

19 TAC §153.1015 Mental Health Training

Updated: July 2025

During the 88th Legislative Session, House Bill 3 was passed to establish a requirement that each district employee who regularly interacts with students enrolled at the district complete an evidence-based mental health training program designed to provide instruction to participants regarding the recognition and support of children and youth who experience a mental health or substance use issue that may pose a threat to school safety. ([TEC §22.904](#))

This document will provide answers to frequently asked questions for the implementation of this legislation.

Where can I find the list of approved programs?

The Best Practices and Programs Repository:

A school district may choose an evidence-based mental health training course from the recommended lists provided by the Texas Education Agency (TEA), the Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC), or an education service center (ESC) that is specifically designated as compliant under this rule. [19 TAC §153.1015 \(d\) \(1\)](#).

The Texas School Mental Health Resource Database:

Programs that meet these requirements can be found using the Mental and Behavioral Health Recommended Best Practices and Programs Repository list established by [TEC §38.351](#) or the Texas School Mental Health Resource Database.

How do I know if a program is approved?

The Best Practices and Programs Repository trainings that meet the requirements of this rule will have the following designation:

“School district employees who have completed this training have fulfilled the mental health training requirements mandated by House Bill 3 88R (TEC §22.904(b)) and the subsequent Commissioner’s Rule (19 TAC §153.1015).”

The Texas School Mental Health Resource Database trainings that meet the requirements of this rule will be tagged **“Required Mental Health Awareness Training”** in the resource tag section of the listed resource.

Is Youth Mental Health First Aid (YMHFA) the only training that will meet the requirements of the rule?

Not necessarily.

House Bill 3 introduced a provision in [TEC §22.904\(b\)](#) which established that training in Youth Mental Health First Aid (YMHFA) would meet the requirement for this evidence-based mental health training.

However, the rule allows school systems the flexibility to provide training through a locally selected course, provided it meets the criteria outlined in subsection [19 TAC §153.1015 \(d\)\(3\)\(A\)-\(J\)](#). This alternative course can be developed and delivered by a partnering organization, such as a mental health agency or an Education Service Center (ESC).

How long is the Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) or Youth Mental Health First Aid (YMHFA) training certificate good for?

Indefinitely as it relates to this rule only.

Per [19 TAC §153.1015 \(d\)\(2\)](#), a school district cannot require an employee to retake a mental health training to satisfy this statutory requirement if the employee can present a valid certificate of completion for Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) or Youth Mental Health First Aid (YMHFA). **The date of completion is irrelevant if the employee can produce a valid certificate.**

Please note that staff who have **previously taken** MHFA and can provide a certificate are not required to take the training again. It is important to note, MHFA primarily addresses the mental health of adults; it does not fully address all of the competencies specified in [19 TAC §153.1015 \(d\)\(3\)\(A\)-\(J\)](#).

Can a district select an evidence-based mental health training course that is not designated as compliant on the recommended list?

Yes.

A school district can review and select a course to satisfy the training requirement if the course meets the following criteria, as established in [19 TAC §153.1015](#):

Awareness and Understanding:

- Data on mental health and substance use prevalence.
- Typical child development, adverse experiences, grief, trauma, and risk factors.
- Benefits of early identification and intervention for children with mental health or substance use concerns.
- Evidence-supported treatments and self-help strategies.
- Promotive/protective mental health factors for students in school.

Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities:

- Implementing prevention strategies for mental health and substance use in schools to ensure student/staff safety.
- Identifying warning signs of mental health challenges or substance use in alignment with [TEC § 38.351](#).
- Supporting students with mental health concerns, including effective classroom strategies for all students, especially those with disabilities.
- Communicate respectfully with parents or guardians about concerns and provide recommendations for seeking help.

Resources and Strategies:

- Connecting families to school- and community-based mental health resources, including crisis intervention.
- Promoting mental health and wellness among school staff.

1) Provides experiential activities designed to:

- increase the participant's understanding of the impact of mental illness on individuals and

- families, skills for listening respectfully, and strategies for supporting the individual and family in a mental health crisis;
 - encourage help-seeking to obtain appropriate professional care;
 - identify professional care, other supports, and self-help strategies for mental health and substance use challenges.
- 2) Uses training materials that provide evidence-based information, practices, and strategies.
 - 3) Provides sufficient instructional time to adequately cover each competency.
 - The rule does not require a minimum or maximum number of training hours.
 - Please note that there may be a specific number of hours required if the school district elects to provide a commercially available training course.
 - 4) Utilizes rigorous methods to appropriately address and assess the competencies for the participants.

Possible modalities for training delivery:

- Face-to-face
- Synchronous online learning
- Hybrid learning format
- Blended learning format

These delivery modes may include job-embedded learning and coaching strategies for evidence-based implementation support.

Who can deliver the mental health training?

The district-approved mental health training course can be conducted by an instructor who has received proper instruction to use the training materials and is qualified to train participants.

Trainers can include, but are not limited to, a licensed mental health professional.

Can an Education Service Center (ESC) create a training to meet the requirements of 19 TAC §153.1015?

Yes.

Trainings must comply with the standards of [19 TAC §153.1015](#), including the competencies included in the rule.

Can we combine courses or use the courses that we use for existing compliance?

The mental health training required in this rule may be combined or coordinated to include up to 3 required mental health topics, (as determined by the local school district):

- Suicide prevention, intervention, and postvention training ([TEC §38.351](#))
- Grief and trauma-informed care practices training ([TEC §38.036](#)) ([TEC §21.451\(d-1\)\(2\)](#))
- Building skills related to managing emotions, establishing and maintaining positive relationships, and responsible decision-making ([TEC §38.351](#))
- Early mental health prevention and intervention ([TEC §38.351](#))

- Substance abuse prevention and intervention ([TEC §38.351](#))
- Positive school climates; ([TEC §38.351](#))
- Positive behavior interventions and supports; ([TEC §38.351](#))
- Positive youth development ([TEC §38.351](#))
- Safe, supportive, and positive school climate ([TEC §38.351](#))

Any training course must meet the standards of the rule including the competencies, standards, and strategies. A district must adequately document that the selected training meets the competencies and criteria outlined in the rule.

How is it determined who should take this training?

The school district is responsible for determining who should participate in the training.

The training requirement applies to school district employees who regularly interact with students. This requirement applies to all who meet the criteria, regardless of prior formal mental health training and education. [19 TAC §153.1015 \(c\) \(2\)](#)

Who Should Participate in Training?

Employees working on a school campus who regularly interact with students should participate in the training. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Teachers
- Coaches
- Librarians
- Instructional Coaches
- Counselors
- Nurses
- Administration
- Administrative Support Personnel
- Student Support Personnel
- School Resource Officers
- Paraprofessionals
- Substitutes
- Custodians
- Cafeteria Staff
- Bus Drivers
- Crossing Guards
- District Special Programs Liaisons*
- Members of a Safe and Supportive Schools Program Team

*District Special Programs Liaisons may include:

- Individuals providing support for students who are homeless, in substitute care, military-connected, or emergent bilingual.
- Individuals involved in child maltreatment and human trafficking prevention.
- Individuals supporting special education services.

Optional, if required by the district

- Contracted personnel who regularly interact with students
- Supervisors of personnel who regularly interact with students

Determining the Number of Employees for Training

When calculating how many employees should receive the training by the timeline, use the number of staff that the district has determined must be trained to meet the training deadlines. This number may be different than your total staffing numbers. The number of staff will be determined by using the number of applicable staff employed as of **September 1** of each given year.

The number and percentage of employees trained, as well as the procedure for determining these figures, must be available upon request by the Texas Education Agency (TEA).

Training Timeline: Training must occur before the start of each listed school year.

- **2025-2026 School Year:**
Target: Train at least 25% of applicable district employees.
- **2026-2027 School Year:**
Target: Train at least 50% of applicable district employees.
- **2027-2028 School Year:**
Target: Train at least 75% of applicable district employees.
- **2028-2029 School Year:**
Target: Train 100% of applicable district employees.

How often does staff need to take this training?

Once.

Staff need to take this training only once to meet statutory requirements. ([TEC §22.904](#)) ([19 TAC §153.1015 \(b\) \(2\) \(D\)](#))

The statute indicates that if an employee has previously completed the YMHFA or MHFA course provided by a local mental health authority, they are not required to retake it.

[TEC §22.904](#) does not specify a frequency for the mental health training or mandate retraining. The statute also does not authorize TEA to determine the training frequency.

Local school districts should review and be guided by recommendations from the [State Board for Educator Certification's clearinghouse](#), and the school district's board of trustees or governing body must develop its own local professional development policy accordingly.

District Policy

School districts should include policies and procedures for the implementation of this mental health training requirement in their professional development policy. [19 TAC §153.1015 \(b\) \(2\) \(E\)](#).

The policy should include:

- Details on what training will be provided.
- Training frequency for required personnel to be trained.
- Details about any differences between the policy adopted by the district or school and the recommendations published in the State Board for Educator Certification Clearinghouse on providing mental health training per [TEC §21.4515](#).

For staff to apply the content delivered in the training, they must be informed of the local practices and procedures for mental health promotion required by [TEC §38.351\(i\)](#). The district should ensure that the staff completing the required training have received and reviewed the local district policies and procedures for the mental health topics covered in [TEC §38.351](#). If the school district also develops practices and procedures for providing educational material to all parents and families in the district that contain information on identifying risk factors, accessing resources for treatment or support provided on and off campus, and accessing available student accommodations provided on campus in accordance with [TEC §38.351\(i-1\)](#), personnel who regularly interact with students must also be informed of those practices and procedures.

To ensure staff can effectively implement the training content, it is essential that they are informed about the local practices and procedures required by [TEC §38.351\(i\)](#) for mental health promotion. The district should verify that staff completing the required training have received and reviewed local policies and procedures related to the mental health topics specified in [TEC §38.351](#). This verification should be documented using a district-approved acknowledgment form signed by the employee.

If the school district establishes additional practices and procedures for providing educational materials to parents and families, these materials should include information on:

- Identifying risk factors,
- Accessing on- and off-campus resources for treatment or support, and
- Utilizing available student accommodations on campus, in alignment with [TEC §38.351\(i-1\)](#).

Furthermore, all personnel who regularly interact with students must be informed about these practices and procedures.

What does accountability look like at the district level? How is TEA tracking LEA progress?

Each required school district employee must provide a certificate of completion of the district-selected training in accordance with district policy.

Staff must submit a signed acknowledgement form confirming receipt of the current training and a copy of local procedures and practices, as published in the district handbook and/or district improvement plan.

A school district must keep records of the following documents:

- 1) The employee's certificate of completion for the evidence-based mental health training program
- 2) The acknowledgement form of local procedures and practices
- 3) Information, including the name of the training course, along with supporting documentation

confirming that the training course meets the competencies outlined in the rule

This documentation must be retained by the school district and can be housed in the district's document repository in **Sentinel** so that it is available to TEA upon request.

School districts must upload training logs containing the names and dates of training completed into the TEA Required Documents section of the LEA Documentation Repository in Sentinel.

Records must be kept for each employee for the duration of their employment.

Will districts get reimbursed for these required trainings?

No.

As of the time of publication of this FAQ, no funds have been appropriated for this purpose.

Does this requirement apply to charter schools?

No.

This mental health training rule only applies to school district staff and does not apply to charter school staff.

Resources:

- [Texas School Mental Health Website](#)
- [Best Practices and Programs Repository](#)
- [Texas School Mental Health Resource Database](#)
- [School Board of Education Clearinghouse](#)
- [Education Service Center Map](#)
- [Local Mental Health Authority](#)
- [YMFA Outreach Workers](#)
- [TEA Mental Health and Behavioral Health](#)