

CHAPTER 239
HB 1705-FN - FINAL VERSION

19Feb2026... 0531h
26Mar2026... 1202h
05/14/2026 1926s

2026 SESSION

26-2393
06/07

HOUSE BILL ***1705-FN***

AN ACT establishing an employee assistance program for small town and volunteer first responders.

SPONSORS: Rep. Selig, Straf. 10; Rep. Damon, Sull. 8; Rep. Drye, Sull. 7; Rep. Newell, Ches. 4; Sen. Prentiss, Dist 5

COMMITTEE: Labor, Industrial and Rehabilitative Services

AMENDED ANALYSIS

This bill establishes a fund to cover the costs of enrolling and supporting first responders from small communities into the state-provided employee assistance program (EAP) and outlines eligibility, enrollment, and reporting requirements for the department of health and human services. Implementation of the program is contingent upon receipt of funding.

Explanation: Matter added to current law appears in ***bold italics***.
 Matter removed from current law appears ~~[in brackets and struckthrough.]~~
 Matter which is either (a) all new or (b) repealed and reenacted appears in regular type.

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STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

In the Year of Our Lord Two Thousand Twenty-Six

AN ACT establishing an employee assistance program for small town and volunteer first responders.

Be it Enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court convened:

1 239:1 New Sections; State-Funded Employee Assistance Program for Small Communities;
2 Establishment of Fund. Amend RSA 281-A by inserting after section 17-f the following new sections:

3 281-A:17-g First Responders Support Fund. There is established a first responders support fund,
4 which shall be administered by the department of health and human services. This fund shall be used for
5 costs incurred to enroll and administer volunteer first responders and full-time first responders from towns
6 with 5 or fewer full-time, paid first responders into the state-provided employee assistance program
7 (EAP). All fees, monetary grants, gifts, donations, or interest generated by these funds shall be deposited
8 with the state treasurer in a special nonlapsing fund to be known as the first responders support fund and
9 shall be continually appropriated to the department for the administration of this section.

10 281-A:17-h Eligibility and Enrollment.

11 I. Volunteer first responders and full-time first responders from towns with 5 or fewer full-time,
12 paid first responders shall be eligible for the employee assistance program for small communities.

13 II. The department of health and human services shall ensure that these first responders are
14 enrolled in the state-provided employee assistance program (EAP), which offers comprehensive support
15 services, including those for post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and post-traumatic stress (PTS).

16 III. The department of health and human services shall develop and implement guidelines for the
17 administration of the fund, including the process for enrollment and provision of services.

18 IV. The department shall submit an annual report to the legislature detailing the usage of the
19 fund, the number of first responders served, and the outcomes of the program.

20 V. Implementation of the employee assistance program for small communities established in this
21 section shall be contingent upon funding. The department shall indicate the availability of such funding in
22 the report submitted pursuant to paragraph IV, provided that program implementation shall begin upon
23 receipt of such funding, with the initial report submitted shortly thereafter.

24 239:2 New Subparagraph; New Funding. Amend RSA 6:12, I(b) by inserting after subparagraph
25 (410) the following new subparagraph:

26 (411) Moneys deposited in the first responders support fund as established in RSA 281-
27 A:17-g.

28 239:3 Effective Date. This act shall take effect July 1, 2027.

Approved: July 02, 2026
Effective Date: July 01, 2027

