

2023 -- H 5880

LC002224

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2023

A N A C T

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

Introduced By: Representative Thomas E. Noret

Date Introduced: March 01, 2023

Referred To: House Health & Human Services

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~~ **Educational requirements — National certified mental health training.**

5 (a) The commission on standards and training shall prepare and publish mandatory training
6 standards to provide instructions for police officers in ~~identifying~~ recognizing the possible
7 existence of a mental disorder and handling of complaints involving mental health/substance ~~abuse~~
8 use emergencies, and victims, witnesses, or suspects with mental illness or substance use disorders
9 and shall develop guidelines for law enforcement responses to incidents involving such persons.
10 The course of instruction shall comply with the certified National Council of Behavioral Health
11 Mental Health First Aid Program (MHFA) for law enforcement, or an International Certified Crisis
12 Intervention Team (ICCIT) training program, or other best practice training recognized by the
13 International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP). Instruction and the guidelines shall include:

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

1 (2) Providing information to law enforcement officers to recognize the signs and symptoms
2 of common mental illnesses and substance use disorders, de-escalating crisis situations safely, and
3 initiating timely referral to mental health and substance ~~abuse~~ use resources available in the
4 community.

5 (b) The commission shall include training in all curricula for recruits and in-service
6 trainees, in all police academies operating or certified by the commission. All law enforcement
7 trainees shall be certified by the National Council of Behavioral Health in Mental Health First Aid,
8 or an International Certified Crisis Intervention Team (ICCIT) training program, or other best
9 practice training recognized by the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP).

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

12 (d) Training presenters ~~shall~~ may include behavioral health practitioners with expertise in
13 the delivery of direct services to individuals experiencing mental health or substance ~~abuse~~ use
14 emergencies, police officers who are certified trainers in the respective training being delivered and
15 victims, witnesses, and suspects with lived experience of mental illness and consumer-survivors
16 i.e. individuals with mental illness or substance use disorders. Training presentations may utilize
17 the staff of community-based mental health treatment facilities.

18 (e) The course of instruction, the learning and performance objectives, the standards for
19 training, and the guidelines shall be developed by the Rhode Island municipal police training
20 ~~committee~~ commission in consultation with groups and individuals having an interest and expertise
21 in the field of mental health and community-based treatment.

22 (f) The Rhode Island municipal police training ~~committee~~ commission periodically shall
23 include within its in-service training curriculum a course of instruction on handling complaints
24 from or against persons with mental illness or substance use disorders, consistent with the
25 provisions of subsections (a)(1) and (a)(2).

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

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

30 (2) "Consumer-survivor" shall mean any individual ~~suffering from~~ with lived experience
31 of a mental health ~~disability~~ condition or substance ~~abuse~~ use disorder.

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

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 police training on recognizing the possible existence of mental
- 2 health disorders and substance use disorders and would require certified crisis intervention team
- 3 training for all officers.
- 4 This act would take effect upon passage.

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