

1 **HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES - FLOOR VERSION**

2 STATE OF OKLAHOMA

3 1st Session of the 59th Legislature (2023)

4 HOUSE BILL 2591

 By: Talley and **Humphrey**

7 AS INTRODUCED

8 An Act relating to civil procedure; amending 12 O.S.
9 2021, Section 2506.2, which relates to peer support
10 counseling privileges; deleting certain exception;
11 and providing an effective date.

12 BE IT ENACTED BY THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF OKLAHOMA:

13 SECTION 1. AMENDATORY 12 O.S. 2021, Section 2506.2, is
14 amended to read as follows:

15 Section 2506.2. A. For purposes of this section:

16 1. "Emergency services provider" means any public employer that
17 employs persons to provide firefighting services;

18 2. "Emergency services personnel" means any employee of an
19 emergency services provider who is engaged in providing firefighting
20 services;

21 3. "Employee assistance program" means a program established by
22 a law enforcement agency or emergency services provider to provide
23 counseling or support services to employees of the law enforcement
24 agency or emergency services provider;

1 4. "Law enforcement agency" means any county sheriff, municipal
2 police department, the Oklahoma Highway Patrol and any state or
3 local public body that employs public safety personnel;

4 5. "Public safety personnel" means a sheriff, deputy sheriff,
5 municipal police officer, state police officer, parole and probation
6 officer, corrections employee, certified reserve officer,
7 telecommunicator or emergency medical dispatcher; and

8 6. "Peer support counseling sessions" means critical incident
9 stress management sessions for public safety or emergency services
10 personnel who have been involved in emotionally traumatic incidents
11 by reason of their employment. The sessions may include
12 participation of the immediate family of the public safety or
13 emergency services personnel.

14 B. Any communication made by a participant or counselor in a
15 peer support counseling session conducted by a law enforcement
16 agency or by an emergency services provider for public safety
17 personnel or emergency services personnel, and any oral or written
18 information conveyed in the peer support counseling session, is
19 confidential and may not be disclosed by any person participating in
20 the peer support counseling session.

21 C. Any communication relating to a peer support counseling
22 session made confidential under subsection B of this section that is
23 made between counselors, between counselors and the supervisors or
24 staff of an employee assistance program, or between the supervisors

1 or staff of an employee assistance program, is confidential and may
2 not be disclosed.

3 D. The provisions of this section apply only to peer support
4 counseling sessions conducted by an employee or other person who:

5 1. Has been designated by a law enforcement agency or emergency
6 services provider, or by an employee assistance program, to act as a
7 counselor; and

8 2. Has received training in counseling and in providing
9 emotional and moral support to public safety personnel or emergency
10 services personnel who have been involved in emotionally traumatic
11 incidents by reason of their employment.

12 E. The provisions of this section apply to all oral
13 communications, notes, records and reports arising out of a peer
14 support counseling session. Any notes, records or reports arising
15 out of a peer support counseling session are not public records for
16 the purposes of Sections 24A.1 through 24A.29 of Title 51 of the
17 Oklahoma Statutes.

18 F. Any communication made by a participant or counselor in a
19 peer support counseling session subject to this section, and any
20 oral or written information conveyed in a peer support counseling
21 session subject to this section, is not admissible in any judicial
22 proceeding, administrative proceeding, arbitration proceeding or
23 other adjudicatory proceeding. Communications and information made
24 confidential under this section shall not be disclosed by the

1 participants in any judicial proceeding, administrative proceeding,
2 arbitration proceeding, or other adjudicatory proceeding. The
3 limitations on disclosure imposed by this subsection include
4 disclosure during any discovery conducted as part of an adjudicatory
5 proceeding.

6 G. Nothing in this section limits the discovery or introduction
7 in evidence of knowledge acquired by any public safety personnel or
8 emergency services personnel from observation made during the course
9 of employment, or material or information acquired during the course
10 of employment, that is otherwise subject to discovery or
11 introduction in evidence.

12 H. This section does not apply to:

13 1. Any threat of suicide or homicide made by a participant in a
14 peer support counseling session, or any information conveyed in a
15 peer support counseling session relating to a threat of suicide or
16 homicide;

17 2. Any information relating to abuse of children or of the
18 elderly, or other information that is required to be reported by
19 law; or

20 3. ~~Any admission of criminal conduct; or~~

21 4. ~~Any admission of a plan to commit a future crime.~~

22 I. This section shall not prohibit any communications between
23 counselors who conduct peer support counseling sessions, or any
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1 communications between counselors and the supervisors or staff of an
2 employee assistance program.

3 SECTION 2. This act shall become effective November 1, 2023.
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5 COMMITTEE REPORT BY: COMMITTEE ON CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND CORRECTIONS,
6 dated 03/01/2023 - DO PASS, As Coauthored.
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