

SSB 5644 - H COMM AMD

By Committee on College & Workforce Development

ADOPTED 03/04/2022

1 Strike everything after the enacting clause and insert the
2 following:

3 "NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that behavioral
4 health co-response has experienced a surge in popularity in
5 Washington state in the past five years. The legislature recognizes
6 the importance of training for those involved in co-responder
7 programs to promote high standards within programs and to enhance the
8 skills of those already working in this field. The purpose of this
9 act is to develop best practice recommendations and a model training
10 curriculum relevant to first responders and behavioral health
11 professionals working on co-response teams, to create ongoing
12 learning opportunities for emerging and established co-response
13 programs, and to develop the workforce to fill future co-responder
14 hiring needs.

15 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 71.24
16 RCW to read as follows:

17 (1) Subject to the availability of amounts appropriated for this
18 specific purpose, the University of Washington shall, in consultation
19 and collaboration with the co-responder outreach alliance and other
20 stakeholders as appropriate in the field of co-response:

21 (a) Establish regular opportunities for police, fire, emergency
22 medical services, peer counselors, and behavioral health personnel
23 working in co-response to convene for activities such as training,
24 exchanging information and best practices around the state and
25 nationally, and providing the University of Washington with
26 assistance with activities described in this section;

27 (b) Subject to the availability of amounts appropriated for this
28 specific purpose, administer a small budget to help defray costs for
29 training and professional development, which may include expenses
30 related to attending or hosting site visits with experienced co-
31 response teams;

1 (c) Develop an assessment to be provided to the governor and
2 legislature by June 30, 2023, describing and analyzing the following:

3 (i) Existing capacity and shortfalls across the state in co-
4 response teams and the co-response workforce;

5 (ii) Current alignment of co-response teams with cities,
6 counties, behavioral health administrative services organizations,
7 and call centers; distribution among police, fire, and EMS-based co-
8 response models; and desired alignment;

9 (iii) Current funding strategies for co-response teams and
10 identification of federal funding opportunities;

11 (iv) Current data systems utilized and an assessment of their
12 effectiveness for use by co-responders, program planners, and
13 policymakers;

14 (v) Current training practices and identification of future state
15 training practices;

16 (vi) Alignment with designated crisis responder activities;

17 (vii) Recommendations concerning best practices to prepare co-
18 responders to achieve objectives and meet future state crisis system
19 needs, including those of the 988 system;

20 (viii) Recommendations to align co-responder activities with
21 efforts to reform ways in which persons experiencing a behavioral
22 health crisis interact with the criminal justice system; and

23 (ix) Assessment of training and educational needs for current and
24 future co-responder workforce;

25 (d) Beginning in calendar year 2023, begin development of model
26 training curricula for individuals participating in co-response
27 teams; and

28 (e) Beginning in calendar year 2023, host an annual statewide
29 conference that draws state and national co-responders.

30 (2) Stakeholders in the field of co-response may include, but are
31 not limited to, the Washington association of designated crisis
32 responders; state associations representing police, fire, and
33 emergency medical services personnel; the Washington council on
34 behavioral health; the state enhanced 911 system; 988 crisis call
35 centers; and the peer workforce alliance."

36 Correct the title.

EFFECT: Makes a technical change to use standardized "subject to availability of amounts appropriated for this specific purpose" language.

--- **END** ---