

AMENDED IN SENATE MARCH 22, 2023

**SENATE BILL**

**No. 783**

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**Introduced by Senator Archuleta**

February 17, 2023

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*An act to add and repeal Article 6 (commencing with Section 976) of Chapter 5 of Division 4 of the Military and Veterans Code, relating to ~~veterans~~ veterans, and making an appropriation therefor.*

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 783, as amended, Archuleta. Veterans: suicide.

Existing law establishes the Department of Veterans Affairs, which administers various programs that provide benefits to veterans, including educational assistance and farm and home purchase assistance. Existing law authorizes each county to appoint a veterans service officer. Existing law requires that these officers administer aid to veterans, investigate veterans claims and requests relating to veterans aid, and to perform any other veteran-related services as requested by the county board of supervisors.

~~This bill would state the intent of the Legislature to enact legislation to establish a Veteran Suicide Prevention Training Pilot Program, with the purpose of offering each county and city veterans service officer specialized training and certification in the prevention of veteran suicide.~~

*This bill, until January 1, 2029, would authorize the Counties of Los Angeles and Nevada to create a veteran suicide prevention training pilot program to offer individuals in each county specialized training and certification in suicide prevention with military-connected populations. The bill would require the program to train individuals to identify indicators of elevated suicide risk and provide emergency crisis intervention and referrals for veterans, as specified.*

*This bill would require counties establishing the program to collaborate to hire a suicide prevention subject matter expert (SME) with experience in implementation and dissemination of evidence-based practices and evidence-informed interventions with military-connected populations. The bill would require the SME to, among other things, develop an individualized intense training curriculum based on the needs of the counties and to develop a process for collaboration and communication with current community partners. The bill would also require the counties in the program to submit a report to the Legislature on or before September 15, 2026. The bill would appropriate \$100,000 for the creation of this program.*

Vote: ~~majority~~<sup>2/3</sup>. Appropriation: ~~no~~ yes. Fiscal committee: ~~no~~ yes. State-mandated local program: no.

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

1     SECTION 1. Article 6 (commencing with Section 976) is added  
2     to Chapter 5 of Division 4 of the Military and Veterans Code, to  
3     read:

4  
5     Article 6. Veteran Suicide Prevention Training Pilot Program  
6

7     976. (a) The Counties of Los Angeles and Nevada may create  
8     a veteran suicide prevention training pilot program in those  
9     counties, to offer individuals in each county specialized training  
10    and certification in suicide prevention with military-connected  
11    populations to ensure high-risk veterans get streamlined and  
12    prioritized access to effective services.

13    (b) (1) Individuals being trained by the pilot program shall be  
14    trained to identify indicators of elevated suicide risk and provide  
15    emergency crisis intervention and referrals for veterans expressing  
16    or exhibiting symptoms of emotional or psychological distress.  
17    The training shall go beyond traditional gatekeeper training.  
18    Counties establishing a program pursuant to this section shall  
19    collaborate to hire a suicide prevention subject matter expert  
20    (SME) with expertise in implementation and dissemination of  
21    evidence-based practices and evidence-informed interventions  
22    with military-connected populations.

23    (2) The SME shall conduct a thorough needs assessment of  
24    unique training needs of the counties and develop an individualized

1 *intense training curriculum based on those needs and consistent*  
2 *with clinical practice guidelines put forth by the United States*  
3 *Department of Veterans Affairs and the United States Department*  
4 *of Defense.*

5 *(3) The SME shall develop a process for collaboration and*  
6 *communication with current community partners and shall help*  
7 *develop processes for collaboration and consistency among these*  
8 *agencies.*

9 *(4) The SME, in each county, shall conduct a data-driven*  
10 *assessment of outcomes, including compliance with developed*  
11 *metrics of success, to better understand the outcomes of this*  
12 *process, as well as modifications to be made.*

13 *(c) Counties establishing a pilot program pursuant to this article*  
14 *shall adopt rules, policies, and procedures necessary to implement*  
15 *the pilot program.*

16 *(d) (1) Counties establishing a pilot program pursuant to this*  
17 *article shall submit a report to the Legislature on or before*  
18 *September 15, 2026. The report shall include both of the following:*

19 *(A) Information concerning the pilot program and whether any*  
20 *changes should be made to the pilot program to increase its*  
21 *effectiveness.*

22 *(B) A recommendation of whether the pilot program should be*  
23 *continued or expanded to other counties.*

24 *(2) A report to be submitted pursuant to this subdivision shall*  
25 *be submitted in compliance with Section 9795 of the Government*  
26 *Code.*

27 *(e) This article shall remain in effect only until January 1, 2029,*  
28 *and as of that date is repealed.*

29 *SEC. 2. The sum of one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000)*  
30 *is hereby appropriated from the General Fund for the purposes*  
31 *of creating a pilot program pursuant to Section 976 of the Military*  
32 *and Veterans Code, to be distributed as follows:*

33 *(a) The sum of \_\_\_ for distribution to the County of Los Angeles.*

34 *(b) The sum of \_\_\_ for distribution to the County of Nevada.*

35 ~~SECTION 1. It is the intent of the Legislature to enact~~  
36 ~~legislation to establish a Veteran Suicide Prevention Training Pilot~~  
37 ~~Program, with the purpose of offering each county and city veterans~~

- 1 ~~service officer specialized training and certification in the~~
- 2 ~~prevention of veteran suicide.~~

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