

LEGISLATURE OF NEBRASKA
ONE HUNDRED SEVENTH LEGISLATURE
FIRST SESSION

LEGISLATIVE BILL 247

Introduced by Pansing Brooks, 28; Friesen, 34; Hunt, 8; Lathrop, 12;
Williams, 36.

Read first time January 11, 2021

Committee:

- 1 A BILL FOR AN ACT relating to mental health; to create the Mental Health
- 2 Crisis Hotline Task Force; to provide powers and duties; and to
- 3 declare an emergency.
- 4 Be it enacted by the people of the State of Nebraska,

1 Section 1. (1) The Mental Health Crisis Hotline Task Force is
2 created. The task force shall develop an implementation plan for Nebraska
3 to integrate and utilize the 988 mental health crisis hotline established
4 pursuant to the federal National Suicide Hotline Designation Act of 2020,
5 Public Law 116-172.

6 (2) The task force shall identify a method to integrate local mental
7 health crisis hotlines to ensure each individual who accesses a local
8 mental health crisis hotline is connected to a qualified mental or
9 behavioral health professional regardless of the time, date, or number of
10 individuals trying to simultaneously access a local mental health crisis
11 hotline. The task force shall develop a plan for staffing a statewide
12 mental health crisis hotline, shall coordinate with local mental health
13 authorities to carry out this section, and may conduct any other business
14 related to such duties.

15 (3) The federal National Suicide Hotline Designation Act of 2020
16 authorizes states to impose fees on wireless device services to provide
17 funding in a manner similar to the funding of 911 services. The task
18 force shall conduct a cost analysis to determine how such a fee structure
19 could be designed to cover the costs of the 911 mental health crisis
20 hotline.

21 (4) The task force shall consist of the following members:

22 (a) The chairperson of the Health and Human Services Committee of
23 the Legislature or the chairperson's designee;

24 (b) The chairperson of the Judiciary Committee of the Legislature or
25 the chairperson's designee;

26 (c) The chairperson of the Transportation and Telecommunications
27 Committee of the Legislature or the chairperson's designee;

28 (d) Two at-large members of the Legislature appointed by the
29 Executive Board of the Legislative Council;

30 (e) The chief executive officer of the Department of Health and
31 Human Services or the chief executive officer's designee, as a nonvoting,

1 ex officio member;

2 (f) The executive director of the Nebraska Commission on Law
3 Enforcement and Criminal Justice or the executive director's designee, as
4 a nonvoting, ex officio member;

5 (g) The chairperson of the Public Service Commission or the
6 chairperson's designee, as a nonvoting, ex officio member; and

7 (h) The following members who shall be nonvoting members appointed
8 by the voting members of the task force listed in subdivisions (a)
9 through (d) of this subsection through an application and selection
10 process and selected from among (i) mental or behavioral health
11 clinicians licensed to practice in the state, (ii) behavioral and mental
12 health service providers, (iii) advocacy groups that focus on behavioral
13 and mental health, (iv) educational institutions, (v) county and
14 municipal law enforcement from each congressional district, and (vi)
15 other representatives of county and municipal governments from each
16 congressional district.

17 (5) The task force shall choose a chairperson and a vice-chairperson
18 from its voting membership. The task force shall meet at the call of the
19 chairperson but shall hold its first meeting no later than July 1, 2021.
20 The members of the task force shall serve without compensation but shall
21 be entitled to receive reimbursement for expenses incurred incident to
22 such service as provided in sections 81-1174 to 81-1177. The Executive
23 Board of the Legislative Council may provide the task force with a legal
24 counsel, committee clerk, and other staff as required by the task force
25 from existing legislative staff.

26 (6) The task force shall file a report electronically with the Clerk
27 of the Legislature, and with the Governor, regarding its implementation
28 plan and any recommendations, together with drafts of any legislation
29 necessary to carry out any recommendations, no later than December 17,
30 2021.

31 (7) The task force shall terminate on December 31, 2022.

1 Sec. 2. Since an emergency exists, this act takes effect when
2 passed and approved according to law.