

Mental Health First Aid Training Act

This act directs the state Department of Human Services to establish and administer the Mental Health First Aid training program so that certified trainers can provide residents, professionals, and members of the public with training on how to identify and assist someone who is believed to be developing or has developed a mental health disorder or an alcohol or substance abuse disorder; or who is believed to be experiencing a mental health or substance abuse crisis. It also creates a grant program to provide training that is subject to an appropriations process as well as provide hardship subsidies for Mental Health First Aid training fees. The program shall be designed to train individuals to: (i) build mental health, alcohol abuse, and substance abuse literacy designed to help the public identify, understand, and respond to the signs of mental illness, alcohol abuse, and substance abuse and (ii) know how to prevent a mental health disorder or an alcohol or substance abuse disorder from deteriorating into a more serious condition which may lead to more costly interventions and treatments.

Submitted as:

Illinois

[House Enrolled Bill 1538](#)

Status: Enacted into law on August 7, 2013.

Suggested State Legislation

(Title, enacting clause, etc.)

1 Section 1. [*Short Title.*] This act may be cited as the Mental Health First Aid Training Act.

2

3 Section 2. [*Purpose.*]

4 Through the use of innovative strategies, Mental Health First Aid training shall be implemented
5 throughout the State. Mental Health First Aid training is designed to train individuals to assist
6 someone who is developing a mental health disorder or an alcohol or substance abuse disorder,
7 or who is experiencing a mental health or substance abuse crisis and it can be reasonably
8 assumed that a mental health disorder or an alcohol or substance abuse disorder is a contributing
9 or precipitating factor.

10

11 Section 3. [*Definitions.*]

12 "Illinois Mental Health First Aid training program" means the Mental Health First Aid training
13 program administered by the [Department of Human Services].

14

15 "Certified trainers" means individuals who obtain certification in Mental Health First Aid
16 training by successfully completing (i) the Instructor Training Program offered by the [Illinois]
17 Mental Health First Aid training program or (ii) the Instructor Training Program offered by the
18 National Authorities of Mental Health First Aid.

19

20 Section 4. [*Mental Health First Aid training program.*]

21 The [Department of Human Services] shall administer the [Illinois] Mental Health First Aid
22 training program so that certified trainers can provide [Illinois] residents, professionals, and

1 members of the public with training on how to identify and assist someone who is believed to be
2 developing or has developed a mental health disorder or an alcohol or substance abuse disorder
3 or who is believed to be experiencing a mental health or substance abuse crisis.
4

5 Section 5. [*Mental health first aid training grants.*]

6 Subject to appropriations made to the [Department of Human Services] and other State agencies,
7 the [Department of Human Services] and other State agencies shall support training grants for
8 [Illinois] Mental Health First Aid training. These training grants may support hardship subsidies
9 for [Illinois] Mental Health First Aid training fees.
10

11 Section 6. [*Objectives of the training program.*]

12 The [Illinois] Mental Health First Aid training program shall be designed to train individuals to
13 accomplish the following objectives as deemed appropriate for the individuals to be trained,
14 taking into consideration the individual's age:

15 (1) Build mental health, alcohol abuse, and substance abuse literacy designed to help the
16 public identify, understand, and respond to the signs of mental illness, alcohol abuse, and
17 substance abuse.

18 (2) Assist someone who is believed to be developing or has developed a mental health
19 disorder or an alcohol or substance abuse disorder or who is believed to be experiencing a
20 mental health disorder or an alcohol or substance abuse crisis. Such assistance shall
21 include the following:

22 (A) Knowing how to recognize the symptoms of a mental health disorder or an
23 alcohol or substance abuse disorder.

24 (B) Knowing how to provide initial help.

25 (C) Knowing how to guide individuals requiring assistance toward appropriate
26 professional help, including help for individuals who may be in crisis.

27 (D) Knowing how to provide comfort to the person experiencing a mental health
28 disorder or an alcohol or substance abuse disorder.

29 (E) Knowing how to prevent a mental health disorder or an alcohol or substance
30 abuse disorder from deteriorating into a more serious condition which may lead to
31 more costly interventions and treatments.

32 (F) Knowing how to promote healing, recovery, and good mental health.
33

34 Section 7. [*Distribution of training grants.*]

35 When awarding training grants under this Act, the [Department] or other appropriate State
36 agency shall distribute training grants equitably among the geographical regions of the State
37 paying particular attention to the training needs of rural areas and areas with underserved
38 populations or professional shortages.
39

40 Section 8. [*Evaluation.*]

41 The [Department of Human Services], as the [Illinois] Mental Health First Aid training authority,
42 shall ensure that evaluative criteria are established which measure the distribution of the training
43 grants and the fidelity of the training processes to the objective of building mental health, alcohol
44 abuse, and substance abuse literacy designed to help the public identify, understand, and respond
45 to the signs of mental illness, alcohol abuse, and substance abuse.
46

1 Section 9. [*Severability.*] Insert severability clause.

2

3 Section 10. [*Repealer.*] Insert repealer clause.

4

5 Section 11. [*Effective Date.*] Insert effective date.