



HOUSE BILL 436: Support Law Enforcement Mental Health.

2021-2022 General Assembly

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| Committee: | House Rules, Calendar, and Operations of the House | Date: | May 4, 2021 |
| Introduced by: | Reps. K. Baker, Szoka, Hunter | Prepared by: | Jessica Boney |
| Analysis of: | Second Edition | | Staff Attorney |

OVERVIEW: *House Bill 436 would require psychological screening examinations for law enforcement officers prior to initial certification, or before employment with an agency; require mental health and wellness strategies training as a component of qualification and in-service training for law enforcement officers; and expand access to information on statewide mental health resources available for law enforcement officers.*

CURRENT LAW: Chapters 17C and 17E of the General Statutes regulate the North Carolina Criminal Justice Education and Training Standards Commission and the North Carolina Sheriffs' Education and Training Standards Commission respectively. These commissions are responsible for establishing the minimum qualifications for the educational and training standards of law enforcement officers throughout the State.

BILL ANALYSIS: House Bill 436 would do all of the following:

- Require law enforcement officers to submit to a psychological screening examination prior to initial certification or before employment with an agency to determine the law enforcement officer's psychological suitability to properly fulfill the responsibilities of the office. The psychological screening examination would include an in-person interview conducted by a licensed clinical psychologist.
- Incorporate education and training to develop mental health and wellness strategies as part of the minimum educational and training standards for (i) entry level law enforcement officer qualification and (ii) in-service training for current law enforcement officers. This would include two hours of relevant training every three years. Training standards that utilize mental health professionals and in-person instruction would be encouraged.
- Require information on statewide mental health resources specifically available to law enforcement officers be regularly provided to law enforcement agencies and departments, and require coordination with appropriate local management entity/managed care organizations (LME/MCO) or prepaid health plans to make information on State and local mental health resources and programs more available.

EFFECTIVE DATE: This act would become effective when it becomes law. Sections 1 through 4 (psychological screening examinations and mental health training) would be required to be implemented no later than January 1, 2022. Sections 1 and 2 (psychological screening examinations) would apply to certifications issued and employees entering employment on or after the date of implementation (no later than January 1, 2022).

Jeremy Ray, Legislative Analysis Division, substantially contributed to this summary.

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