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SECOND SUBSTITUTE SENATE BILL 5970

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State of Washington                      65th Legislature                      2018 Regular Session

By Senate Ways & Means (originally sponsored by Senators Frockt, Saldaña, O'Ban, and Palumbo)

READ FIRST TIME 02/06/18.

1            AN ACT Relating to the mental health field response teams  
2 program; and adding a new section to chapter 36.28A RCW.

3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

4            NEW SECTION.    **Sec. 1.**    A new section is added to chapter 36.28A  
5 RCW to read as follows:

6            (1) Subject to the availability of amounts appropriated for this  
7 specific purpose, the Washington association of sheriffs and police  
8 chiefs shall develop and implement a mental health field response  
9 team grant program. The purpose of the program is to assist local law  
10 enforcement agencies to develop and operate mental health field  
11 response team capabilities, utilizing mental health professionals to  
12 professionally, humanely, and safely respond to encounters involving  
13 persons with mental health issues. A portion of the grant funds may  
14 also be used to develop data management capability to support the  
15 program.

16            (2) Grants must be awarded to local law enforcement agencies  
17 based on locally developed proposals to incorporate mental health  
18 professionals into the agencies' mental health field response  
19 planning and response. Two or more agencies may submit a joint grant  
20 proposal to develop their mental health field response proposals.  
21 Proposals must provide a plan for improving mental health field

1 response through modifying or expanding law enforcement practices in  
2 partnership with mental health professionals. A peer review panel  
3 appointed by the Washington association of sheriffs and police chiefs  
4 in consultation with fully integrated managed care organizations and  
5 behavioral health organizations must review the grant applications.  
6 Once the Washington association of sheriffs and police chiefs  
7 certifies that the application satisfies the proposal criteria, the  
8 grant funds will be distributed. To the extent possible, at least one  
9 grant recipient agency should be from the east side of the state and  
10 one from the west side of the state with the crest of the Cascades  
11 being the dividing line. Grant recipients must be selected and  
12 receiving funds no later than October 1, 2018.

13 (3) Grant recipients must include at least one designated crisis  
14 responder who will perform professional services under the plan. A  
15 mental health professional may assist patrolling officers in the  
16 field or in an on-call capacity, provide preventive, follow-up,  
17 training on mental health field response best practices, or other  
18 services at the direction of the local law enforcement agency.  
19 Nothing in this subsection (3) requires or limits the mental health  
20 professional's participation in field patrol.

21 (4) Within existing resources, the Washington association of  
22 sheriffs and police chiefs shall:

23 (a) Consult with the department of social and health services  
24 research and data analysis unit to establish data collection and  
25 reporting guidelines for grant recipients. The data will be used to  
26 study and evaluate whether the use of mental health field response  
27 teams improves outcomes of interactions with persons experiencing  
28 behavioral health crises, including reducing rates of violence and  
29 harm, reduced arrests, and jail or emergency room usage; and

30 (b) Consult with the department of social and health services  
31 behavioral health administration and the managed care system to  
32 develop requirements for participating mental health professionals.

33 (5) The Washington association of sheriffs and police chiefs  
34 shall submit an annual report to the governor and appropriate  
35 committees of the legislature on the program. The report must include  
36 information on grant recipients, use of funds, participation of  
37 mental health professionals, and feedback from the grant recipients  
38 by December 1st of each year the program is funded.

39 (6) Grant recipients shall develop and provide or arrange for  
40 training necessary for mental health professionals to operate

1 successfully and competently in partnership with law enforcement  
2 agencies. The training must provide the professionals with a working  
3 knowledge of law enforcement procedures and tools sufficient to  
4 provide for the safety of the professionals, partnered law  
5 enforcement officers, and members of the public.

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