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**SUBSTITUTE SENATE BILL 5074**

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**State of Washington**

**67th Legislature**

**2021 Regular Session**

**By** Senate Behavioral Health Subcommittee to Health & Long Term Care  
(originally sponsored by Senators Wagoner, Dhingra, and Wilson, C.)

READ FIRST TIME 01/25/21.

1 AN ACT Relating to establishing and expanding safe station pilot  
2 programs for persons in need of substance use disorder treatment;  
3 adding a new section to chapter 41.05 RCW; adding a new section to  
4 chapter 70.385 RCW; and creating a new section.

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

6 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that the safe  
7 station program is a concept that started with successful model  
8 programs in the cities of Manchester and Nashua, New Hampshire and  
9 has spread throughout New England, including a widespread presence in  
10 Rhode Island. Under this act, participating fire departments are  
11 designated as safe stations that provide assessment and referral  
12 services at their station locations. Alternatively, or in addition,  
13 fire departments may have a mobile response unit that responds to  
14 requests for assistance in community-based locations. Basic screening  
15 is provided by mental health professionals, substance use disorder  
16 professionals, licensed practical nurses, paramedics, registered  
17 nurses, or emergency medical technicians who are trained to provide a  
18 welcoming environment and connect persons to treatment support and  
19 services, including transportation to acute medical services when  
20 warranted. Safe stations break down barriers for individuals and  
21 allow them to interact with support in recovery. Safe stations

1 provide an alternative to emergency rooms and can serve as a  
2 diversion for people who need help but are not at the point of  
3 crisis.

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 41.05  
5 RCW to read as follows:

6 (1) Subject to appropriation, the authority shall manage a grant  
7 program to award funding to fire departments in the state of  
8 Washington to implement safe station pilot programs. Programs that  
9 combine the safe station approach with fire department mobile  
10 integrated health programs such as the community assistance referral  
11 and education services program under RCW 35.21.930 are encouraged.

12 (2) Certified substance use disorder peer specialists may be  
13 employed in a safe station pilot program under this section if the  
14 authority determines that a plan is in place to provide appropriate  
15 levels of supervision and technical support.

16 (3) Behavioral health administrative services organizations in a  
17 region with a safe station pilot program shall collaborate with the  
18 safe station program, local crisis providers, and other stakeholders  
19 to develop a streamlined process for referring safe station clients  
20 to the appropriate level of care.

21 (4) Funding for pilot programs under this act shall be used for  
22 new or expanded programs and may not be used to supplant existing  
23 funding.

24 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** A new section is added to chapter 70.385  
25 RCW to read as follows:

26 Certified substance use disorder peer counselors may be employed  
27 in the pilot program established under section 2 of this act if the  
28 authority determines that a plan is in place to provide appropriate  
29 levels of supervision and technical support.

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