

SENATE BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

SENATE, No. 2801

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: DECEMBER 16, 2021

The Senate Budget and Appropriations Committee reports favorably Senate Bill No. 2801.

This bill requires the Police Training Commission (PTC) in the Division of Criminal Justice in the Department of Law and Public Safety to contract with a crisis intervention training center to assist and support counties in developing and implementing the Crisis Intervention Team model.

The bill defines a “crisis intervention training center” as a program or entity that has operated as a crisis intervention support center in the State for a period of at least five years and is contracted under the bill to assist counties in developing and implementing the Crisis Intervention Team model. The “Crisis Intervention Team model” is the best practice jail diversion model originally developed by the Memphis Tennessee Police Department and implemented in New Jersey as a county based collaboration of professionals committed to improving the law enforcement and mental health systems’ response to persons experiencing a psychiatric crisis who come into contact with law enforcement first responders.

The bill directs the PTC to assume and maintain any existing contract between a crisis intervention training center and the Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS) in the Department of Human Services that is in operation on the bill’s effective date. Upon the expiration of that contract, any new contract entered into under the bill between a crisis intervention training center and the PTC will need to include, at a minimum, the same provisions that were contained in the expired contract executed by the DMHAS.

The bill also directs the PTC to: 1) require every municipal and county police officer appointed to a police department and force in this State, within five years of the bill’s effective date or by a date determined by the Attorney General, to complete the Crisis Intervention Team model as part of the officer’s in-service training; and 2) develop and implement, in collaboration with the contracted crisis intervention training center, a curriculum that applies the Crisis Intervention Team model to persons experiencing an economic crisis or struggling with a substance abuse disorder who come into contact with law enforcement first responders.

As reported by the committee, Senate Bill No. 2801 is identical to Assembly Bill No. A4366 (1R), which also was reported by the committee on this same date.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The Office of Legislative Services (OLS) projects that the bill may result in a one-time marginal State expenditure increase by the Department of Law and Public Safety and the Department of Human Services to develop a curriculum as well as update current contracts with a crisis intervention training center to provide mental health training to county and municipal police officers. Any further periodic cost increases would result from the intermittent updating of the course curriculum, instruction, and examination.

The OLS estimates that the State's expenditure increase would be marginal because the Police Training Commission's present training curriculum requires mental health training under current law. Additionally, the implementation of the New Jersey Resiliency Program for Law Enforcement in 2019 provides mental health support and training. The OLS estimates that meeting the requirements of this bill may not be overly labor-intensive and the concerned departments may be able to absorb the additional workload within their existing operating budgets.

The bill requires the in-service training to be administered to each municipal and county law enforcement officer within five years of the bill's effective date and thus the timing of the associated costs will vary among law enforcement agencies.