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# **Meeting the Mental Health Needs of Veterans, the Military and Their Families**

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**Dr. Courtney Harvey**

Associate Commissioner

Office of Mental Health Coordination

# Office of Mental Health Coordination

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## Mission

Collaborate with stakeholders to improve policies, programs, and systems to achieve positive behavioral health outcomes for all people in Texas.

## Vision

Cultivate multi-system collaborations to improve the behavioral health system in Texas.

## Framework

The Statewide Behavioral Health Coordinating Council and Texas Statewide Behavioral Health Strategic Plan



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# Office of Mental Health Coordination

## Areas of Operation

Stakeholder  
Engagement &  
Strategic  
Planning

Policy, Systems  
Coordination,  
and  
Programming

Veterans  
Mental Health  
Coordination  
and Programs

Statewide  
Opioid  
Coordination



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# Office of Mental Health Coordination

## Veterans Mental Health Coordination and Programs

- Mental Health Program for Veterans;
- Texas Veterans + Family Alliance Grant Program;
- TexVet; and
- Long-Term Action Plan to Prevent Veterans Suicides.



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# Mental Health Program for Veterans (1 of 2)

## Program Summary

Texas Health and Safety Code, Section 1001.222, and Texas Government Code, Sections 434.352 and 434.401 direct HHSC and TVC to jointly administer this program and provide:

- Peer-to-peer counseling;
- Access to licensed mental health professionals;
- Training to peers and providers, including suicide prevention training;
- Training to community and faith-based organizations;
- Jail diversion service coordination; and
- Mental Health First Aid specifically designed for veterans.



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# Mental Health Program for Veterans (2 of 2)

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## **In fiscal year 2021:**

- 78,675 peer services delivered;
- 1,732 peer service coordinators and volunteer peers trained;
- 12,127 interactions with justice-involved veterans;
- 833 clinical mental health sessions with a veteran counselor; and
- 247 service members, veterans, and family members trained in the veterans module of Mental Health First Aid.



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# Texas Veterans + Family Alliance Grant (1 of 3)

## Program Summary

Texas Government Code (TGC), Section 531.0992, requires HHSC to administer a mental health grant program that:

- Provides mental health care services and treatment to veterans and their families; and
- Coordinates mental health care services for veterans and their families with other transition support services.



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# Texas Veterans + Family Alliance Grant (2 of 3)

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- Five phases of TV+FA grants;
- Awarded over \$46 million in state funds;
- 74 projects across the state; and
- Through these five phases, 51,575 veterans and family members have been served through grant-funded activities.



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# Texas Veterans + Family Alliance Grant (3 of 3)

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## Services include:

- Interventions such as cognitive behavioral therapy;
- Individual, group, family, and couples peer support services;
- Suicide prevention services;
- Treatment of substance use disorders;
- Individual and family counseling; and
- Navigation services such as case management and referral services.



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# TexVet Website

HHSC contracts with Texas A&M Health Science Center to provide online information and resources through the TexVet website: <https://www.texvet.org/>.

## **In fiscal year 2021:**

- 520,756 visitors;
- 460,390 outbound clicks from the website to listed provider links;
- 1,426 average daily visitors;
- 1,416 vetted resource directory listings; and
- 1,224,897 page views.



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# HHSC Suicide Prevention Team

- Lillian Nguyen: Director of Policy, System Coordination, and Programming
- Tammy Weppelman: State Suicide Prevention Coordinator and Team Lead
- Samantha Zachery: Suicide Care Coordinator
- Laura Hernandez Gold: Suicide Prevention & Project AWARE Co-Coordinator
- Jennifer Haussler Garing: Suicide Prevention Data & Outcomes Coordinator
- Jennifer Crutsinger: Suicide Prevention Youth Grant Project Coordinator
- Tara Reyna: Veterans Suicide Prevention Coordinator

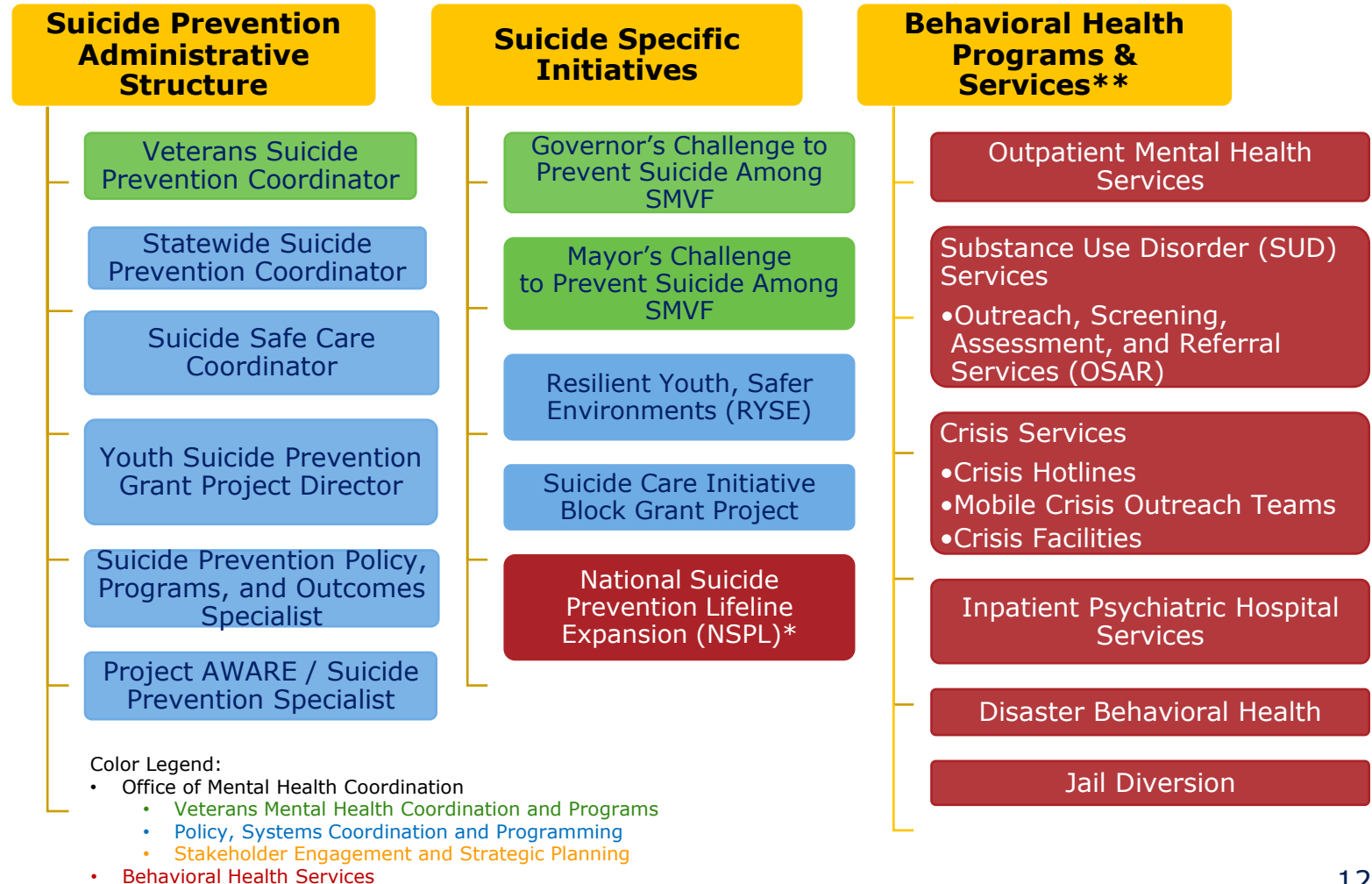


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# IDD-BHS Suicide Prevention Efforts



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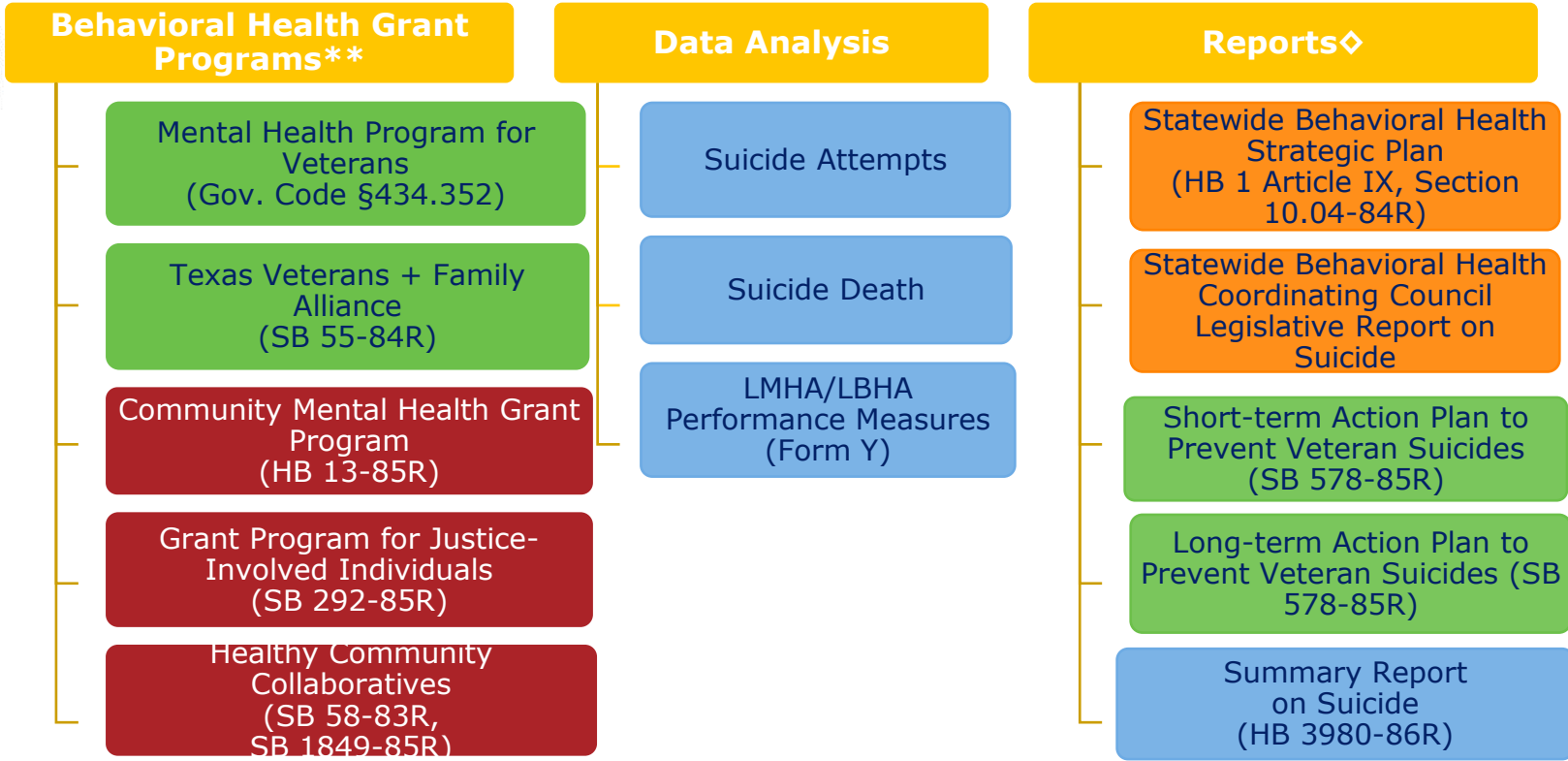


# IDD-BHS Suicide Prevention Efforts



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Color Legend:

- Office of Mental Health Coordination
  - Veterans Mental Health Coordination and Programs
  - Policy, Systems Coordination and Programming
  - Stakeholder Engagement and Strategic Planning
- Behavioral Health Services

# Veteran Suicide Prevention Action Plan

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- TGC, Section 531.0925, requires HHSC to develop a comprehensive action plan to increase access to and availability of professional health services to prevent veteran suicides in Texas.



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# **Veterans Mental Health Coordination and Programs**

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