

Second Regular Session
Seventy-fourth General Assembly
STATE OF COLORADO

INTRODUCED

LLS NO. 24-0075.01 Alana Rosen x2606

SENATE BILL 24-057

SENATE SPONSORSHIP

Sullivan,

HOUSE SPONSORSHIP

Froelich and Amabile,

Senate Committees
Health & Human Services

House Committees

A BILL FOR AN ACT

101 CONCERNING CREATING A PROGRAM TO PREVENT SUICIDE IN THE
102 AGRICULTURAL WORKFORCE.

Bill Summary

(Note: This summary applies to this bill as introduced and does not reflect any amendments that may be subsequently adopted. If this bill passes third reading in the house of introduction, a bill summary that applies to the reengrossed version of this bill will be available at <http://leg.colorado.gov>.)

The bill creates the agricultural workforce mental health and suicide prevention program (program) in the department of agriculture (department). The purpose of the program is to address the challenges facing agricultural workers and to provide agricultural workers mental health support, suicide prevention services, and crisis management services.

Shading denotes HOUSE amendment. Double underlining denotes SENATE amendment.
Capital letters or bold & italic numbers indicate new material to be added to existing law.
Dashes through the words or numbers indicate deletions from existing law.

As part of the program, the department shall:

- Create a public awareness campaign to promote suicide prevention among agricultural workers;
- Contract with a nationally recognized nonprofit organization to offer a free and confidential crisis support hotline for agricultural workers;
- Develop a mental wellness plan for agricultural workers who are affected by a natural disaster and its financial and industry-related repercussions;
- Coordinate suicide prevention and crisis management services with state agencies, including the department of human services and the behavioral health administration;
- Collaborate with the behavioral health administration to ensure callers to the 988 crisis hotline and callers to the crisis support hotline are served; and
- Collect data on the program and recommend legislative changes as necessary.

The bill requires the department to submit a report summarizing the data collected on the program and recommendations on or before September 1, 2025, and September 1 every other year thereafter, to the house of representatives agriculture, water, and natural resources committee and the senate agriculture and natural resources committee, or their successor committees.

1 *Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Colorado:*

2 **SECTION 1.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, **add** 35-1-121 as
3 follows:

4 **35-1-121. Agricultural workforce mental health and suicide**
5 **prevention program - creation - report - rules - legislative declaration**
6 **- definitions.** (1) (a) THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY FINDS AND DECLARES

7 THAT:

8 (I) SUICIDE IS ONE OF THE LEADING CAUSES OF DEATH IN THE
9 UNITED STATES;

10 (II) FIREARMS ARE USED IN MORE THAN FIFTY PERCENT OF
11 SUICIDES;

12 (III) THE PRESENCE OF GUNS IN A HOUSEHOLD INCREASES THE RISK

1 OF SUICIDE;

2 (IV) SINCE 2000, SUICIDE RATES HAVE BEEN CONSISTENTLY
3 HIGHER IN RURAL AMERICA THAN URBAN AMERICA;

4 (V) IN THE UNITED STATES, BETWEEN THE YEARS 2000 AND 2020,
5 SUICIDE RATES INCREASED FORTY-SIX PERCENT IN RURAL AREAS
6 COMPARED TO TWENTY-SEVEN PERCENT IN URBAN AREAS;

7 (VI) COLORADO HAS ONE OF THE TOP TEN HIGHEST RATES OF
8 SUICIDE IN THE UNITED STATES, WITH RESIDENTS IN RURAL COMMUNITIES
9 FACING ELEVATED RISKS DUE TO LIMITED HEALTH RESOURCES, INCREASED
10 ACCESS TO FIREARMS, AND A HIGHER AVERAGE AGE; AND

11 (VII) THE RISKS DESCRIBED IN SUBSECTION (1)(a)(VI) OF THIS
12 SECTION ARE COMPOUNDED FOR FARMERS, RANCHERS, AND FARM
13 WORKERS, FOR WHOM THE RISK OF DYING BY SUICIDE IS MORE THAN TWICE
14 THE STATEWIDE AVERAGE.

15 (b) THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY FINDS, THEREFORE, THAT SUICIDE
16 SERIOUSLY ENDANGERS FARMERS, RANCHERS, AND FARM WORKERS IN
17 RURAL COLORADO. AGRICULTURAL WORKERS FACE UNIQUE CHALLENGES,
18 FROM WORRYING ABOUT HOW GLOBAL EVENTS IMPACT COMPLEX
19 COMMODITY MARKETS TO HOW BAD STRETCHES OF WEATHER, DROUGHT,
20 OR SICK LIVESTOCK CAN LEAD TO FINANCIAL RUIN. THE STATE MUST
21 IMPLEMENT PROGRAMS TO HELP COMMUNITIES ADDRESS ISSUES SPECIFIC
22 TO AGRICULTURAL WORKERS, UNDERSTAND THE IMPACT OF
23 AGRICULTURAL WORK ON AGRICULTURAL WORKERS' MENTAL HEALTH,
24 AND PREVENT SUICIDE.

25 (2) AS USED IN THIS SECTION, UNLESS THE CONTEXT OTHERWISE
26 REQUIRES:

27 (a) "AGRICULTURAL WORKFORCE" OR "AGRICULTURAL WORKERS"

1 MEANS FARMERS, RANCHERS, AND FARM WORKERS COLLECTIVELY.

2 (b) "AGRICULTURAL WORKFORCE MENTAL HEALTH AND SUICIDE
3 PREVENTION PROGRAM" OR "PROGRAM" MEANS THE AGRICULTURAL
4 WORKFORCE MENTAL HEALTH AND SUICIDE PREVENTION PROGRAM
5 CREATED IN SUBSECTION (3) OF THIS SECTION.

6 (c) "ORGANIZATION" MEANS A NATIONALLY RECOGNIZED
7 NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION THAT REPRESENTS HEALTH PROFESSIONALS
8 AND EDUCATORS WHO FOCUS ON REDUCING HEALTH DISPARITIES FOUND
9 AMONG THE AGRICULTURAL COMMUNITY.

10 (3) THE AGRICULTURAL WORKFORCE MENTAL HEALTH AND
11 SUICIDE PREVENTION PROGRAM IS CREATED IN THE DEPARTMENT. THE
12 PURPOSE OF THE PROGRAM IS TO ADDRESS THE CHALLENGES FACING
13 AGRICULTURAL WORKERS AND TO PROVIDE AGRICULTURAL WORKERS
14 WITH MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT, SUICIDE PREVENTION SERVICES, AND
15 CRISIS MANAGEMENT SERVICES.

16 (4) AS PART OF THE PROGRAM, THE DEPARTMENT SHALL:

17 (a) CREATE A PUBLIC AWARENESS CAMPAIGN TO PROMOTE SUICIDE
18 PREVENTION AMONG AGRICULTURAL WORKERS;

19 (b) CONTRACT WITH AN ORGANIZATION TO OFFER A FREE AND
20 CONFIDENTIAL CRISIS SUPPORT HOTLINE SPECIFIC TO THE CULTURE,
21 VALUES, STRESSORS, AND LIVED EXPERIENCES OF AGRICULTURAL
22 WORKERS;

23 (c) DEVELOP A MENTAL WELLNESS PLAN FOR AGRICULTURAL
24 WORKERS AFFECTED BY NATURAL DISASTER AND ITS FINANCIAL IMPACTS
25 ON EQUIPMENT, LIVESTOCK, AND CROPS;

26 (d) COORDINATE SUICIDE PREVENTION AND CRISIS MANAGEMENT
27 SERVICES WITH STATE AGENCIES, INCLUDING THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN

1 SERVICES AND THE BEHAVIORAL HEALTH ADMINISTRATION;

2 (e) COLLABORATE WITH THE BEHAVIORAL HEALTH
3 ADMINISTRATION TO ENSURE CALLERS TO THE 988 CRISIS HOTLINE
4 ESTABLISHED PURSUANT TO ARTICLE 64 OF TITLE 27 AND CALLERS TO THE
5 CRISIS SUPPORT HOTLINE DESCRIBED IN SUBSECTION (4)(b) OF THIS
6 SECTION ARE SERVED; AND

7 (f) COLLECT DATA ON THE PROGRAM AND RECOMMEND
8 LEGISLATIVE CHANGES AS DETERMINED BY THE DEPARTMENT.

9 (5) (a) ON OR BEFORE SEPTEMBER 1, 2025, AND SEPTEMBER 1
10 EVERY OTHER YEAR THEREAFTER, THE DEPARTMENT SHALL SUBMIT A
11 REPORT SUMMARIZING THE DATA AND RECOMMENDATIONS COLLECTED
12 PURSUANT TO SUBSECTION (4)(f) OF THIS SECTION TO THE HOUSE OF
13 REPRESENTATIVES AGRICULTURE, WATER, AND NATURAL RESOURCES
14 COMMITTEE AND THE SENATE AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES
15 COMMITTEE, OR THEIR SUCCESSOR COMMITTEES.

16 (b) NOTWITHSTANDING THE REQUIREMENT IN SECTION 24-1-136
17 (11)(a)(I), THE REQUIREMENT TO SUBMIT THE REPORT REQUIRED IN THIS
18 SUBSECTION (5) CONTINUES INDEFINITELY.

19 (6) THE DEPARTMENT MAY PROMULGATE RULES AS NECESSARY TO
20 IMPLEMENT THE PROGRAM.

21 **SECTION 2. Safety clause.** The general assembly finds,
22 determines, and declares that this act is necessary for the immediate
23 preservation of the public peace, health, or safety or for appropriations for
24 the support and maintenance of the departments of the state and state
25 institutions.