
ENGROSSED SUBSTITUTE SENATE BILL 5074

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; creating a new section; and providing an
5 expiration date.

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

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

1 allow them to interact with support in recovery. Safe stations
2 provide an alternative to emergency rooms and can serve as a
3 diversion for people who need help but are not at the point of
4 crisis.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

31 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** This act expires June 30, 2023.

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