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SYNOPSIS
Requires uniform response procedures for all domestic crisis teams established or participated in by law enforcement agencies, and strengthens Statewide supervision over teams.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT
Introduced Pending Technical Review by Legislative Counsel.
AN ACT concerning the training and oversight of domestic crisis teams established or participated in by law enforcement agencies, and amending P.L.1991, c.261.

BE IT ENACTED by the Senate and General Assembly of the State of New Jersey:

1. Section 4 of P.L.1991, c.261 (C.2C:25-20) is amended to read as follows:

4. a. (1) The Division of Criminal Justice shall develop and approve a training course and curriculum on the handling, investigation and response procedures concerning reports of domestic violence and abuse and neglect of the elderly and disabled. This training course and curriculum shall include response procedures to be followed by all domestic crisis teams established or participated in by law enforcement agencies pursuant to paragraph (3) of subsection b. of this section. The training course and curriculum shall be reviewed at least every two years and modified by the Division of Criminal Justice from time to time as need may require. The Division of Criminal Justice shall distribute the curriculum to all local police agencies.

(2) The Attorney General shall be responsible for ensuring that all law enforcement officers attend initial training within 90 days of appointment or transfer and annual inservice training of at least four hours as described in this section.

b. (1) The Administrative Office of the Courts shall develop and approve a training course and curriculum on the handling, investigation and response procedures concerning allegations of domestic violence. This training course shall be reviewed at least every two years and modified by the Administrative Office of the Courts from time to time as need may require.

(2) The Administrative Director of the Courts shall be responsible for ensuring that all judges and judicial personnel attend initial training within 90 days of appointment or transfer and annual inservice training as described in this section.

(3) The Division of Criminal Justice and the Administrative Office of the Courts shall provide that all training on the handling of domestic violence matters shall include information concerning the impact of domestic violence on society, the dynamics of domestic violence, the statutory and case law concerning domestic violence, the necessary elements of a protection order, policies and procedures as promulgated or ordered by the Attorney General or the Supreme Court, and the use of available community resources, support services, available sanctions and treatment options. Law enforcement agencies, under the supervision of the Division of

EXPLANATION – Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets [thus] in the above bill is not enacted and is intended to be omitted in the law.

Matter underlined thus is new matter.
Criminal Justice, shall: [(1)] (a) establish domestic crisis teams or participate in established domestic crisis teams, which shall be made available to victims whenever law enforcement responds to reports of domestic violence and abuse and neglect of the elderly and disabled; and [(2) shall] (b) train, in accordance with the training course and curriculum developed pursuant to paragraph (1) of subsection a, of this section, all individual officers participating in domestic crisis teams in methods of dealing with domestic violence and neglect and abuse of the elderly and disabled. The teams may include social workers, clergy or other persons trained in counseling, crisis intervention or in the treatment of domestic violence and neglect and abuse of the elderly and disabled victims. 

(cf: P.L.1999, c.433, s.1)

2. This act shall take effect on the first day of the fourth month next following enactment.

STATEMENT

This bill concerns the training and oversight of domestic crisis teams established or participated in by law enforcement agencies. Domestic crisis teams may include social workers, clergy, or other persons trained in counseling, crisis intervention, or treating domestic violence victims, or elderly or disabled victims of neglect or abuse. See P.L.1991, c.261, s.4 (C.2C:25-20).

The bill would require that response procedures for domestic crisis teams be included in the training course and curriculum on handling, investigating, and responding to reports of domestic violence and abuse and neglect of the elderly and disabled prepared, and revised from time to time as needed, by the State’s Division of Criminal Justice in the Department of Law and Public Safety. With respect to the new response procedures to be developed, the bill would establish greater uniformity for future domestic crisis team responses by requiring that such teams be made available to victims whenever law enforcement responds to any reports of domestic violence and abuse and neglect of the elderly and disabled. Currently, there are inconsistencies in how and when the services of domestic crisis teams are made available to victims.

Lastly, the bill would strengthen oversight over domestic crisis teams by providing that law enforcement agency actions involving (1) establishing or participating in a domestic crisis team, and (2) training all individual officers participating in a team, shall be done under the supervision of the State’s Division of Criminal Justice.

This bill embodies recommendation 9 of the Report of the Supreme Court Ad Hoc Committee on Domestic Violence issued June 2016.