

ASSEMBLY BILL

No. 1762

Introduced by Assembly Member Villaraigosa

January 18, 2000

An act to add and repeal Chapter 3 (commencing with Section 13720) of Title 5 of Part 4 of the Penal Code, relating to peace officers.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 1762, as introduced, Villaraigosa. Peace officer training: mentally ill persons.

Existing law provides that the Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training shall include in the basic training course for law enforcement officers adequate instruction in the handling of persons with developmental disabilities or mental illness, or both. Existing law requires the commission to develop this training and related supplemental training in consultation with appropriate groups and individuals having an interest and expertise in this area, and to include specified subject matter.

This bill would direct the Office of Criminal Justice Planning to establish a Crisis Intervention Team pilot project for the training of law enforcement officers and public safety dispatchers concerning the nature of mental illness and appropriate methods of handling the mentally ill in order to accomplish specified policy goals. The bill would provide that these projects shall be established in the County of Los Angeles and in a county to be located within the Central

Valley of California, and would also provide funding to the existing Crisis Intervention Team program located in the City of San Jose. The bill would provide that completion of the training course specified under this program shall satisfy specified training requirements of existing law, that the implementation of their pilot projects shall be subject to appropriation by the Legislature, and that these provisions shall be repealed on January 1, 2004.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: yes. State-mandated local program: no.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Chapter 3 (commencing with Section
2 13720) is added to Title 5 of Part 4 of the Penal Code, to
3 read:

4
5 CHAPTER 3. CRISIS INTERVENTION
6

7 13720. The Legislature finds and declares the
8 following:

9 (a) Approximately 40 percent of persons suffering
10 from serious mental illness will be arrested at least once
11 during their lifetimes. It is imperative that progressive
12 law enforcement agencies assume the responsibility of
13 evaluating situations, recognizing mental illness and the
14 need for treatment and ensuring that the mentally ill
15 person receives the proper treatment resources.

16 (b) Increases in drug and alcohol abuse and the release
17 of the mentally ill from institutions have caused many to
18 become homeless and increase the probability of violence
19 and involvement with law enforcement.

20 (c) Lawsuits regarding excessive force and related
21 community reaction are significant concerns for local law
22 enforcement agencies, and traditional police methods,
23 misinformation, and lack of sensitivity can cause
24 frustration for both the mentally ill and their families as
25 well as for law enforcement. Peace officers responding to
26 calls involving the mentally ill may be faced with a lack
27 of knowledge about mental illness, resulting in a fear of



1 the unknown, and an increase in the likelihood of physical
2 confrontation.

3 (d) An effective program has been established by the
4 San Jose Police Department called the Crisis Intervention
5 Team (CIT) to train law enforcement officers in the
6 proper handling of persons suffering from mental illness.

7 (e) The pilot project created pursuant to this act is
8 intended to address these concerns by providing regional
9 training programs by which law enforcement officers can
10 become familiar with the nature of mental illness, the
11 tools and resources available for assisting the mentally ill,
12 and related matters.

13 13721. The Office of Criminal Justice Planning shall
14 establish a pilot project based on the Crisis Intervention
15 Team program of the San Jose Police Department to
16 accomplish the following goals:

17 (a) Reduce the number of mentally ill persons in
18 custody.

19 (b) Decrease the number of mentally ill persons
20 placed into emergency commitment custody.

21 (c) Provide better training and education for law
22 enforcement officers and dispatchers regarding mental
23 illness.

24 (d) Decrease the use of force during crisis events
25 involving the mentally ill.

26 (e) Reduce the number of injuries to both the
27 mentally ill and to law enforcement officers.

28 (f) Improve interaction between law enforcement
29 agencies and mental health service providers.

30 13722. Crisis Intervention Teams shall be established
31 and funded pursuant to this chapter in the County of Los
32 Angeles and in a county to be located within the Central
33 Valley of California, and the Crisis Intervention Team
34 program located in the City of San Jose shall also be
35 eligible to receive funding under this chapter. Crisis
36 Intervention Teams receiving funding pursuant to this
37 pilot project shall do all of the following:

38 (a) Establish a training program where patrol officers
39 and public safety dispatchers shall attend a 40-hour
40 curriculum under the instructional supervision of mental



1 health professionals, family advocates, and mental health
2 consumer groups.

3 (b) Recruit instructors from local hospitals, mental
4 health advocacy groups, community agencies, and
5 private mental health providers with experience in the
6 assessment and treatment of mentally ill persons.

7 (c) Require instructors to complete ride-alongs with
8 patrol officers and sit-alongs with public safety
9 dispatchers to better understand police operations.

10 13723. Completion of the training course authorized
11 under this section shall satisfy the training requirements
12 of Section 13519.2.

13 13724. Establishment of the Crisis Intervention Team
14 pilot project authorized pursuant to this chapter shall be
15 subject to an appropriation by the Legislature.

16 13725. This chapter shall remain in effect only until
17 January 1, 2004, and as of that date is repealed, unless a
18 later enacted statute, that is enacted before January 1,
19 2004, deletes or extends that date.

