
**Criminal Justice & Corrections
Committee**

SSB 5473

Brief Description: Requiring the criminal justice training commission to train officers on interacting with persons with a developmental disability or mental illness.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Judiciary (originally sponsored by Senators Regala, B. Sheldon, Johnson, Kohl-Welles, Winsley and Rasmussen).

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Directs the Criminal Justice Training Commission (CJTC) to offer a training session on how law enforcement officers should interact with people with developmental disabilities or mental illness.

Hearing Date: 3/25/03

Staff: Yvonne Walker (786-7841).

Background:

The CJTC was established in 1974 for the primary purpose of providing basic law enforcement training, corrections training, and educational programs for criminal justice personnel, including commissioned officers, corrections officers, fire marshals, and prosecuting attorneys.

Basic law enforcement officer training is generally required of all full-time commissioned law enforcement employees employed in Washington. The training consists of a 720-hour program covering a wide variety of subjects, including constitutional and criminal law and procedures, criminal investigation, firearms training, and communication and writing skills. All law enforcement personnel hired, transferred or promoted, are required to complete the core training requirements within six months unless the employee receives a waiver from the CJTC.

Summary of Bill:

The CJTC must offer a training session on how law enforcement officers should interact with

people that have developmental disabilities or a mental illness. The training must be developed by the CJTC in consultation with appropriate community, local and state organizations, and agencies that have expertise in the area of mental illness and developmental disabilities, and with appropriate self advocate and family advocate groups. In developing the course, the CJTC must also examine existing courses certified by the CJTC that relate to mental illness and developmental disabilities.

The training must emphasize nonclassroom availability of the offerings when appropriate as well as replicate likely field situations to the maximum extent. In addition, the training must include, at a minimum, core instruction in all of the following:

- The cause and nature of mental illnesses and developmental disabilities;
- How to identify indicators of mental illness and developmental disabilities and how to respond appropriately in a variety of common situations;
- Conflict resolution and de-escalation techniques for potentially dangerous situations involving people with mental illness or a developmental disability;
- Appropriate language usage when interacting with people with mental illness or a developmental disability;
- Alternatives to lethal force when interacting with potentially dangerous people with mental illness or a developmental disability; and
- Community and state resources available to serve people with mental illness or developmental disabilities and how these resources can be best used by law enforcement to benefit people with mental illness or a developmental disability.

The training must be made available to law enforcement agencies, through electronic means, for use at their convenience and determined by the internal training needs and resources of each agency.

The CJTC must make all reasonable efforts to secure private and nonstate public funds to implement this act.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on March 20, 2003.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.