

Mental Health First Aid

What is Mental Health First Aid?

Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) is a free, evidence-based training available to all educators. MHFA is an 8-hour instructor led course, which teaches the general public about the signs and symptoms of mental illness and substance use disorders. It employs a variety of teaching techniques including hands-on exercises and real-world scenarios to equip participants with the skills they will need to intervene in a crisis situation. Participants receive invaluable information that they can then use in the classroom to potentially help prevent traumatic events with our Texas youth. The end goal is to maximize the number of Texas school children who have direct contact with an individual who has successfully completed an MHFA training course.

MHFA is free to teachers and any school district employee. Education Service Centers (ESCs) and Independent School Districts (ISDs) can contact the local mental health authority (LMHA) or local behavioral health authority (LBHA) in their areas and begin the process of scheduling training during June, July, and August 2018, and continue their efforts to train throughout Fiscal Year 2019. There is an MHFA coordinator at each LMHA/LBHA who can help schedule a training class.

If ESCs and ISDs would like to identify the LMHA/LBHA in their area, they can:

- Visit <https://hhs.texas.gov/services/mental-health-substance-use/mental-health-substance-use-resources/find-your-local-mental-health-or-behavioral-health-authority>.
- Access information for the LMHA/LBHA through the online search tool: <http://www.dshs.texas.gov/mhservices-search/>.

Download a copy of the crosswalk of Texas LMHA's/LBHA and LEA, including the designated Mental Health First Aid Coordinator. This tool identifies each Texas school district with their corresponding Texas LMHA/LBHA and includes the LMHA/LBHA name, website, and Mental Health First Aid Coordinator.

What is a Local Mental Health Authority (LMHA)/Local Behavioral Health Authority (LBHA)?

Each Local Mental Health Authority (LMHA) or local behavioral health authority (LBHA) provides services to a specific geographic area of the state, called a local service area. The Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) requires each LMHA to plan, develop policy, coordinate, allocate, and develop resources for mental health services in its local service area. HHSC contracts with 39 LMHAs to deliver mental health services in communities across Texas. LMHAs provide psychiatric crisis response through 24-hour hotlines and mobile crisis outreach teams. LMHAs also provide behavioral health services, and referrals for Texans seeking behavioral health services. LMHAs routinely outreach to community partners as well as serve as resources in their respective communities to provide training, such as Mental Health First Aid.