

VIRGINIA ACTS OF ASSEMBLY - 2026 SESSION

CHAPTER 47

An Act to amend and reenact § 22.1-298.6 of the Code of Virginia, relating to public schools; mental health awareness training and instruction; requirements.

[H 38]

Approved April 2, 2026

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That § 22.1-298.6 of the Code of Virginia is amended and reenacted as follows:

§ 22.1-298.6. Mental health awareness training.

A. Each school board shall adopt and implement policies that require each teacher and other relevant personnel, as determined by the school board, employed on a full-time basis, to complete a mental health awareness training or similar program at least once. *Any such mental health awareness training or similar program shall address the needs of youth populations that are at a high risk of experiencing mental health challenges and disorders in accordance with evidence-based best practices developed by the American Psychological Association, including youth who (i) are bereaved by suicide; (ii) have mental or physical disabilities or chronic health conditions, including substance use disorders; (iii) are experiencing homelessness or housing instability; (iv) are in foster care or other situations that may result in instability in a youth's custodial or living situation; or (v) identify as LGBTQ+. The provisions of this section or any policy adopted in accordance with the provisions of this section shall not be construed to permit biased or discriminatory treatment of any youth population deemed to be at a high risk of experiencing mental health challenges and disorders.*

B. Each school board shall provide required personnel the training required by subsection A and may contract with the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services, a community services board, a behavioral health authority, a nonprofit organization, or other certified trainer as defined in § 37.2-312.2 to provide such training. Such training may be provided via an online module.