

About House Bill 2015

"Improving public safety funding by providing resources to local governments and state and local criminal justice agencies, and authorizing a local option tax."

Overview

On April 22, the State Legislature passed a substitute version of House Bill 2015. If signed by the governor, the bill will:

- Create a new statewide Local Law Enforcement Grant Program, administered by the Criminal Justice Training Commission (CJTC).
- Allow cities and counties that are eligible for the grant program to impose a 0.1 percent sales and use tax. The tax could be enacted directly by the City Council and would not require voter approval.

How could funds be spent?

Under the law, money from the tax could be spent on "criminal justice purposes," including:

- Recruiting and funding new law enforcement officers, corrections officers, peer counselors and behavioral health personnel working in co-response
 - Grants may provide up to 75 percent of the entry-level salaries and fringe benefits of full-time local or tribal law enforcement officers for a maximum of 36 months, with a minimum 25 percent local cash match requirement and a maximum state share of \$125,000 per position
- Use of force, de-escalation, crisis intervention, and trauma-informed trainings for officers to remain in compliance with CJTC's required trainings
- Public safety programs for emergency management planning, environmental hazard mitigations, security personnel, community outreach and assistance programs, alternative response programs, and mental health crisis response
- Domestic violence services, such as those provided by domestic violence programs, community advocates and legal advocates
- Staffing public defenders to provide appropriate defense for individuals
- Diversion programs
- Reentry work for inmates
- Local government programs that have a reasonable relationship to reducing the numbers of people interacting with the criminal justice system, including programs that seek to reduce homelessness or improve behavioral health
- Community placements for juvenile offenders
- Community outreach and assistance programs, alternative response programs and mental health crisis response, including the recovery navigator program

Eligibility criteria

To qualify for a grant, a law enforcement agency must have:

- Issued and implemented policies consistent with the 2019 Keep Washington Working Act and participated in required commission training relating to violence de-escalation and duty to render aid
- Issued and implemented policies in compliance with model policies for law enforcement from the CJTC and Attorney General's Office, including, duty to intervene and canine

- Implemented use of force data collection and reporting issued and implemented policies and practices related to laws addressing firearm relinquishment pursuant to court orders and domestic violence 911 response requirements
- A 25 percent officer compliance rate with the commission's 40-hour crisis intervention team training
- A chief of police who is certified by CJTC and who has not been convicted of a felony or convicted of a gross misdemeanor involving moral turpitude, dishonesty, fraud, or corruption
- Policies that prohibit volunteers who assist with agency work from enforcing criminal laws, other than for assistance with special event traffic, and parking, and that set forth the required supervision of volunteers

Application requirements

To apply for a grant, law enforcement agencies must provide the commission a detailed staffing plan specifying the following:

- The total number of commissioned officers currently employed by the agency
- The total number of specially commissioned officers currently employed by the agency
- The total number of co-response teams established within the agency and what staffing are included in each co-response team
- The total number of administrative staff currently employed by the agency
- The number of officers on flexible work schedules
- The average 911 response rate of the agency over the 12-month period immediately preceding the month in which the agency is applying for the grant
- The average case closure rate of the agency over the 12-month period immediately preceding the month in which the agency is applying for the grant

* If HB 2015 is signed by the governor, the CJTC will still need to develop an formal application process.

Applicant priority

In selecting grant recipients, CJTC must prioritize applicants in the following order:

1. Law enforcement agencies seeking grants to establish co-response teams or community immersion law enforcement programs, which pair new officers with community partners
2. Law enforcement agencies who currently maintain co-response teams and who are seeking grants to hire additional law enforcement officers
3. All other applicants