

2023 -- H 5185

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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2023

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A N A C T

RELATING TO STATE AFFAIRS AND GOVERNMENT -- POLICE OFFICERS--
COMMISSION ON STANDARDS AND TRAINING

Introduced By: Representatives Cortvriend, Hull, Donovan, Spears, Dawson, Knight,
Noret, Solomon, Tanzi, and Felix

Date Introduced: January 19, 2023

Referred To: House State Government & Elections

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Chapter 42-28.2 of the General Laws entitled "Police Officers - Commission
2 on Standards and Training" is hereby amended by adding thereto the following sections:

3 **42-28.2-8.4. Training on calls involving individuals with cognitive or communication-**
4 **related disabilities -- Educational requirements.**

5 (a) The commission on standards and training shall prepare and publish mandatory training
6 standards to provide instruction for police officers in identifying, responding to, handling,
7 investigating and reporting all incidents involving victims, witnesses, or suspects with cognitive or
8 communication-related disabilities and shall develop guidelines for law enforcement responses to
9 incidents involving such persons. Instruction and guidelines shall include:

10 (1) Identifying and recognizing cognitive and communication-related disabilities for the
11 benefit of victims, witnesses and suspects, the availability of community resources for persons
12 experiencing emergencies, and the protection of persons with cognitive and communication-related
13 disabilities and for law enforcement officers engaging such persons; and

14 (2) Providing information to law enforcement officers to recognize the signs and symptoms
15 of common cognitive and communication-related disabilities, de-escalating crisis situations safely,
16 and initiating timely referrals to resources available in the community.

17 (b) The commission shall include training in all curricula for recruits and in-service
18 trainees, in all police academies operating or certified by the commission.

1 (c) All law enforcement trainees shall participate in the course of basic training for law
2 enforcement officers, established in this section, as part of their required certification process.

3 (d) Training presenters shall include:

4 (1) Intellectual/developmental disabilities and communication disabilities practitioners
5 with expertise in the delivery of direct services to individuals with cognitive disabilities or
6 communication-related disabilities; and

7 (2) Individuals with cognitive disabilities or communication-related disabilities.

8 (e) The course of instruction, the learning and performance objectives, the standards for
9 training, and the guidelines shall be developed by the municipal police training committee in
10 consultation with practitioners and advocates having an interest and expertise in providing services
11 and supports to individuals with cognitive disabilities or communication-related disabilities in
12 community-based settings.

13 (f) Training presentations may utilize the staff of community-based providers of services
14 and supports for individuals with cognitive disabilities and communication-related disabilities, as
15 well as videos or webinars developed by other federal, state or municipal law enforcement agencies.

16 (g) As used in this section, the following words and terms shall have the following
17 meanings:

18 (1) "Police detective" means any member of a municipal police department or a department
19 in the state that is assigned to conduct investigations of complaints.

20 (2) The terms "cognitive disabilities" and "communication-related disabilities" mean a
21 severe, chronic disability of a person which:

22 (i) Is attributable to a mental or physical impairment;

23 (ii) Is likely to continue indefinitely; or

24 (iii) Results in substantial functional limitations in receptive or expressive language.

25 **42-28.2-8.5. Training in investigating and handling complaints involving victims,**
26 **witnesses or suspects with cognitive or communication-related disabilities -- Educational**
27 **requirements.**

28 (a) The commission on standards and training shall prepare and publish mandatory training
29 standards to provide instruction for police detectives in investigating and handling complaints
30 involving victims, witnesses or suspects with cognitive or communication-related disabilities and
31 shall develop guidelines for detectives responding to incidents involving such persons.

32 (b) The commission on standards and training shall include and require training in the
33 curricula described in subsection (a) of this section for all newly commissioned police detectives
34 and in-service trainees, in all police academies operated or certified by the commission.

1 (c) Training presenters shall include:

2 (1) Intellectual/developmental disabilities and communication disabilities practitioners
3 with expertise in the delivery of direct services to individuals with cognitive disabilities or
4 communication-related disabilities; and

5 (2) Individuals with cognitive disabilities or communication-related disabilities.

6 (d) The course of instruction, the learning and performance objectives, the standards for
7 training, and the guidelines shall be developed by the municipal police training committee in
8 consultation with practitioners and advocates having an interest and expertise in providing services
9 and supports to individuals with cognitive disabilities or communication-related disabilities in
10 community-based settings.

11 (e) Training presentations may utilize the staff of community-based providers of services
12 and supports for individuals with cognitive disabilities and communication-related disabilities, as
13 well as videos or webinars developed by other federal, state or municipal law enforcement agencies.

14 (f) As used in this section, the following words and terms shall have the following
15 meanings:

16 (1) “Police detective” means any member of a municipal police department or a department
17 in the state that is assigned to conduct investigations of complaints.

18 (2) The terms “cognitive disabilities” and “communication-related disabilities” mean, a
19 severe, chronic disability of a person which:

20 (i) Is attributable to a mental or physical impairment;

21 (ii) Is likely to continue indefinitely; or

22 (iii) Results in substantial functional limitations in receptive or expressive language.

23 SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon passage.

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EXPLANATION
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
OF

A N A C T

RELATING TO STATE AFFAIRS AND GOVERNMENT -- POLICE OFFICERS--
COMMISSION ON STANDARDS AND TRAINING

1 This act would require the police officers commission on standards and training to provide
2 training and instructions for police officers and trainees in order to more accurately identify
3 complaints involving persons with cognitive or communication-related disabilities and to develop
4 law enforcement responses to such emergencies, including training for police investigating such
5 complaints.

6 This act would take effect upon passage.

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