

2019 -- H 6007

=====  
LC002438  
=====

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2019

—————  
A N A C T

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

Introduced By: Representatives Bennett, Shekarchi, Hull, Jacquard, and Craven

Date Introduced: April 12, 2019

Referred To: House Judiciary

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Section 42-28.2-8.3 of the General Laws in Chapter 42-28.2 entitled "Police  
2 Officers - Commission on Standards and Training" is hereby amended to read as follows:

3 ~~42-28.2-8.3. Educational requirements -- National certified mental health first aid~~  
4 ~~training.~~ 42-28.2-8.3. Educational requirements – Training on calls involving individuals with  
5 behavioral health, substance use disorder, cognitive or communication-related disabilities.

6 (a) The commission on standards and training shall prepare and publish mandatory  
7 training standards to provide instructions for police officers in identifying and handling of  
8 complaints involving mental health/substance abuse emergencies, and victims, witnesses, or  
9 suspects with mental illness or substance use disorders and shall develop guidelines for law  
10 enforcement responses to incidents involving such persons. The course of instruction shall  
11 comply with the certified National Council of Behavioral Health Mental Health First Aid  
12 Program (MHFA) for law enforcement. Instruction and the guidelines shall include:

13 (1) Identifying and recognizing mental illness or substance use disorders for the benefit  
14 of victims and witnesses, the availability of civil remedies and community resources for persons  
15 experiencing mental health emergencies, and the protection of persons with mental illness or  
16 substance use disorders and for law enforcement officers engaging such persons;

17 (2) Providing information to law enforcement officers to recognize the signs and  
18 symptoms of common mental illnesses and substance use disorders, de-escalating crisis situations

1 safely, and initiating timely referral to mental health and substance abuse resources available in  
2 the community.

3 (b) The commission on standards and training shall prepare and publish mandatory  
4 training standards to provide instructions for police officers in identifying and handling of  
5 complaints involving victims, witnesses, or suspects with cognitive or communication-related  
6 disabilities and shall develop guidelines for law enforcement responses to incidents involving  
7 such persons. Instruction and guidelines shall include:

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

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

15 ~~(b)(c)~~ The commission shall include training in all curricula for recruits and in-service  
16 trainees, in all police academies operating or certified by the commission. All law enforcement  
17 trainees shall be certified by the National Council of Behavioral Health in Mental Health First  
18 Aid.

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

21 ~~(c)(e)~~ Training presenters shall include behavioral health, developmental disabilities and  
22 communication disabilities practitioners with expertise in the delivery of direct services to  
23 individuals experiencing mental health or substance abuse emergencies and victims, witnesses,  
24 and suspects with mental illness, cognitive disabilities, communication-related disabilities and  
25 consumer-survivors i.e. individuals with mental illness, cognitive disabilities, communication-  
26 related disabilities or substance use disorders. Training presentations may utilize the staff of  
27 community-based ~~mental health~~ treatment facilities.

28 ~~(c)(f)~~ The course of instruction, the learning and performance objectives, the standards  
29 for training, and the guidelines shall be developed by the municipal police training committee in  
30 consultation with groups and individuals having an interest and expertise in the field of mental  
31 health, cognitive disabilities, communication-related disabilities and community-based treatment.

32 ~~(c)(g)~~ The municipal police training committee periodically shall include within its in-  
33 service training curriculum a course of instruction on handling complaints from or against  
34 persons with mental illness, cognitive disabilities, communication-related disabilities or substance

1 use disorders, consistent with the provisions of subsections (a)(1), ~~and~~ (a)(2), (b)(1) and (b)(2) of  
2 this section.

3 (h) The commission on standards and training shall prepare and publish mandatory  
4 training standards to provide instruction for police detectives in investigating and handling  
5 complaints involving victims, witnesses or suspects with cognitive or communication-related  
6 disabilities and shall develop guidelines for detectives responding to incidents involving such  
7 persons.

8 (i) The commission on standards and training shall include and require training in the  
9 curricula described in subsection (h) of this section for all newly commissioned police detectives  
10 and in-service trainees, in all police academies operated or certified by the commission.

11 ~~(e)~~(j) As used in this section, the following words and terms shall have the following  
12 meanings:

13 (1) "Law enforcement officer" shall mean any officer of a municipal police department or  
14 a department of the state.

15 (2) "Consumer-survivor" shall mean any individual suffering from mental health  
16 disability, cognitive disabilities, communication-related disabilities or substance abuse disorder.

17 (3) "Police detective" means any detective of a municipal police department or a  
18 department in the state.

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

=====  
LC002438  
=====

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

6           This act would take effect upon passage.

=====  
LC002438  
=====