
Public Safety Committee

HB 1767

Brief Description: Establishing a law enforcement grant program to expand alternatives to arrest and jail processes.

Sponsors: Representatives Lovick, Leavitt, Davis, Orwall, Appleton, Macri, Gregerson, Jinkins, Ryu, Pellicciotti, Dolan, Ormsby, Stanford, Peterson, Pollet, Slatter, Valdez, Walen, Frame and Tharinger.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Creates a grant program administered through the Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs to support local initiatives to properly identify criminal justice system-involved persons with behavioral health needs and engage those persons with therapeutic interventions and other services prior to or at the time of jail booking, or while in custody.

Hearing Date: 2/5/19

Staff: Omeara Harrington (786-7136).

Background:

The Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs (WASPC) is a statewide organization consisting of executive and management personnel from law enforcement agencies. Membership includes sheriffs, police chiefs, the Washington State Patrol, the Department of Corrections, and representatives of a number of federal agencies. The 1975 Washington Legislature made the WASPC a statutory entity by designating the association as a "combination of units of local government."

The WASPC has been tasked with managing certain statewide programs, such as the Jail Booking and Reporting System. Additionally, it has been given administrative responsibility for several state-funded grant programs, including grant programs addressing gang crime, graffiti

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and tagging abatement, denied firearm purchase attempts, sexual assault kits, metal theft, and mental health field response.

Summary of Bill:

When funding is provided, the WASPC must develop and implement a grant program aimed at supporting local initiatives to properly identify criminal justice system–involved persons with behavioral health needs and engage those persons with therapeutic interventions and other services prior to or at the time of jail booking, or while in custody.

Grants must be awarded to local law enforcement agencies based on locally developed proposals to establish or expand existing programs. A single agency may submit a proposal, or two or more agencies may submit a joint proposal. Programs preferred for the award of grant funding are those that contain one or more of the following components:

- employment of tools and strategies to accurately identify individuals with behavioral health needs at the point of arrest or jail booking and immediately engage those individuals with appropriate treatment programs and support services;
- capacity to receive ongoing referrals to specialized behavioral health programming for persons already incarcerated in jails;
- utilization of case manager and peer support services for persons with behavioral health needs who are incarcerated in jails;
- specialized training for jail staff relating to incarcerated individuals with behavioral health needs;
- comprehensive jail reentry programming for incarcerated persons with behavioral health needs; and
- other innovative interventions targeted specifically at persons with behavioral health needs who are brought to jail for booking or are incarcerated in jails.

Proposals must provide a plan for tracking client engagement and outcomes, and grant recipients must agree to comply with any data collection and reporting requirements established by the WASPC.

A peer review panel appointed by the WASPC, in consultation with integrated managed care organizations and behavioral health organizations, must review the grant applications. To the extent possible, grant awards should be geographically distributed on both the east and west sides of the crest of the Cascade mountain range. The WASPC may prioritize grant applications that include local matching funds. Grant recipients must be selected no later than March 1, 2020.

The WASPC must submit an annual report to the Governor and appropriate committees of the Legislature each year the program is funded. The report must include information on grant recipients, use of funds, and outcomes and other feedback from the grant recipients.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 30, 2019.

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