

HOUSE BILL ANALYSIS

HB 1423

Title: An act relating to criminal justice training.

Brief Description: Strengthening the criminal justice training commission.

Sponsors: Representatives Sterk and Costa.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND CORRECTIONS

Staff: Yvonne Walker (786-7841)

Background: The Criminal Justice Training Commission was established in 1974 for the primary purpose of providing basic law enforcement training, corrections training, and education programs for criminal justice personnel, including commissioned officers, corrections officers, fire marshals, and prosecuting attorneys.

Training. Basic law enforcement officer training is generally required of all full-time commissioned law enforcement employees of the state. The training consists of a 440 hour program covering a wide variety of subjects, including constitutional and criminal law and procedures, criminal investigation, firearms training, and communication and writing skills. The law enforcement training is available only to persons employed as commissioned law enforcement officers and must be commenced within the first six months of employment of each law enforcement officer.

Course Fees. Although the commission is funded by appropriations from the public safety and education account, it provides training to criminal justice personnel at no cost.

Training Evaluation. In 1996, the legislature directed the Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs to review the commission along with its duties and administration. The intent of this study was to review current fiscal costs associated with providing the training while raising the standard of quality law enforcement training.

Summary: Training and Course Fees. Effective January 1, 1999, all law enforcement personnel hired, transferred or promoted effective January 1, 1999 are required to complete the core training requirements within six months unless the employee receives a waiver from the commission. All other position related training must be completed within one year after the core training.

Effective July 1, 1997, the Criminal Justice Training Commission must begin charging course fees to all local law enforcement officers participating in the mandatory basic law enforcement training. The commission has the discretion to charge law enforcement personnel for training other than the

mandatory basic law enforcement courses. Course fees must be equal to all or a portion of the costs associated with providing the training courses.

The commission is authorized to waive fees or establish monthly payment schedules with interest rates not exceeding 8 percent to help enable officers to pay for their basic training. Fees must be paid in full in order for an officer to receive certification of a complete of training course unless that officer has signed a note for participation in a monthly payment schedule. All revenue receive through the training fees will be deposited in the public safety and education account.

Training Evaluation. Two separate boards are established to make recommendations to the commission regarding law enforcement training: the board on law enforcement training standards and education, and the board on correctional training standards and education.

The law enforcement board will consist of 13 members:

- three members from a county law enforcement agency
- three members from city police agencies
- one member representing community colleges and one member representing four-year colleges
- one member must represent tribal law enforcement in Washington
- four members representing and recommended by the council of police officers

The correctional board consist of 14 members:

- three members from the state correctional system
- three members from the county correctional system
- two members from the juvenile corrections or probation system (one at the state level and one at the county level)
- two members who are employed in community corrections
- one member representing community colleges and one member representing four-year colleges
- two members with experience and interest in correctional training standards and education

Each board must report to the commission at the end of each fiscal year on the effectiveness of training and education programs for criminal justice personnel. The members of both boards are appointed for six year term limits. Members participating on these boards are eligible to receive reimbursement for their travel expenses for board meetings.

Every two years the commission must submit an evaluation of its training program to the legislature.

Require the Exercise of Rule- Making Powers: No

Fiscal Note: Requested on February 4, 1997.

Effective Date: This bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect immediately.