

HEALTH & SAFETY CODE
TITLE 7. MENTAL HEALTH AND MENTAL RETARDATION
SUBTITLE A. TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH AND MENTAL
RETARDATION

CHAPTER 531. PROVISIONS GENERALLY APPLICABLE TO THE TEXAS
DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH AND MENTAL RETARDATION

Sec. 531.001. PURPOSE; POLICY. (a) It is the purpose of this subtitle to provide for the effective administration and coordination of mental health and mental retardation services at the state and local levels.

(b) Recognizing that a variety of alternatives for serving the mentally disabled exists, it is the purpose of this subtitle to ensure that a continuum of services is provided. The continuum of services includes facilities operated by the Texas Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation and community services provided by the department and other entities through contracts with the department.

(c) It is the goal of this state to provide a comprehensive range of services for persons with mental illness or mental retardation who need publicly supported care, treatment, or habilitation. In providing those services, efforts will be made to coordinate services and programs with services and programs provided by other governmental entities to minimize duplication and to share with other governmental entities in financing those services and programs.

(d) It is the policy of this state that, when appropriate and feasible, persons with mental illness or mental retardation shall be afforded treatment in their own communities.

(e) It is the public policy of this state that mental health and mental retardation services be the responsibility of local agencies and organizations to the greatest extent possible. The department shall assist the local agencies and organizations by coordinating the implementation of a statewide system of services. The department shall ensure that mental health and mental retardation services are provided. The department shall provide technical assistance for and regulation of the programs that receive funding through contracts with the department.

(f) It is the public policy of this state to offer services first to those persons who are most in need. Therefore, funds appropriated by the legislature for mental health and mental retardation services may be spent only to provide services to the priority populations identified in the department's long-range plan.

(g) It is the goal of this state to establish at least one special officer for mental health assignment in each county. To achieve this goal, the department shall assist a local law enforcement agency that desires to have an officer certified under Section 1701.404, Occupations Code.

(h) It is the policy of this state that the board serves as the state's mental health and mental retardation authority and is responsible for the planning, policy development, and resource development and allocation for and oversight of mental health and mental retardation services in this state. It is the policy of this state that, when appropriate and feasible, the board may delegate the board's authority to a single entity in each region of the state that may function as the local mental health or mental retardation authority for one or more service areas in the region.

Added by Acts 1991, 72nd Leg., ch. 76, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1991. Amended by Acts 1993, 73rd Leg., ch. 60, Sec. 19, eff. Sept. 1, 1993; Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 821, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1995; Acts 2001, 77th Leg., ch. 1420, Sec. 14.800, eff. Sept. 1, 2001.

Sec. 531.002. DEFINITIONS. In this subtitle:

(1) "Board" means the Texas Board of Mental Health and Mental Retardation.

(2) "Business entity" means a sole proprietorship, partnership, firm, corporation, holding company, joint-stock company, receivership, trust, or any other entity recognized by law.

(3) "Chemical dependency" has the meaning assigned by Section 461.002.

(4) "Commissioner" means the commissioner of mental health and mental retardation.

(5) "Community center" means a center established under Subchapter A, Chapter 534.

(6) "Department" means the Texas Department of Mental

Health and Mental Retardation.

(7) "Effective administration" includes continuous planning and evaluation within the system that result in more efficient fulfillment of the purposes and policies of this subtitle.

(8) "ICF-MR" means the medical assistance program serving persons with mental retardation who receive care in intermediate care facilities.

(9) "Local agency" means:

(A) a municipality, county, hospital district, rehabilitation district, school district, state-supported institution of higher education, or state-supported medical school; or

(B) any organizational combination of two or more of those entities.

(10) "Local mental health authority" means an entity to which the board delegates its authority and responsibility within a specified region for planning, policy development, coordination, including coordination with criminal justice entities, and resource development and allocation and for supervising and ensuring the provision of mental health services to persons with mental illness in the most appropriate and available setting to meet individual needs in one or more local service areas.

(11) "Local mental retardation authority" means an entity to which the board delegates its authority and responsibility within a specified region for planning, policy development, coordination, including coordination with criminal justice entities, and resource development and allocation and for supervising and ensuring the provision of mental retardation services to persons with mental retardation in the most appropriate and available setting to meet individual needs in one or more local service areas.

(12) "Mental health services" includes all services concerned with research, prevention, and detection of mental disorders and disabilities, and all services necessary to treat, care for, control, supervise, and rehabilitate persons who have a mental disorder or disability, including persons whose mental disorders or disabilities result from alcoholism or drug addiction.

(13) "Mental retardation services" includes all services concerned with research, prevention, and detection of mental retardation, and all services related to the education, training, habilitation, care, treatment, supervision, and control of persons with mental retardation, but does not include the education of school-age persons that the public educational system is authorized to provide.

(14) "Person with mental retardation" means a person, other than a person with a mental disorder, whose mental deficit requires the person to have special training, education, supervision, treatment, care, or control in the person's home or community or in a state school.

(15) "Priority population" means those groups of persons with mental illness or mental retardation identified by the department as being most in need of mental health or mental retardation services.

(16) "Region" means the area within the boundaries of the local agencies participating in the operation of community centers established under Subchapter A, Chapter 534.

(17) "State school" means a state-supported and structured residential facility operated by the department to provide to clients with mental retardation a variety of services, including medical treatment, specialized therapy, and training in the acquisition of personal, social, and vocational skills.

Added by Acts 1991, 72nd Leg., ch. 76, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1991. Amended by Acts 1993, 73rd Leg., ch. 107, Sec. 6.01, eff. Aug. 30, 1993; Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 821, Sec. 2, eff. Sept. 1, 1995; Acts 2001, 77th Leg., ch. 367, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 2001.