HOUSE DOCKET, NO. 4527 FILED ON: 8/15/2023

HOUSE . . . . . No. 4142

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Kay Khan

To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in General Court assembled:

The undersigned legislators and/or citizens respectfully petition for the adoption of the accompanying bill:

An Act relative to mental health awareness in higher education.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	DATE ADDED:
Kay Khan	*11th Middlesex*	*8/15/2023*

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HOUSE . . . . . No. 4142

By Representative Khan of Newton, a petition (subject to Joint Rule 12) of Kay Khan relative to mental health awareness at public higher education institutions. Higher Education.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the One Hundred and Ninety-Third General Court
(2023-2024)

An Act relative to mental health awareness in higher education.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

SECTION 1. Chapter 15A of the General Laws is hereby amended by adding the following section:-

Section 48. (a) As used in this section, the following words shall, unless the context clearly requires otherwise, have the following meanings:-

"Employees", any person hired and paid by the institution, including professors, coaches, club leaders, financial aid officers, admissions counselors, dining staff, and facilities maintenance personnel.

"Institution", any public institution of higher education listed as part of the system of public institutions of higher education in section 5.

"Students", part-time and full-time students as defined by their institution.

(b) Within 45 days of the first day of employment, an institution shall provide to newly-hired employees:

(i) mandatory mental health awareness programming and primary prevention for mental health issues that shall include, but not be limited to:

(A) an explanation of civil rights laws, their meaning, purpose, definition and applicability to all forms of mental health leave of absences and discrimination;

(B) warning signs of students experiencing mental health problems, students in distress, and students experiencing signs of substance abuse;

(C) cultural competency training and profiles on at-risk student groups;

(D) information on the institution's mental health resources available to each student, including how to access them;

(E) evidence-based suggestions for ways in which employees can assist students directly and engage in risk reduction;

(F) the name, contact information, and role of a crisis provider for students in immediate harm/distress; and

(ii) information on opportunities for ongoing mental health crisis prevention as well as mental health promotion and awareness campaigns and programming.

(c) Within 45 days of their matriculation, an institution shall provide to newly-enrolled students:

(i) mandatory mental health awareness programming and primary prevention for mental health issues for newly-enrolled students of the institution that shall include, but not be limited to:

(A) an explanation of civil rights laws, their meaning, purpose, definition and applicability to all forms of mental health leave of absences and discrimination;

(B) warning signs of experiencing mental health problems and substance abuse;

(C) information on the institution's mental health resources available to each student, including how to access them;

(D) evidence-based suggestions for ways in which students can protect and promote their own mental health;

(E) the name, contact information, and role of a crisis provider for students in immediate harm/distress; and

(ii) information on opportunities for ongoing mental health crisis prevention as well as mental health promotion and awareness campaigns and programming.

SECTION 2. The requirements of this act shall take effect on August 1, 2025