental  
44 health services available to students, including recommendations for  
45 obtaining accreditation from the International Accreditation of  
46 Counseling Services or another nationally or regionally recognized

47 accrediting body for mental health services, and (D) the crisis  
48 intervention and management plan established pursuant to section 4 of  
49 this act.

50       Sec. 2. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2020*) (a) Not later than January 1, 2021,  
51 and every four years thereafter, the executive director of the Office of  
52 Higher Education and the Commissioner of Mental Health and  
53 Addiction Services, in consultation with an epidemiologist or other  
54 specialist with expertise in the study of mental health, shall develop and  
55 update (1) an assessment tool for use by each institution of higher  
56 education in evaluating the effectiveness of the services and programs  
57 offered at each of the institution's campuses to address student mental  
58 illness, (2) guidelines for the implementation of the assessment tool,  
59 including a timeline for completion, and (3) training workshops for the  
60 campus mental health coalitions established pursuant to section 1 of this  
61 act regarding best practices for the use and completion of the assessment  
62 tool.

63       (b) Not later than October 1, 2021, and every four years thereafter,  
64 each campus mental health coalition established at each institution of  
65 higher education pursuant to section 1 of this act shall (1) conduct an  
66 evaluation of the effectiveness of the services and programs offered at  
67 each campus by such institution to address student mental illness using  
68 the assessment tool developed pursuant to subsection (a) of this section  
69 in accordance with the guidelines and training provided by the  
70 executive director of the Office of Higher Education and the  
71 Commissioner of Mental Health and Addiction Services, and (2) submit  
72 the result of the assessment tool to the Office of Higher Education.

73       (c) Not later than thirty days after the receipt of the results of the  
74 assessment tool from each campus mental health coalition, the executive  
75 director of the Office of Higher Education shall post such results on the  
76 Internet web site of said office and submit a report, in accordance with  
77 the provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes, to the joint  
78 standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of  
79 matters relating to higher education on such results from each

80 institution of higher education.

81       Sec. 3. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2020*) Not later than January 1, 2021,  
82 each institution of higher education, in consultation with the  
83 Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services, shall enter into  
84 and maintain a memorandum of understanding with at least one  
85 community-based mental health care provider or emergency mobile  
86 psychiatric service provider for the purpose of providing students  
87 access to mental health services on or off campus and assistance to  
88 institutions in developing mental health programming.

89       Sec. 4. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2020*) (a) Not later than January 1, 2021,  
90 and annually thereafter, each institution of higher education shall  
91 establish and update a crisis intervention and management plan for each  
92 campus of such institution. Such plan shall include, but not be limited  
93 to, (1) a detailed description of the campus-wide response to a mental  
94 health crisis, (2) a review of each campus to identify any areas of danger  
95 to a person experiencing a mental health crisis, including buildings with  
96 roof access or areas used for storing chemicals, medicines or weapons,  
97 and (3) protocols to ensure campus safety and maintain restricted access  
98 to areas of danger identified on campus.

99       (b) Not later than January 1, 2021, and as necessary thereafter, the  
100 governing board of each institution of higher education shall adopt and  
101 update a policy regarding student mental health. Such policy shall  
102 include, but not be limited to, (1) the types of mental health services and  
103 programs provided to students each academic year, and (2) the  
104 availability of and eligibility requirements for mental health leave  
105 available to students.

106       (c) Not later than February 1, 2021, and not more than thirty days  
107 after the adoption of an updated policy, the governing board of each  
108 institution of higher education shall submit, in accordance with the  
109 provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes, to the joint standing  
110 committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters  
111 relating to higher education the policy adopted pursuant to subsection

112 (b) of this section.

113 Sec. 5. (*Effective July 1, 2020*) Not later than January 1, 2021, the Board  
114 of Regents for Higher Education shall employ a grant writer to identify  
115 and apply for available grant funding to implement or improve services  
116 and programs offered by the regional community-technical colleges to  
117 address student mental illness.

118 Sec. 6. Section 1 of special act 19-14 is repealed and the following is  
119 substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

120 (a) There is established a task force to study the policies and  
121 procedures adopted by each institution of higher education regarding  
122 the prevention and treatment of mental illness in students and to  
123 recommend a state-wide policy regarding mental health services  
124 available to students at institutions of higher education. For each  
125 institution of higher education in the state, such study shall include, but  
126 need not be limited to, an examination of (1) the manner in which the  
127 institution informs students of the availability of mental health services,  
128 (2) the manner in which the mental health services are delivered to  
129 students, including whether mental health services are available online,  
130 through individual counseling sessions or group discussions and a  
131 listing of the types of mental health care providers available to students,  
132 (3) the rate at which the mental health services are utilized in  
133 comparison to the total student body, (4) the level of engagement the  
134 institution has with community or nonprofit organizations that provide  
135 mental health treatment and services, (5) the solicitation and review of  
136 voluntary recommendations of students and alumni that received  
137 mental health services while enrolled at the institution, (6) the manner  
138 in which the institution facilitates the return of students that take a leave  
139 of absence due to mental illness, (7) the training provided to faculty and  
140 staff to identify students experiencing mental illness, [and] (8) [an  
141 analysis of] the rate at which different types of mental health services  
142 are sought by students, including, but not limited to, the rate at which  
143 services for substance use disorder, depression or anxiety are sought, (9)  
144 the policies adopted or updated by the governing board of each

145 institution pursuant to section 4 of this act, and (10) feedback from the  
146 executive director of the Office of Higher Education and each campus  
147 mental health coalition established pursuant to section 1 of this act on  
148 the assessment tool and results received from its implementation  
149 pursuant to section 2 of this act. No personally identifying information  
150 shall be included on any information the task force requests or analyzes  
151 for the purposes of the study.

152 (b) The task force shall consist of the following members:

153 (1) Two appointed by the speaker of the House of Representatives,  
154 one of whom shall be a representative of a community or nonprofit  
155 provider of mental health treatment or services;

156 (2) Two appointed by the president pro tempore of the Senate, one of  
157 whom shall be a mental health care provider;

158 (3) One appointed by the majority leader of the House of  
159 Representatives;

160 (4) One appointed by the majority leader of the Senate;

161 (5) One appointed by the minority leader of the House of  
162 Representatives;

163 (6) One appointed by the minority leader of the Senate;

164 (7) The president of the Board of Regents for Higher Education, or the  
165 president's designee; and

166 (8) The Commissioner of Mental Health and Addiction Services, or  
167 the commissioner's designee.

168 (c) Any member of the task force appointed under subdivision (1),  
169 (2), (3), (4), (5) or (6) of subsection (b) of this section may be a member  
170 of the General Assembly.

171 (d) All appointments to the task force shall be made not later than  
172 thirty days after the effective date of this section. Any vacancy shall be

173 filled by the appointing authority.

174 (e) The speaker of the House of Representatives and the president pro  
 175 tempore of the Senate shall select the chairpersons of the task force from  
 176 among the members of the task force. Such chairpersons shall schedule  
 177 the first meeting of the task force, which shall be held not later than sixty  
 178 days after the effective date of this section.

179 (f) The administrative staff of the joint standing committees of the  
 180 General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to higher  
 181 education and employment advancement and public health shall serve  
 182 as administrative staff of the task force.

183 (g) Not later than January 1, 2020, and annually thereafter until  
 184 January 1, 2022, the task force shall submit a report on its findings and  
 185 recommendations to the joint standing committees of the General  
 186 Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to higher education  
 187 and employment advancement and public health, in accordance with  
 188 the provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes. The task force  
 189 shall terminate on the date that it submits [such] its last report or  
 190 January 1, [2020] 2022, whichever is later.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	<i>July 1, 2020</i>	New section
Sec. 2	<i>July 1, 2020</i>	New section
Sec. 3	<i>July 1, 2020</i>	New section
Sec. 4	<i>July 1, 2020</i>	New section
Sec. 5	<i>July 1, 2020</i>	New section
Sec. 6	<i>from passage</i>	SA 19-14, Sec. 1

**Statement of Purpose:**

To implement the recommendations of the task force regarding the prevention and treatment of mental illness at institutions of higher education.

*[Proposed deletions are enclosed in brackets. Proposed additions are indicated by underline, except that when the entire text of a bill or resolution or a section of a bill or resolution is new, it is not underlined.]*

