

By: Representatives Felsher, Hale

To: Public Health and Human
Services

HOUSE BILL NO. 1190

1 AN ACT TO CREATE THE MISSISSIPPI FIRST RESPONDER PTSD AND
2 SUICIDE PREVENTION TASK FORCE; TO PROVIDE FOR THE MEMBERSHIP AND
3 DUTIES OF THE TASK FORCE; TO REQUIRE THE TASK FORCE TO SUBMIT A
4 REPORT ON ITS FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE LEGISLATURE
5 BEFORE DECEMBER 1, 2025; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

6 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI:

7 **SECTION 1.** (1) There is created the Mississippi First
8 Responder PTSD and Suicide Prevention Task Force. The purpose of
9 the task force is to unite key stakeholders in order to assess the
10 mental health needs of first responders and develop a strategic
11 plan and proposed legislation. The task force shall review and
12 make recommendations on how to identify PTSD and those
13 contemplating suicide and on methods to prevent suicide for
14 Mississippi's first responders. Additionally, this task force
15 will identify methods to effectively provide treatment for first
16 responders. For the purposes of this section only, the term
17 "first responders" includes law enforcement officers, fire
18 fighters, 911 dispatchers, members of the Mississippi National
19 Guard and emergency medical services.



(2) The task force shall be composed of the following twenty (20) members:

(a) Three (3) members of the Senate Public Health and Welfare Committee appointed by the chair of the committee;

(b) Three (3) members of the House Public Health and Human Services Committee appointed by the chair of the committee;

(c) One (1) employee of the State Department of Health appointed by the executive director;

(d) One (1) employee of the Mississippi Department of Human Services appointed by the executive director;

(e) The Medical Director and the Director of the Office of Standards and Training of the Department of Public Safety, or their respective designees;

(f) One (1) employee of the Office of the Attorney General appointed by the Attorney General;

(g) Two (2) members, who must be therapists, appointed by the First Responders of Mississippi organization;

(h) One (1) member of the Mississippi Association of Chiefs of Police appointed by the president;

(i) One (1) member of the Mississippi Sheriffs' Association appointed by the president;

(j) One (1) member of the Mississippi Fire Chiefs Association appointed by the president;

(k) One (1) member of the Professional Firefighters Association of Mississippi appointed by the president;



(l) One (1) member of the Mississippi Law Enforcement Officers Association appointed by the president;

(m) One (1) member of the Mississippi National Guard appointed by the Adjutant General of Mississippi; and

(n) One (1) employee of a member of the Mississippi Ambulance Alliance appointed by the president.

(3) The task force shall perform the following duties:

(a) Assess the needs of first responders by gathering input from first responders about mental health challenges and reviewing existing resources, and identify gaps in mental health support services;

(b) Develop a plan to address identified needs by creating a detailed plan for programs and services that will support first responders' mental health, and identify strategies to make mental health services accessible, affordable and effective;

(c) Foster collaboration among stakeholders by bringing together first responders, mental health professionals and policymakers to identify solutions and propose legislation;

(d) Identify ways to reduce mental health stigma by promoting education and awareness;

(e) Ensure oversight and sustainability of programs by establishing a system and recommending an agency or entity to monitor program effectiveness and make needed improvements, and to



69 secure funding and resources in order to ensure programs can
70 continue long-term; and

71 (f) Recommend relevant changes to Mississippi law and
72 other state and local policies which can be implemented by state
73 and local governmental entities.

74 (4) (a) Appointments to the task force must be made within
75 thirty (30) days after the effective date of this act. Within
76 fifteen (15) days thereafter, on a day to be designated jointly by
77 the legislative members of the task force, the task force shall
78 meet and organize by selecting from its membership a chair and
79 vice chair. The vice chair shall serve also as the secretary and
80 is responsible for keeping all records of the task force. A
81 majority of the members of the task force constitutes a quorum.
82 In the selection of its officers and the adoption of rules,
83 resolutions and reports, an affirmative vote of a majority of the
84 task force is required. Written notice of task force meetings
85 shall be sent electronically to all members at least fifteen (15)
86 days before the date on which a meeting is to be held.

87 (b) The task force shall meet at least once monthly.

88 (c) The task force shall make a final report of its
89 findings and recommendations, including any recommended
90 legislation and any funding needs, to the Legislature before
91 December 1, 2025, at which time the task force will be dissolved.

92 (5) Members of the task force may not receive compensation
93 for their service on the task force.



(6) To effectuate the purposes of this act, upon the request of the chair of the task force, a department, division, board, bureau, committee, institution or agency of the state or a political subdivision of the state shall provide the facilities, assistance, information and data needed to enable the task force to carry out its duties.

SECTION 2. This act shall take effect and be in force from and after its passage.

