

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA  
SESSION 2023

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HOUSE BILL 661

Short Title: Emergency Services Peer Counseling Privilege. (Public)

Sponsors: Representatives Winslow, Crutchfield, N. Jackson, and Pike (Primary Sponsors).  
*For a complete list of sponsors, refer to the North Carolina General Assembly web site.*

Referred to: Judiciary 1, if favorable, Rules, Calendar, and Operations of the House

April 18, 2023

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED  
2 AN ACT TO EXPAND THE SCOPE OF VARIOUS PEER SUPPORT GROUP COUNSELOR  
3 PROVISIONS.

4 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

5 SECTION 1. G.S. 8-53.10 reads as rewritten:

6 "§ 8-53.10. Peer support group counselors.

7 (a) Definitions. – The following definitions apply in this section:

8 ...

9 (3) Peer counselor. – Any active or retired law enforcement officer, emergency  
10 personnel officer, or civilian employee of a law enforcement agency ~~who~~or  
11 emergency agency who meets both of the following criteria:

12 a. Has received training to provide emotional and moral support and  
13 counseling to client law enforcement employees, emergency personnel  
14 officers, and their immediate families.

15 b. ~~Was~~Has been designated by ~~the~~a sheriff, police chief, or other head  
16 of a law enforcement or emergency agency to ~~counsel~~a ~~provide~~  
17 counseling to client law enforcement ~~employee~~employees and  
18 emergency personnel officers.

19 (4) Privileged communication. – Any communication made by a client law  
20 enforcement employee, emergency personnel officer, or a member of the  
21 client law enforcement employee's or emergency personnel officer's  
22 immediate family to a peer counselor while receiving counseling.

23 (a1) Nothing in this section shall be construed to require either of the following in order  
24 for the privilege established by this section to apply:

25 (1) That the peer counselor be specifically assigned to counsel the client law  
26 enforcement employee, emergency personnel officer, or member of the client  
27 law enforcement employee's or emergency personnel officer's immediate  
28 family receiving the counseling.

29 (2) That the designation as a peer counselor required by sub-subdivision b. of  
30 subdivision (3) of subsection (a) of this section be made by the head of the  
31 same agency that employs the client law enforcement employee or emergency  
32 personnel officer.

33 ...."

34 SECTION 2. This act is effective when it becomes law and applies retroactively to  
35 communications made on or after July 8, 2022.

