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**Technology, Economic Development, &  
Veterans Committee**

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**HB 1816**

**Brief Description:** Concerning civilian-staffed crisis response teams.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Scott, Parshley, Farivar, Dufault, Fitzgibbon, Davis, Goodman, Obras, Taylor, Pollet, Nance, Ryu, Hill and Cortes.

**Brief Summary of Bill**

- Allows certain cities to create and maintain a civilian-staffed crisis response team (CRT) to respond to certain emergencies.
- Restricts collective bargaining and agreements between cities that create a CRT and law enforcement personnel.
- Creates a public records exemption for personal information about individuals receiving services from a CRT.

**Hearing Date:** 2/11/25

**Staff:** Martha Wehling (786-7067).

**Background:**

General Authority Law Enforcement Agency.

A general authority law enforcement agency is any agency, department, or division of local or state government whose primary function is to detect and apprehend persons committing infractions, violating traffic laws, or violating criminal laws. The Washington State Patrol and the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife are general authority law enforcement agencies.

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*This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.*

General authority peace officers who meet certification requirements may enforce the traffic or criminal laws in the following circumstances:

- with written consent of the jurisdiction's sheriff or chief of police;
- in response to an emergency involving an immediate threat to human life or property;
- in response to a request for assistance;
- when transporting a prisoner;
- in execution of an arrest or search warrant; or
- when the officer is in "fresh pursuit."

#### Collective Bargaining.

Under the Public Employees' Collective Bargaining Act (PECBA), local governments and certain other public employees, including uniformed personnel and the Washington State Patrol, have the right to organize and designate collective bargaining representatives to bargain their wages and working conditions. "Uniformed personnel" includes law enforcement officers employed by a city or town with a population greater than 2,500, and officers employed by a county with a population greater than 10,000.

Under the PECBA, the employer and bargaining representative have a mutual obligation to negotiate in good faith over specified mandatory subjects of bargaining, including grievance procedures, personnel matters, wages, hours, and working conditions. Negotiations involving the Washington State Patrol and its officers include wage-related matters, but negotiations regarding rates of pay, wage levels, or matters relating to retirement benefits, health care, or other employee insurance benefits are prohibited. Bargaining disputes involving uniformed personnel require binding interest arbitration if negotiations reach an impasse and cannot be resolved through mediation.

#### Public Records.

The Public Records Act (PRA) requires state and local agencies to make all public records available for public inspection and copying unless a record falls within an exemption in the PRA or another statute that exempts or prohibits disclosure of specific information or records. There is an exemption under the PRA for personal information in files maintained for students in public schools, patients or clients of public institutions or public health agencies, or welfare recipients.

#### **Summary of Bill:**

##### Civilian-Staffed Crisis Response Team.

Cities with populations greater than 500,000 have the option to create and maintain a civilian-staffed crisis response team (CRT). The CRT will function as the primary response to 911 calls or on-view events that do not report a weapon or active or imminent violence in the following situations:

- a person is in crisis but does not request law enforcement;
- a person needs a safety and welfare check; or
- a person requests resources such as shelter, food, or transportation.

A city's executive head will determine:

- whether the CRT will support law enforcement as a secondary response;
- the minimum qualifications for crisis responders;
- which city department will house the CRT;
- the number of staff for the CRT;
- the CRT's deployable areas and hours; and
- which 911 calls the CRT will respond to.

The minimum qualifications are required to include training in scene safety, de-escalation, and interacting with individuals in crisis.

#### Collective Bargaining.

Collective bargaining agreements for law enforcement personnel with effective dates on or after January 1, 2026, that have conflicting provisions are preempted and unenforceable. Collective bargaining agreements with effective dates before January 1, 2026, that have conflicting provisions or limit a city's ability to comply may not be extended or renewed beyond the existing expiration date.

A city that creates a CRT is prohibited from collectively bargaining with law enforcement personnel for: the transfer of 911 response duties to the CRT; whether the CRT will support law enforcement response; the minimum qualifications for crisis responders; which city department will house the CRT; the number of staff for the CRT; the CRT's deployable areas and hours; and which 911 calls the CRT will respond to.

A city may collectively bargain regarding wages, hours, and working conditions of law enforcement personnel.

#### Public Records Exemption.

A public records exemption for individuals receiving public safety or health services from a nonlaw enforcement agency is added to existing exemptions for personal information.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Requested on February 5, 2025.

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