Amendment - 1st Reading-white - Requested by: Steve Gist - (H) Local Government
- 2025
69th Legislature 2025   Drafter: Toni Henneman,   HB0621.001.001

1   HOUSE BILL NO. 621

2   INTRODUCED BY S. GIST, M. VINTON, S. KELLY, T. SHARP, C. SCHOMER, M. CUNNINGHAM, M. THIEL,

3   E. TILLEMAN, K. WALSH, J. ETCHART, D. BAUM, S. ESSMANN

4

5   A BILL FOR AN ACT ENTITLED: "AN ACT ALLOWING A LOCAL FIRST RESPONDER ENTITY TO

6   ESTABLISH A PEER SUPPORT PROGRAM; PROVIDING FOR MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS OF A LOCAL

7   FIRST RESPONDER PEER SUPPORT PROGRAM; AND PROHIBITING A QUALIFIED PEER SUPPORTER

8   FROM TESTIFYING ABOUT THE CONTENT OF A PEER SUPPORT SESSION."

9

10   BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MONTANA:

11

12   NEW SECTION. **Section 1.   Local first responder peer support programs.** (1) A police department,

13   sheriff's office, fire department, or emergency medical service provider may establish a first responder peer

14   support program that is in compliance with the provisions of this section.

15   (2)   A local first responder peer support program must have a written policy that outlines, at a

16   minimum:

17   (a)   qualifications for a peer supporter, including certification and continuing education

18   requirements;

19   (b)   guidelines for what constitutes a peer support session from a conversation between peers;

20   (c)   definitions for a group debrief and peer support team;

21   (d)   the prohibition of recording in writing or by video or audio any peer support session;

22   (e)   how peer supporters in the program shall comply with the Health Insurance Portability and

23   Accountability Act of 1996, 42 U.S.C. 1320d, et seq.;

24   (f)   the ability of an employee to use multiple peer supporters;

25   (g)   the protection of an employee from being forced to use a peer supporter who holds supervisory

26   authority over the employee;

27   (h)   the prohibition of harassment or discrimination against an employee or volunteer who seeks

28   services from the peer support program; and

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1   (i)   confidentiality protections of the peer support program, including the following exceptions:

2   (i)   if the employee has committed or plans to commit a crime; and

3   (ii)   if the employee indicates the employee will cause harm to themself or to others;

4   (iii)   if there is a request from an appropriate licensing board; and

5   (iv)   if the mandatory reporting requirements of licensing boards apply.

6   (3)   A peer support session is confidential, and, except as provided in subsection (2)(i), a qualified

7 peer supporter in a local first responder peer support program is prohibited from providing testimony about a

8 peer support session, including individual and group peer support sessions.

9

10   NEW SECTION. **Section 2.   Codification instruction.** [Section 1] is intended to be codified as an

11 integral part of Title 7, chapter 32, part 21, and the provisions of Title 7, chapter 32, part 21, apply to [section 1].

12   - END -

Legislative Services Division