

CALIFORNIA STATE BOARD OF PSYCHOLOGY

BILL ANALYSIS

BILL NUMBER: AB 2198

VERSION: AMENDED APRIL 21, 2014

AUTHOR: LEVINE

SPONSOR: AUTHOR

RECOMMENDED POSITION: WATCH

SUBJECT: MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONALS: SUICIDE PREVENTION TRAINING

Existing Law:

- 1) Provides that the Board of Psychology (Board) is the state licensing entity for Psychologists, Registered Psychologists, and Psychological Assistants. (Business and Professions Code (BPC) §§2900, 2903, 2913)
- 2) Requires the director of the Department of Consumer Affairs to establish, by regulation, guidelines to prescribe components for mandatory continuing education programs administered by any board within the department. The guidelines shall be developed to ensure that mandatory continuing education is used as a means to create a more competent licensing population, thereby enhancing public protection. (Business and Professions Code §166)
- 3) Requires licensees of the Board of Psychology (Board), upon renewal of their license, to certify to the Board that he or she has completed at least 36 hours of approved continuing education in or relevant to their field of practice. (BPC §§2914.1, 2914.2, 2915 (a), 2915 (d) (1), 2915 (2) (a-b), 2915.5, 2915.7).

This Bill:

- 1) States the intent of the Legislature to help lower the suicide rate in California by requiring certain health professionals to complete training in suicide assessment, treatment, and management as part of their continuing education. (BPC §§2915.3, 2915.4)
- 2) Would require a Psychologist, whose graduate study begins on or after January 1, 2016, to complete a 15 hours of contact hours of coursework in suicide assessment, treatment, and management. (BPC §2915.3)

3) Would require a Psychologist, whose graduate study began prior to January 1, 2016, to complete a six-hour continuing education course in suicide assessment, treatment, and management. (BPC §2915.4 (a))

Comments:

1) Author's Intent. The intent of this bill is to ensure mental health professionals have concentrated training in suicide assessment, treatment, and management. In 2008, over 36,000 people died by suicide in the U.S., making it the 10th leading cause of death nationally. Several organizations, including the United States Department of Health and Human Services, and the Institute of Medicine, have indicated a need for improved education and training in suicide assessment.

2) Current Education Requirements. There is currently no specific requirement that a licensee of the Board has coursework covering suicide assessment, treatment, and management in his or her degree, or complete continuing education, which covers suicide assessment.

The courses below must be completed prior to licensure or at the first renewal, depending on when the applicant began graduate study:

- Spousal/partner abuse (15 hours);
- Human Sexuality (10 hours);
- Child Abuse (7 hours);
- Substance Abuse (15 hours);
- Aging/long term care (10 hours);

Conversations with one of the Board's subject matter experts indicated that suicide assessment is likely covered in Master's degree and post-doctoral programs, both in basic counseling skills courses and in trauma courses.

3) Continuing Education Requirements. The Board has several one-time continuing educational requirements that must be completed by its licensees. These additional courses must be completed prior to licensure or at the first renewal, depending on when the applicant began graduate study.

All licensees must also certify that they have kept abreast of changes to the law or ethical codes every renewal period. In total, a licensee must complete 36 hours of continuing education every renewal period. There is no requirement for suicide assessment, treatment, and management.

4) Recommended Position: Watch

5) Support and Opposition.

Support:

None at this time.

Opposition:

None at this time.

11) History

2014

Apr. 22 In committee: Set, first hearing. Hearing canceled at the request of author.
Apr. 22 Re-referred to Com. on B.,P. & C.P.
Apr. 21 From committee chair, with author's amendments: Amend, and re-refer to Com. on B.,P. & C.P. Read second time and amended.
Mar. 6 Referred to Com. on B.,P. & C.P.
Feb. 21 From printer. May be heard in committee March 23.
Feb. 21 Read first time. To print.

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY APRIL 21, 2014

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE—2013–14 REGULAR SESSION

ASSEMBLY BILL

No. 2198

Introduced by Assembly Member Levine
(Principal coauthor: Senator Hill)

February 20, 2014

An act to add ~~Chapter 17 (commencing with Section 4999.150) to Division 2 of Sections 2915.3, 2915.4, 4980.393, 4980.394, 4989.21, 4989.35, 4996.27, 4996.275, 4999.37, and 4999.77~~ to the Business and Professions Code, relating to healing arts.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 2198, as amended, Levine. Mental health professionals: suicide prevention training.

Existing law provides for the licensure and regulation of various professionals who provide mental health-related services, including psychologists, marriage and family therapists, educational psychologists, *professional clinical counselors*, and clinical social workers. Under existing law, an applicant for licensure in these professions is required to complete certain coursework or training in order to be eligible for a license. Existing law also requires these professionals to participate in continuing education as a prerequisite for renewing their license.

~~This bill would require a mental health professional, defined to include, but not be limited to, certain types of professionals, to complete a training program in suicide assessment, treatment, and management that is administered by the relevant board or other state entity responsible for the licensure and regulation of the mental health professional. The bill would require the Department of Consumer Affairs to conduct a study evaluating the effect of evidence-based suicide assessment,~~

~~treatment, and management training on the ability of licensed health care professionals to identify, refer, treat, and manage patients with suicidal ideation, and would require the department, no later than January 1, 2016, to prepare and submit to the Legislature report summarizing the findings of that study.~~

This bill would require a psychologist, marriage and family therapist, educational psychologist, professional clinical counselor, and clinical social worker who began graduate study on or after January 1, 2016, to complete a minimum of 15 contact hours of coursework in suicide assessment, treatment, and management before he or she may be issued a license. The bill would also require, commencing January 1, 2016, a person licensed in these professions who began graduate study prior to January 1, 2016, to take a six-hour continuing education course in suicide assessment, treatment, and management in order to renew his or her license.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: yes.
State-mandated local program: no.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

1 *SECTION 1. Section 2915.3 is added to the Business and*
2 *Professions Code, to read:*

3 *2915.3. (a) Any applicant for licensure as a psychologist who*
4 *began graduate study on or after January 1, 2016, shall complete,*
5 *as a condition of licensure, a minimum of 15 contact hours of*
6 *coursework in suicide assessment, treatment, and management.*

7 *(b) The board shall not issue a license to the applicant until the*
8 *applicant has met the requirements of this section.*

9 *SEC. 2. Section 2915.4 is added to the Business and Professions*
10 *Code, to read:*

11 *2915.4. (a) A licensee who began graduate study prior to*
12 *January 1, 2016, shall complete a six-hour continuing education*
13 *course in best practices for suicide assessment, treatment, and*
14 *management during his or her first renewal period after the*
15 *operative date of this section, and shall submit to the board*
16 *evidence acceptable to the board of the person’s satisfactory*
17 *completion of that course.*

18 *(b) The board shall not issue a license to the applicant until the*
19 *applicant has met the requirements of this section.*

1 (c) Continuing education courses taken pursuant to this section
2 shall be applied to the 36 hours of approved continuing education
3 required by Section 2915.

4 (d) This section shall become operative on January 1, 2016.

5 SEC. 3. Section 4980.393 is added to the Business and
6 Professions Code, immediately following Section 4980.39, to read:

7 4980.393. (a) An applicant for licensure who began graduate
8 study on or after January 1, 2016, and whose education qualifies
9 him or her under Section 4980.36 or 4980.37 shall complete, as
10 a condition of licensure, a minimum of 15 contact hours of
11 coursework in suicide assessment, treatment, and management.

12 SEC. 4. Section 4980.394 is added to the Business and
13 Professions Code, to read:

14 4980.394. (a) A licensee who began graduate study before
15 January 1, 2016, shall complete a six-hour continuing education
16 course in best practices for suicide assessment, treatment, and
17 management, during his or her first renewal period after the
18 operative date of this section and shall submit to the board
19 evidence, acceptable to the board, of the person's satisfactory
20 completion of the course.

21 (b) Continuing education courses taken pursuant to this section
22 shall be applied to the 36 hours of approved continuing education
23 required by Section 4980.54.

24 (c) This section shall become operative on January 1, 2016.

25 SEC. 5. Section 4989.21 is added to the Business and
26 Professions Code, to read:

27 4989.21. (a) Any applicant for licensure as an educational
28 psychologist who began graduate study on or after January 1,
29 2016, shall complete, as a condition of licensure, a minimum of
30 15 contact hours of coursework in suicide assessment, treatment,
31 and management.

32 (b) The board shall not issue a license to the applicant until the
33 applicant has met the requirements of this section.

34 SEC. 6. Section 4989.35 is added to the Business and
35 Professions Code, to read:

36 4989.35. (a) A licensee who began graduate study before
37 January 1, 2016, shall complete a six-hour continuing education
38 course in best practices for suicide assessment, treatment, and
39 management, during his or her first renewal period after the
40 operative date of this section and shall submit to the board

1 evidence, acceptable to the board, of the person’s satisfactory
2 completion of the course.

3 (b) Continuing education courses taken pursuant to this section
4 shall be applied to the 36 hours of approved continuing education
5 required by Section 4989.34.

6 (c) This section shall become operative on January 1, 2016.

7 SEC. 7. Section 4996.27 is added to the Business and
8 Professions Code, immediately following Section 4996.26, to read:

9 4996.27. (a) Any applicant for licensure as a licensed clinical
10 social worker who began graduate study on or after January 1,
11 2016, shall complete, as a condition of licensure, a minimum of
12 15 contact hours of coursework in suicide assessment, treatment,
13 and management.

14 (b) The board shall not issue a license to the applicant until the
15 applicant has met the requirements of this section.

16 SEC. 8. Section 4996.275 is added to the Business and
17 Professions Code, immediately following Section 4996.27, to read:

18 4996.275. (a) A licensee who began graduate study prior to
19 January 1, 2016, shall complete a six-hour continuing education
20 course in best practices for suicide assessment, treatment, and
21 management, during his or her first renewal period after the
22 operative date of this section, and shall submit to the board
23 evidence, acceptable to the board, of the person’s satisfactory
24 completion of the course.

25 (b) Continuing education courses taken pursuant to this section
26 shall be applied to the 36 hours of approved continuing education
27 required in Section 4996.22.

28 (c) This section shall become operative on January 1, 2016.

29 SEC. 9. Section 4999.37 is added to the Business and
30 Professions Code, to read:

31 4999.37. An applicant for examination eligibility or registration
32 who began graduate study on or after January 1, 2016, and whose
33 education qualifies him or her under Section 4999.32 or 4999.33
34 shall complete, as a condition of licensure, a minimum of 15
35 contact hours of coursework in suicide assessment, treatment, and
36 management.

37 SEC. 10. Section 4999.77 is added to the Business and
38 Professions Code, to read:

39 4999.77. (a) A licensee who began graduate study prior to
40 January 1, 2016, shall complete a six-hour continuing education

1 *course in best practices for suicide assessment, treatment, and*
2 *management, during his or her first renewal period after the*
3 *operative date of this section, and shall submit to the board*
4 *evidence, acceptable to the board, of the person's satisfactory*
5 *completion of the course.*

6 *(b) Continuing education courses taken pursuant to this section*
7 *shall be applied to the 36 hours of approved continuing education*
8 *required in Section 4999.76.*

9 *(c) This section shall become operative on January 1, 2016.*

10 SECTION 1. ~~Chapter 17 (commencing with Section 4999.150)~~
11 ~~is added to Division 2 of the Business and Professions Code, to~~
12 ~~read:~~

13
14 CHAPTER 17. MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONAL SUICIDE
15 PREVENTION TRAINING
16

17 ~~4999.150. The Legislature finds and declares all of the~~
18 ~~following:~~

19 ~~(a) According to the federal Centers for Disease Control and~~
20 ~~Prevention:~~

21 ~~(1) In 2008, more than 36,000 people died by suicide in the~~
22 ~~United States, making it the 10th leading cause of death nationally.~~

23 ~~(2) During 2007 to 2008, inclusive, an estimated 569,000 people~~
24 ~~visited hospital emergency departments with self-inflicted injuries~~
25 ~~in the United States, 70 percent of whom had attempted suicide.~~

26 ~~(b) According to a national study, veterans face an elevated risk~~
27 ~~of suicide as compared to the general population, more than twice~~
28 ~~the risk among male veterans. Another study has indicated a~~
29 ~~positive correlation between posttraumatic stress disorder and~~
30 ~~suicide.~~

31 ~~(c) Research continues on how the effects of wartime service~~
32 ~~and injuries such as traumatic brain injury, posttraumatic stress~~
33 ~~disorder, or other service-related conditions, may increase the~~
34 ~~number of veterans who attempt suicide.~~

35 ~~(d) As more men and women separate from the military and~~
36 ~~transition back into civilian life, community mental health~~
37 ~~providers will become a vital resource to help these veterans and~~
38 ~~their families deal with issues that may arise.~~

39 ~~(e) Suicide has an enormous impact on the family and friends~~
40 ~~of the victim as well as the community as a whole.~~

1 (f) Approximately 90 percent of people who die by suicide had
2 a diagnosable psychiatric disorder at the time of death. Most suicide
3 victims exhibit warning signs or behaviors prior to an attempt.

4 (g) Improved training and education in suicide assessment,
5 treatment, and management has been recommended by a variety
6 of organizations, including the United States Department of Health
7 and Human Services and the Institute of Medicine.

8 (h) It is the intent of the Legislature to help lower the suicide
9 rate in this state by requiring certain health professionals to
10 complete training in suicide assessment, treatment, and
11 management as part of their continuing education, continuing
12 competency, or recertification requirements.

13 (i) The Legislature does not intend to expand or limit the existing
14 scope of practice of any health professional affected by this chapter.

15 4999.151. As used in this chapter, "mental health professional"
16 includes, but is not limited to, all of the following:

- 17 (a) A psychologist.
- 18 (b) A marriage and family therapist.
- 19 (c) A clinical social worker.

20 4999.152. Commencing January 1, 2015, a mental health
21 professional subject to this chapter shall complete a training
22 program in suicide assessment, treatment, and management as
23 prescribed by this chapter and administered by the relevant board
24 or other state entity responsible for the licensure and regulation of
25 the mental health professional.

26 4999.153. (a) The Department of Consumer Affairs shall
27 conduct a study evaluating the effect of evidence-based suicide
28 assessment, treatment, and management training on the ability of
29 licensed health care professionals to identify, refer, treat, and
30 manage patients with suicidal ideation.

31 (b) The Department of Consumer Affairs shall prepare and
32 submit to the Legislature, no later than January 1, 2016, a report
33 summarizing the findings of the study pursuant to subdivision (a).
34 The report shall be submitted in compliance with Section 9795 of
35 the Government Code.

36 (c) This section shall remain in effect only until January 1, 2019,
37 and as of that date is repealed, unless a later enacted statute, that
38 is enacted before January 1, 2019, deletes or extends that date.

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