
SENATE BILL 5970

State of Washington 65th Legislature 2017 3rd Special Session

By Senators Frockt, Saldaña, O'Ban, and Palumbo

Read first time 06/29/17. Referred to Committee on Law & Justice.

1 AN ACT Relating to the crisis intervention response team pilot
2 project; adding new sections to chapter 43.101 RCW; creating a new
3 section; and providing expiration dates.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature recognizes the need to
6 address the impact of behavioral health crises on individuals,
7 communities, and state and local institutions. By virtue of their
8 position, law enforcement officers are often the first called to
9 respond to or assist individuals experiencing a behavioral health
10 crisis. The legislature recognizes that law enforcement has made
11 efforts to respond appropriately to such calls through crisis
12 intervention training and other measures focused on behavioral
13 health. However, violent interactions between persons in crisis and
14 law enforcement remain an issue of significant state and national
15 concern. While crisis intervention training and techniques are
16 critical to reducing violence and harm, there is no substitute for
17 the experience and skills of licensed mental health professionals.
18 Results from new programs used in other states demonstrate that
19 partnerships between law enforcement and mental health professionals
20 improve outcomes for safety and also address the needs of those in
21 crisis. Accordingly, the legislature hereby establishes the crisis

1 intervention response team pilot project to deploy law enforcement
2 and mental health professionals as partners in the field. The
3 allocation of grant funds will facilitate the implementation of this
4 innovative approach, and also create an opportunity to measure
5 possible outcomes through a study conducted by the Washington state
6 institute for public policy. The legislature aims to foster peaceful
7 resolution to volatile situations, and ultimately save taxpayer
8 dollars, by directly acknowledging and addressing behavioral health
9 crises with the combined efforts and expertise of law enforcement and
10 mental health professionals.

11 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 43.101
12 RCW to read as follows:

13 (1) Subject to the availability of amounts appropriated for this
14 specific purpose, the crisis intervention response team pilot project
15 is created within the commission. The purpose of the project is to
16 create crisis intervention response teams composed of qualified law
17 enforcement and mental health professionals to respond
18 professionally, humanely, and safely to crises involving persons with
19 behavioral health issues.

20 (2)(a) The commission shall award two grants, one to an eligible
21 applicant west of the crest of the Cascade mountains and one to an
22 eligible applicant east of the crest of the Cascade mountains.

23 (b) Eligible applicants include law enforcement agencies with: A
24 need for crisis intervention professionals for responding to calls
25 for service in the field; a commitment to improving crisis
26 intervention through modifying or expanding upon law enforcement
27 practices; and a commitment to partnering with mental health
28 professionals. In evaluating grant applications, the commission shall
29 consult with the Washington association of sheriffs and police chiefs
30 and behavioral health organizations. Grants must be reviewed and
31 awarded through peer review panels.

32 (c) Grant recipients must be selected and receiving funds no
33 later than June 30, 2018.

34 (3) Grant recipients must:

35 (a) Establish at least four and no more than twelve crisis
36 intervention response teams with grant funds;

37 (b) Include on each crisis intervention team one experienced law
38 enforcement officer who has completed enhanced crisis intervention
39 training under RCW 43.101.427 and one person designated as a mental

1 health professional by the department of social and health services
2 who has completed training under section 3 of this act; the officer
3 and mental health professional must be assigned as partners and
4 patrol together;

5 (c) Use crisis intervention teams to: (i) Assist law enforcement
6 officers with service calls necessitating crisis intervention; (ii)
7 conduct proactive and follow-up investigations related to crisis
8 intervention; (iii) appropriately corespond to calls involving
9 special weapons and tactics teams or other enhanced teams; (iv)
10 directly lead and handle the agency's most serious crisis
11 intervention calls; and (v) where appropriate, educate and train
12 other officers in the agency on best practices for crisis
13 intervention.

14 (4) The commission shall:

15 (a) Adopt policies and procedures necessary to administer the
16 project, including for evaluating and selecting grant recipients,
17 monitoring use of grant funds, and collecting and evaluating data to
18 assess the effectiveness of the project;

19 (b) Consult with the Washington state institute for public policy
20 to establish data collection and reporting guidelines for grant
21 recipients in order for the institute to conduct the study under
22 section 4 of this act; and

23 (c) Consult with the department of social and health services to
24 develop requirements for mental health professionals participating in
25 the project.

26 (5) The commission shall submit an annual report to the governor
27 and appropriate committees of the legislature on the project,
28 including information on selected grant recipients, use of funds,
29 number of teams, and an assessment and input by the commission and
30 grant recipients, by December 1st of each year the project is funded.

31 (6) This section expires July 1, 2022.

32 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** A new section is added to chapter 43.101
33 RCW to read as follows:

34 (1) The commission shall provide training for mental health
35 professionals participating in the crisis intervention response team
36 pilot project under section 2 of this act.

37 (2) The commission shall develop and provide training necessary
38 for mental health professionals to operate successfully and
39 competently as part of crisis intervention response teams. The

1 training must provide the professionals with a working knowledge of
2 law enforcement procedures and tools sufficient to provide for the
3 safety of the professionals, partnered law enforcement officers, and
4 members of the public.

5 (3) All mental health professionals participating in the project
6 must complete the training under this section prior to operating in
7 the field with a crisis intervention response team, unless the
8 commission provides a written waiver to the professional. A written
9 waiver may only be provided if the professional demonstrates a full
10 understanding and competency of the training materials and
11 curriculum.

12 (4) The commission shall provide the training required in this
13 section, together with facilities, supplies, materials, and the room
14 and board for noncommuting attendees.

15 (5) This section expires July 1, 2022.

16 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** A new section is added to chapter 43.101
17 RCW to read as follows:

18 (1) The Washington state institute for public policy, in
19 consultation with the commission, shall develop data collection and
20 reporting guidelines for the commission to require of grant
21 recipients under section 2 of this act. The institute shall conduct a
22 study on whether the use of crisis intervention response teams
23 improves outcomes of interactions with persons experiencing
24 behavioral health crises, including reducing rates of violence and
25 harm and other measurable effects identified by the institute.

26 (2) This section expires July 1, 2022.

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