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**Public Safety & Emergency Preparedness  
Committee**

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**HB 1324**

**Brief Description:** Modifying the requirements of psychological examinations for peace officer certification.

**Sponsors:** Representatives O'Brien, Ericks, Goodman, Crouse and Wood; by request of Criminal Justice Training Commission.

**Brief Summary of Bill**

- Requires that all psychological exams taken by law enforcement officers are standardized and in compliance with the rules of the Criminal Justice Training Commission.

**Hearing Date:** 1/27/09

**Staff:** Yvonne Walker (786-7841)

**Background:**

In 2005 the Legislature passed legislation that required all new full-time, part-time, and returning reserve officers to pass a psychological and polygraph test as a condition of continued employment as a peace officer.

Each county, city, or state hiring law enforcement agency must require that every law enforcement officer applicant who has been offered a conditional offer of employment and every returning reserve officer who has been out of work for more than two years, to take and successfully pass a psychological and polygraph examination. The psychological examination must be administered by a Washington licensed psychiatrist or psychologist. Although additional tests may be administered at the option of the hiring law enforcement agency, at a minimum, the psychological exam must consist of a standardized clinical test that: (1) complies

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with accepted psychological standards; and (2) is widely used as an objective clinical screening tool for personality and psychosocial disorders.

The hiring law enforcement agency is authorized to require those applicants taking the psychological and polygraph tests to pay a portion of the testing fee based on the actual cost of the test or \$400, whichever is less. In addition, the hiring entity may establish a payment plan for those instances where an applicant may not readily have the means to pay for his or her portion of the testing fee.

The Criminal Justice Training Commission (CJTC) must deny peace officer certification to any officer that has lost his or her certification as a result of a break in law enforcement work of more than two years and has failed to pass the psychological and polygraph tests.

**Summary of Bill:**

The statutory provision is eliminated that requires that the psychological exams given to law enforcement officers consist of a standardized clinical test that complies with accepted psychological standards and is widely used as an objective clinical screening tool for personality and psychosocial disorders. As a result, all psychological exams must be standardized and in compliance with the established rules of the CJTC.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

**Effective Date:** The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.