

1-1 By: Menéndez S.B. No. 2938  
 1-2 (In the Senate - Filed March 14, 2025; April 7, 2025, read  
 1-3 first time and referred to Committee on Veteran Affairs;  
 1-4 April 24, 2025, reported favorably by the following vote: Yeas 7,  
 1-5 Nays 0; April 24, 2025, sent to printer.)

1-6 COMMITTEE VOTE

	Yea	Nay	Absent	PNV
1-7 Hancock	X			
1-8 Parker	X			
1-9 Eckhardt	X			
1-10 Gutierrez	X			
1-11 Hagenbuch	X			
1-12 Hall	X			
1-13 Menéndez	X			

1-15 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED  
 1-16 AN ACT

1-17 relating to the verification of the veteran status of inmates and  
 1-18 prisoners.

1-19 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

1-20 SECTION 1. Section 8(a), Article 42.09, Code of Criminal  
 1-21 Procedure, is amended to read as follows:

1-22 (a) A county that transfers a defendant to the Texas  
 1-23 Department of Criminal Justice under this article shall deliver to  
 1-24 an officer designated by the department:

1-25 (1) a copy of the judgment entered pursuant to Article  
 1-26 42.01, completed on a standardized felony judgment form described  
 1-27 by Section 4 of that article;

1-28 (2) a copy of any order revoking community supervision  
 1-29 and imposing sentence pursuant to Article 42A.755, including:

1-30 (A) any amounts owed for restitution, fines, and  
 1-31 court costs, completed on a standardized felony judgment form  
 1-32 described by Section 4, Article 42.01; and

1-33 (B) a copy of the client supervision plan  
 1-34 prepared for the defendant by the community supervision and  
 1-35 corrections department supervising the defendant, if such a plan  
 1-36 was prepared;

1-37 (3) a written report that states the nature and the  
 1-38 seriousness of each offense and that states the citation to the  
 1-39 provision or provisions of the Penal Code or other law under which  
 1-40 the defendant was convicted;

1-41 (4) a copy of the victim impact statement, if one has  
 1-42 been prepared in the case under Subchapter D, Chapter 56A;

1-43 (5) a statement as to whether there was a change in  
 1-44 venue in the case and, if so, the names of the county prosecuting  
 1-45 the offense and the county in which the case was tried;

1-46 (6) if requested, information regarding the criminal  
 1-47 history of the defendant, including the defendant's state  
 1-48 identification number if the number has been issued;

1-49 (7) a copy of the indictment or information for each  
 1-50 offense;

1-51 (8) a checklist sent by the department to the county  
 1-52 and completed by the county in a manner indicating that the  
 1-53 documents required by this subsection and Subsection (c) accompany  
 1-54 the defendant;

1-55 (9) if prepared, a copy of a presentence or  
 1-56 postsentence report prepared under Subchapter F, Chapter 42A;

1-57 (10) a copy of any detainer, issued by an agency of the  
 1-58 federal government, that is in the possession of the county and that  
 1-59 has been placed on the defendant;

1-60 (11) if prepared, a copy of the defendant's Texas  
 1-61 Uniform Health Status Update Form;

2-1 (12) a written description of a hold or warrant,  
2-2 issued by any other jurisdiction, that the county is aware of and  
2-3 that has been placed on or issued for the defendant; ~~and~~

2-4 (13) a copy of any mental health records, mental  
2-5 health screening reports, or similar information regarding the  
2-6 mental health of the defendant; and

2-7 (14) the veteran status of the defendant as determined  
2-8 by an investigation conducted in accordance with Section  
2-9 511.009(a)(17)(A), Government Code.

2-10 SECTION 2. Section 501.024(b), Government Code, is amended  
2-11 to read as follows:

2-12 (b) The department shall:

2-13 (1) in consultation with the Texas Veterans  
2-14 Commission, investigate and verify the veteran status of each  
2-15 inmate by using the best available federal data; and

2-16 (2) use the data described by Subdivision (1) to  
2-17 assist inmates who are veterans in applying for federal benefits or  
2-18 compensation for which the inmates may be eligible under a program  
2-19 administered by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs,  
2-20 including mailing any related paperwork, application, or other  
2-21 correspondence on behalf of and at no charge to the inmate.

2-22 SECTION 3. Section 511.009(a), Government Code, is amended  
2-23 to read as follows:

2-24 (a) The commission shall:

2-25 (1) adopt reasonable rules and procedures  
2-26 establishing minimum standards for the construction, equipment,  
2-27 maintenance, and operation of county jails;

2-28 (2) adopt reasonable rules and procedures  
2-29 establishing minimum standards for the custody, care, and treatment  
2-30 of prisoners;

2-31 (3) adopt reasonable rules establishing minimum  
2-32 standards for the number of jail supervisory personnel and for  
2-33 programs and services to meet the needs of prisoners;

2-34 (4) adopt reasonable rules and procedures  
2-35 establishing minimum requirements for programs of rehabilitation,  
2-36 education, and recreation in county jails;

2-37 (5) regularly review the commission's rules and  
2-38 procedures and revise, amend, or change the rules and procedures if  
2-39 necessary;

2-40 (6) provide to local government officials  
2-41 consultation on and technical assistance for county jails;

2-42 (7) review and comment on plans for the construction  
2-43 and major modification or renovation of county jails;

2-44 (8) require that the sheriff and commissioners of each  
2-45 county submit to the commission, on a form prescribed by the  
2-46 commission, an annual report on the conditions in each county jail  
2-47 within their jurisdiction, including all information necessary to  
2-48 determine compliance with state law, commission orders, and the  
2-49 rules adopted under this chapter;

2-50 (9) review the reports submitted under Subdivision (8)  
2-51 and require commission employees to inspect county jails regularly  
2-52 to ensure compliance with state law, commission orders, and rules  
2-53 and procedures adopted under this chapter;

2-54 (10) adopt a classification system to assist sheriffs  
2-55 and judges in determining which defendants are low-risk and  
2-56 consequently suitable participants in a county jail work release  
2-57 program under Article 42.034, Code of Criminal Procedure;

2-58 (11) adopt rules relating to requirements for  
2-59 segregation of classes of inmates and to capacities for county  
2-60 jails;

2-61 (12) adopt a policy for gathering and distributing to  
2-62 jails under the commission's jurisdiction information regarding:

2-63 (A) common issues concerning jail  
2-64 administration;

2-65 (B) examples of successful strategies for  
2-66 maintaining compliance with state law and the rules, standards, and  
2-67 procedures of the commission; and

2-68 (C) solutions to operational challenges for  
2-69 jails;

3-1 (13) report to the Texas Correctional Office on  
3-2 Offenders with Medical or Mental Impairments on a jail's compliance  
3-3 with Article 16.22, Code of Criminal Procedure;  
3-4 (14) adopt reasonable rules and procedures  
3-5 establishing minimum requirements for a county jail to:  
3-6 (A) determine if a prisoner is pregnant;  
3-7 (B) ensure that the jail's health services plan  
3-8 addresses medical care, including obstetrical and gynecological  
3-9 care, mental health care, nutritional requirements, and any special  
3-10 housing or work assignment needs for prisoners who are known or  
3-11 determined to be pregnant; and  
3-12 (C) identify when a pregnant prisoner is in labor  
3-13 and provide appropriate care to the prisoner, including promptly  
3-14 transporting the prisoner to a local hospital;  
3-15 (15) provide guidelines to sheriffs regarding  
3-16 contracts between a sheriff and another entity for the provision of  
3-17 food services to or the operation of a commissary in a jail under  
3-18 the commission's jurisdiction, including specific provisions  
3-19 regarding conflicts of interest and avoiding the appearance of  
3-20 impropriety;  
3-21 (16) adopt reasonable rules and procedures  
3-22 establishing minimum standards for prisoner visitation that  
3-23 provide each prisoner at a county jail with a minimum of two  
3-24 in-person, noncontact visitation periods per week of at least 20  
3-25 minutes duration each;  
3-26 (17) require the sheriff of each county to:  
3-27 (A) investigate and verify the veteran status of  
3-28 each prisoner during the intake process by using data made  
3-29 available from the Veterans Reentry Search Service (VRSS) operated  
3-30 by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs or a similar  
3-31 service; ~~and~~  
3-32 (B) use the data described by Paragraph (A) to  
3-33 assist prisoners who are veterans in applying for federal benefits  
3-34 or compensation for which the prisoners may be eligible under a  
3-35 program administered by the United States Department of Veterans  
3-36 Affairs, including providing the prisoner on verification of the  
3-37 prisoner's veteran status with a prepaid postcard that is supplied  
3-38 by the Texas Veterans Commission for purposes of requesting  
3-39 assistance in applying for veterans benefits;  
3-40 (C) submit a daily report identifying each  
3-41 prisoner whose veteran status was verified under Paragraph (A)  
3-42 during the previous day to the Texas Veterans Commission and, as  
3-43 applicable, the veterans county service officer for the county and  
3-44 each court in which charges against a prisoner identified in the  
3-45 report are pending; and  
3-46 (D) allow for a prisoner whose veteran status has  
3-47 been verified under Paragraph (A) to have in-person or video  
3-48 visitation with the veterans county service officer for the county  
3-49 or a peer service coordinator at no cost to the prisoner;  
3-50 (18) adopt reasonable rules and procedures regarding  
3-51 visitation of a prisoner at a county jail by a guardian, as defined  
3-52 by Section 1002.012, Estates Code, that:  
3-53 (A) allow visitation by a guardian to the same  
3-54 extent as the prisoner's next of kin, including placing the  
3-55 guardian on the prisoner's approved visitors list on the guardian's  
3-56 request and providing the guardian access to the prisoner during a  
3-57 facility's standard visitation hours if the prisoner is otherwise  
3-58 eligible to receive visitors; and  
3-59 (B) require the guardian to provide the sheriff  
3-60 with letters of guardianship issued as provided by Section  
3-61 1106.001, Estates Code, before being allowed to visit the prisoner;  
3-62 (19) adopt reasonable rules and procedures to ensure  
3-63 the safety of prisoners, including rules and procedures that  
3-64 require a county jail to:  
3-65 (A) give prisoners the ability to access a mental  
3-66 health professional at the jail or through a telemental health  
3-67 service 24 hours a day or, if a mental health professional is not at  
3-68 the county jail at the time, then require the jail to use all  
3-69 reasonable efforts to arrange for the inmate to have access to a

4-1 mental health professional within a reasonable time;

4-2 (B) give prisoners the ability to access a health  
4-3 professional at the jail or through a telehealth service 24 hours a  
4-4 day or, if a health professional is unavailable at the jail or  
4-5 through a telehealth service, provide for a prisoner to be  
4-6 transported to access a health professional; and

4-7 (C) if funding is available under Section  
4-8 511.019, install automated electronic sensors or cameras to ensure  
4-9 accurate and timely in-person checks of cells or groups of cells  
4-10 confining at-risk individuals; and

4-11 (20) adopt reasonable rules and procedures  
4-12 establishing minimum standards for the quantity and quality of  
4-13 feminine hygiene products, including tampons in regular and large  
4-14 sizes and menstrual pads with wings in regular and large sizes,  
4-15 provided to a female prisoner.

4-16 SECTION 4. This Act takes effect September 1, 2025.

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