

As Reported by the House Civil Justice Committee

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Sub. H. B. No. 545

Representatives Abrams, Baldridge

**Cosponsors: Representatives LaRe, Seitz, Miller, K., Young, T., Jones, White,
Ghanbari, Gross, Richardson, Miller, A., Miller, J.**

A BILL

To amend section 4735.05 and to enact sections 1
2317.023 and 4113.42 of the Revised Code to 2
generally allow for privileged testimonial 3
communications between a peer support team 4
member and an individual receiving peer support 5
services or advice from the team member. 6

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF OHIO:

Section 1. That section 4735.05 be amended and sections 7
2317.023 and 4113.42 of the Revised Code be enacted to read as 8
follows: 9

Sec. 2317.023. (A) As used in this section: 10

(1) "Corrections officer" means a person employed by a 11
public or private place used for the confinement of a person 12
charged with or convicted of any crime in this state or another 13
state or under the laws of the United States or alleged or found 14
to be a delinquent child or unruly child in this state or 15
another state or under the laws of the United States. 16

(2) "Emergency medical worker" means a first responder, 17

emergency medical technician-basic, emergency medical 18
technician-intermediate, or emergency medical technician- 19
paramedic, certified under Chapter 4765. of the Revised Code, 20
whether paid or volunteer. 21

(3) "Firefighter" means a firefighter, whether paid or 22
volunteer, of a lawfully constituted fire department. 23

(4) "Peace officer" has the same meaning as in section 24
2935.01 of the Revised Code. 25

(5) "Peer support services" means consultation, risk 26
assessment, referral, or on-site intervention services provided 27
by a peer support team member to an individual experiencing 28
psychological or physical symptoms caused by exposure to acute 29
or chronic high stress incidents in the course of the 30
individual's employment. "Peer support services" includes both 31
of the following: 32

(a) Providing knowledge and experience or emotional, 33
social, or practical support to peers; 34

(b) Helping a peer navigate available resources, including 35
the mental health system. 36

(6) "Peer support team member" means an individual who 37
satisfies all of the following: 38

(a) The individual is one of the following: 39

(i) A peace officer, firefighter, emergency medical 40
worker, or corrections officer; 41

(ii) A dispatcher for peace officers, firefighters, or 42
emergency medical workers; 43

(iii) A civilian employee of an entity that employs peace 44

officers, firefighters, emergency medical workers, or 45
corrections officers; 46

(iv) A retired peace officer, firefighter, emergency 47
medical worker, or corrections officer acting with the approval 48
of the retired employee's former employer or the approval of the 49
employer appointing the peer support team; 50

(v) A retired dispatcher for peace officers, firefighters, 51
or emergency medical workers acting with the approval of the 52
retired dispatcher's former employer or the approval of the 53
employer appointing the peer support team. 54

(b) The individual has received not less than sixteen 55
hours of basic peer support training. 56

(c) The individual, as part of a peer support team, 57
provides peer support services to individuals with similar life 58
experiences. 59

(7) "Peer support team" means an organized group that has 60
been appointed by any of the following entities to provide peer 61
support services to an employee or member: 62

(a) An employer; 63

(b) A labor organization as defined in section 3517.01 of 64
the Revised Code; 65

(c) A charitable organization consisting of current or 66
former peace officers, firefighters, emergency medical workers, 67
or dispatchers of peace officers, firefighters, or emergency 68
medical workers. 69

(B) Except as provided in division (C) of this section, a 70
peer support team member shall not testify concerning either of 71
the following: 72

(1) A communication received from an individual who 73
receives peer support services from the peer support team 74
member; 75

(2) The peer support team member's advice to the 76
individual. 77

(C) The testimonial privilege established under division 78
(B) of this section does not apply if any of the following are 79
true: 80

(1) The communication or advice indicates clear and 81
present danger to the individual who receives peer support 82
services or to other persons. 83

(2) The individual who received peer support services 84
expressly consents to the testimony. 85

(3) If the individual who received peer support services 86
is deceased, the surviving spouse or the executor or 87
administrator of the estate of the deceased individual expressly 88
consents. 89

(4) The individual who received peer support services 90
voluntarily testifies, in which case the peer support team 91
member may be compelled to testify on the same subject. 92

(5) The court in camera determines that the information 93
communicated by the individual who received peer support 94
services is not germane to the relationship between the 95
individual and the peer support team member. 96

(6) The communication or advice pertains or is related to 97
any criminal act. 98

(D) For purposes of division (C) (1) of this section, 99
indications of past or present abuse or neglect of a child 100

constitute a clear and present danger. 101

(E) To receive the testimonial privilege established under 102
division (B) of this section, a peer support team member must 103
complete not less than eight hours of basic peer support 104
training every two years. 105

(F) For the testimonial privilege established under 106
division (B) of this section to apply to a communication made at 107
the scene of and immediately after an acute high stress 108
incident, the peer support team member must have provided the 109
peer support services at the request of the recipient and at the 110
direction of the appointing entity listed in division (A) (7) of 111
this section. 112

(G) An employer or organization that appoints a peer 113
support team may designate any of the following individuals as 114
an advisor to ensure team members are appropriately trained and 115
are providing proper peer support services: 116

(1) An individual licensed to practice medicine and 117
surgery or osteopathic medicine and surgery by the state medical 118
board, including such an individual who has satisfactorily 119
completed a residency training program in psychiatry; 120

(2) An individual licensed under Chapter 4732. of the 121
Revised Code to practice psychology; 122

(3) A clinical nurse specialist as defined in section 123
4723.01 of the Revised Code who holds a psychiatric-mental 124
health credential issued by the American nurses credentialing 125
center or a successor organization; 126

(4) A certified nurse practitioner as defined in section 127
4723.01 of the Revised Code who holds a psychiatric-mental 128
health credential issued by the American nurses credentialing 129

center or a successor organization; 130

(5) A licensed professional clinical counselor or licensed 131
professional counselor authorized to practice under Chapter 132
4757. of the Revised Code. 133

Sec. 4113.42. (A) As used in this section, "peer support 134
team" and "peer support team member" have the same meanings as 135
in section 2317.023 of the Revised Code. 136

(B) An employer or organization that appoints a peer 137
support team, or an advisor designated by an employer or 138
organization under division (F) of section 2317.023 of the 139
Revised Code, shall keep a roster of the peer support team 140
members that make up each peer support team maintained by the 141
employer or organization. The employer, organization, or advisor 142
shall do both of the following in the roster: 143

(1) Identify each peer support team member providing 144
services at the time the roster is created by first and last 145
name; 146

(2) Identify whether the member is in compliance with the 147
peer support training requirements necessary for the testimonial 148
privilege described in section 2317.023 of the Revised Code. 149

(C) The roster shall not include the address, telephone 150
number, or other contact information for a team member. The 151
employer, organization, or advisor shall update the roster on a 152
regular basis. 153

(D) The roster required by this section is not a public 154
record under section 149.43 of the Revised Code. However, the 155
employer, organization, or advisor shall make the roster 156
available at the request of a prosecutor, investigator, or any 157
other individual who has a legal right or duty to determine 158

whether a peer support team member is prohibited from testifying 159
in any proceeding to which section 2317.023 of the Revised Code 160
applies. 161

Sec. 4735.05. (A) The Ohio real estate commission is a 162
part of the department of commerce for administrative purposes. 163
The director of commerce is ex officio the executive officer of 164
the commission, or the director may designate any employee of 165
the department as superintendent of real estate and professional 166
licensing to act as executive officer of the commission. 167

The commission and the real estate appraiser board created 168
pursuant to section 4763.02 of the Revised Code shall each 169
submit to the director a list of three persons whom the 170
commission and the board consider qualified to be superintendent 171
within sixty days after the office of superintendent becomes 172
vacant. The director shall appoint a superintendent from the 173
lists submitted by the commission and the board, and the 174
superintendent shall serve at the pleasure of the director. 175

(B) The superintendent, except as otherwise provided, 176
shall do all of the following in regard to this chapter: 177

(1) Administer this chapter; 178

(2) Issue all orders necessary to implement this chapter; 179

(3) Investigate complaints concerning the violation of 180
this chapter or the conduct of any licensee; 181

(4) Establish and maintain an investigation and audit 182
section to investigate complaints and conduct inspections, 183
audits, and other inquiries as in the judgment of the 184
superintendent are appropriate to enforce this chapter. The 185
investigators or auditors have the right to review and audit the 186
business records of licensees and continuing education course 187

providers during normal business hours. 188

(5) Appoint a hearing examiner for any proceeding 189
involving disciplinary action under section 3123.47, 4735.052, 190
or 4735.18 of the Revised Code; 191

(6) Administer the real estate recovery fund. 192

(C) The superintendent may do all of the following: 193

(1) In connection with investigations and audits under 194
division (B) of this section, subpoena witnesses as provided in 195
section 4735.04 of the Revised Code; 196

(2) Apply to the appropriate court to enjoin any violation 197
of this chapter. Upon a showing by the superintendent that any 198
person has violated or is about to violate any provision of this 199
chapter, the court shall grant an injunction, restraining order, 200
or other appropriate order. 201

(3) Recommend the appointment of an ancillary trustee who 202
is qualified as determined by the superintendent in any of the 203
following instances: 204

(a) Upon the death of a licensed broker, if there is no 205
other licensed broker within the brokerage, upon application by 206
any interested party, subject to the approval by the appropriate 207
probate court, to conclude the business transactions of the 208
deceased broker; 209

(b) Upon the revocation of a licensed broker, if there is 210
no other licensed broker within the brokerage, to conclude the 211
business transactions of the revoked broker; 212

(c) Upon the incapacitation, suspension, or incarceration 213
of a licensed broker, if there is no other licensed broker 214
within the brokerage, to continue the business transactions of 215

the brokerage for a period of time not to exceed the period of 216
incapacitation, suspension, or incarceration. 217

(4) In conjunction with the enforcement of this chapter, 218
when the superintendent of real estate has reasonable cause to 219
believe that an applicant or licensee has committed a criminal 220
offense, the superintendent of real estate may request the 221
superintendent of the bureau of criminal identification and 222
investigation to conduct a criminal records check of the 223
applicant or licensee. The superintendent of the bureau of 224
criminal identification and investigation shall obtain 225
information from the federal bureau of investigation as part of 226
the criminal records check of the applicant or licensee. The 227
superintendent of real estate may assess the applicant or 228
licensee a fee equal to the fee assessed for the criminal 229
records check. 230

(5) In conjunction with the enforcement of this chapter, 231
issue advisory letters in lieu of initiating disciplinary action 232
under section 4735.051 or 4735.052 of the Revised Code or 233
issuing a citation under section 4735.16 or 4735.181 of the 234
Revised Code. 235

(D) All information that is obtained by investigators and 236
auditors performing investigations or conducting inspections, 237
audits, and other inquiries pursuant to division (B) (4) of this 238
section, from licensees, complainants, or other persons, and all 239
reports, documents, and other work products that arise from that 240
information and that are prepared by the investigators, 241
auditors, or other personnel of the department, shall be held in 242
confidence by the superintendent, the investigators and 243
auditors, and other personnel of the department. Notwithstanding 244
~~division (D) of section 2317.023~~ any provision of the Revised 245

Code to the contrary, all information obtained by investigators 246
or auditors from an informal mediation meeting held pursuant to 247
section 4735.051 of the Revised Code, including but not limited 248
to the agreement to mediate and the accommodation agreement, 249
shall be held in confidence by the superintendent, 250
investigators, auditors, and other personnel of the department. 251

(E) This section does not prevent the division of real 252
estate and professional licensing from releasing information 253
relating to licensees to the superintendent of financial 254
institutions for purposes relating to the administration of 255
Chapter 1322. of the Revised Code, to the superintendent of 256
insurance for purposes relating to the administration of Chapter 257
3953. of the Revised Code, to the attorney general, or to local 258
law enforcement agencies and local prosecutors. Information 259
released by the division pursuant to this section remains 260
confidential. 261

Section 2. That existing section 4735.05 of the Revised 262
Code is hereby repealed. 263