AN ACT Relating to permissible uses of force by law enforcement and correctional officers; amending RCW 43.101.450; adding a new section to chapter 43.101 RCW; adding a new chapter to Title 10 RCW; creating a new section; and repealing RCW 10.31.050.

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

NEW SECTION. Sec. 1. The legislature recognizes that additional clarity is necessary following the passage of Initiative Measure No. 940 (chapter 1, Laws of 2019) and Substitute House Bill No. 1064 (chapter 4, Laws of 2019). The legislature intends to address excessive force and discriminatory policing by establishing a requirement for law enforcement and correctional officers to act with reasonable care when carrying out their duties, including using de-escalation tactics and alternatives to deadly force. Further, the legislature intends to address public safety concerns by limiting the use of deadly force to very narrow circumstances where there is an imminent threat of serious physical injury or death.

NEW SECTION. Sec. 2. The definitions in this section apply throughout this chapter unless the context clearly requires otherwise.
(1) "Law enforcement agency" includes any "general authority Washington law enforcement agency" and any "limited authority Washington law enforcement agency" as those terms are defined in RCW 10.93.020, except "law enforcement agency" does not include the department of corrections.

(2) "Less lethal alternatives" include, but are not limited to, conducted energy weapons, devices that deploy oleoresin capsicum, batons, and beanbag rounds.

(3) "Peace officer" includes any "general authority Washington peace officer," "limited authority Washington peace officer," and "specially commissioned Washington peace officer" as those terms are defined in RCW 10.93.020, except "peace officer" does not include any corrections officer or other employee of a jail, correctional, or detention facility.

NEW SECTION. Sec. 3. (1)(a) Except as otherwise provided under this section, a peace officer may use physical force against another person when necessary to effect an arrest, prevent an escape as defined under chapter 9A.76 RCW, or otherwise protect against an imminent threat of bodily injury to the peace officer or another person.

(b) A peace officer may use deadly force against another person only when necessary to protect against an imminent threat of serious physical injury or death to the officer or another person.

(2) A peace officer shall use reasonable care when determining whether to use physical force and when using any physical force against another person. To that end, a peace officer shall:

(a) When possible, exhaust available and appropriate de-escalation tactics prior to using any physical force, such as: creating physical distance by employing tactical repositioning and repositioning as often as necessary to maintain the benefit of time, distance, and cover; when there are multiple officers, designating one officer to communicate in order to avoid competing commands; calling for additional resources such as a crisis intervention team or mental health professional when possible; calling for back-up officers when encountering resistance; taking as much time as necessary, without using physical force or weapons; and leaving the area if there is no threat of imminent harm or no crime is being committed;
(b) When using physical force, use only the minimal degree of physical force necessary to overcome resistance under the circumstances. This includes a consideration of the characteristics and conditions of a person for the purposes of determining whether to use force against that person and, if force is necessary, determining the appropriate and minimal degree of force. Such characteristics and conditions may include, for example, whether the person: Is visibly pregnant, or states that they are pregnant; is known to be a minor, objectively appears to be a minor, or states that they are a minor; is known to be a vulnerable adult, or objectively appears to be a vulnerable adult as defined in RCW 74.34.020; displays signs of mental, behavioral, or physical impairments or disabilities; is experiencing perceptual or cognitive impairments typically related to the use of alcohol, narcotics, hallucinogens, or other drugs; is suicidal; has limited English proficiency; or is in the presence of children;

(c) Terminate the use of physical force as soon as the necessity for such force ends;

(d) When possible, use available and appropriate less lethal alternatives before using deadly force; and

(e) Make less lethal alternatives issued to the officer reasonably available for their use.

(3) A peace officer may not use any force tactics prohibited by applicable departmental policy, this chapter, or otherwise by law.

(4) Nothing in this section prevents a law enforcement agency from adopting policies or standards with additional requirements for de-escalation and greater restrictions on the use of physical and deadly force than provided in this section.

(5) For the purposes of this subsection and subsection (1)(b) of this section:

(a) "Imminent threat" means that, based on the totality of the circumstances, it is objectively reasonable to believe that a person has the present and apparent ability, opportunity, and intent to immediately cause death or serious bodily injury to the peace officer or another person.

(b) "Necessary" means that, under the totality of the circumstances, a reasonably effective alternative to the use of deadly force does not exist, and that the amount of force used was a reasonable and proportional response to the threat posed to the officer and others.
(c) "Totality of the circumstances" means all facts known to the peace officer leading up to and at the time of the use of force, and includes the actions of the person against whom the peace officer uses such force, and the actions of the peace officer.

NEW SECTION. Sec. 4. (1) By July 1, 2022, the attorney general shall develop and publish model policies on law enforcement's use of force and de-escalation tactics consistent with section 3 of this act.

(2) By September 31, 2022, all law enforcement agencies shall: Adopt policies consistent with the model policies and submit copies of the applicable policies to the attorney general; or, if the agency did not adopt policies consistent with the model policies, provide notice to the attorney general stating the reasons for any departures from the model policies and an explanation of how the agency's policies are consistent with section 3 of this act, including a copy of the agency's relevant policies. After September 31, 2022, whenever a law enforcement agency modifies or repeals any policies pertaining to the use of force or de-escalation tactics, the agency shall submit notice of such action with copies of any relevant policies to the attorney general within 60 days.

(3) By December 1st of each year, the attorney general shall publish on its website a report on the requirements of this section, including copies of the model policies, information as to the status of individual agencies' policies, and copies of any agency policies departing from the model policies.

NEW SECTION. Sec. 5. A new section is added to chapter 43.101 RCW to read as follows: The basic training provided to criminal justice personnel by the commission must be consistent with the standards in section 3 of this act and the model policies established by the attorney general under section 4 of this act.

Sec. 6. RCW 43.101.450 and 2019 c 1 s 3 (Initiative Measure No. 940) are each amended to read as follows:

(1) Beginning one year after December 6, 2018, all law enforcement officers in the state of Washington must receive violence de-escalation training. Law enforcement officers beginning employment after December 6, 2018, must successfully complete such training
within the first ((fifteen)) 15 months of employment. The commission shall set the date by which other law enforcement officers must successfully complete such training.

(2) All law enforcement officers shall periodically receive continuing violence de-escalation training to practice their skills, update their knowledge and training, and learn about new legal requirements and violence de-escalation strategies.

(3) The commission shall set training requirements through the procedures in RCW 43.101.455.

(4) Violence de-escalation training provided under this section must be consistent with section 3 of this act and the model policies established by the attorney general under section 4 of this act.

(5) The commission shall submit a report to the legislature and the governor by January 1st and July 1st of each year on the implementation of and compliance with subsections (1) and (2) of this section. The report must include data on compliance by agencies and officers. The report may also include recommendations for any changes to laws and policies necessary to improve compliance with subsections (1) and (2) of this section.

NEW SECTION. Sec. 7. RCW 10.31.050 (Officer may use force) and 2010 c 8 s 1031, Code 1881 s 1031, 1873 p 229 s 211, & 1854 p 114 s 75 are each repealed.

NEW SECTION. Sec. 8. Sections 2 through 4 of this act constitute a new chapter in Title 10 RCW.

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