

1 AN ACT concerning State government.

2 **Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois,**
3 **represented in the General Assembly:**

4 Section 1. Short title. This Act may be cited as the First
5 Responders Suicide Prevention Act.

6 Section 5. Legislative findings. The General Assembly
7 finds that:

8 (1) This State's first responders are tasked with work that
9 is highly stressful if one continually faces the impact of
10 murder, violence, accidents, serious injury, and death. The day
11 in and day out impact of these situations wreak havoc
12 personally and professionally on those who serve their
13 communities. Work as a first responder is a combination of
14 extreme boredom with incidents of mind-numbing terror. No
15 person, no matter how highly trained or well-adjusted, is
16 immune to the long-term impact of cumulative stress or sudden
17 critical incidents.

18 (2) Since September 11, 2001, the role of first responders
19 has changed dramatically. First responders have become the
20 teachers, advocates, counselors, enforcement, and safety to
21 those they serve, yet year after year, police and firefighters
22 always rank at the top for the most stressful jobs in this
23 country. The demands of shift work, change in politics and

1 public policy, and having to make life changing decisions
2 within seconds are all contributing factors in the mental
3 health and welfare of our public servants. Alcoholism, divorce,
4 depression, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD),
5 stress-related health issues, and suicide among first
6 responders are constantly well above the national average. The
7 health and well-being of first responders not only affect the
8 officer or firefighter, but those who work closely around the
9 first responder and the public he or she serves and protects.

10 (3) The purpose of this Act is to allow agencies to train
11 personnel in peer counseling. This allows firefighters and law
12 enforcement officers to have access to trained persons within
13 their respective fields to speak to and seek guidance during
14 difficult and challenging times in their careers and lives.
15 Most first responders feel comfortable speaking to others
16 within their profession that have experienced similar
17 situations. Allowing this type of counseling gives public
18 servants the ability to seek help during trying times with the
19 confidence of knowing their issue is held in confidence with
20 someone who understands. No longer should these public servants
21 have to suffer in silence.

22 (4) Maintaining an emotional and mentally healthy class of
23 first responders should be a priority goal to achieve. Healthy
24 police make better decisions, increase productivity, create
25 better work environments, and respond to society in a much more
26 open and effective manner.

1 Section 10. Definitions. In this Act:

2 "Emergency services provider" means any public employer
3 that employs persons to provide firefighting services.

4 "Emergency services personnel" means any employee of an
5 emergency services provider who is engaged in providing
6 firefighting services.

7 "Employee assistance program" means a program established
8 by a law enforcement agency or emergency services provider to
9 provide counseling support services to employees of the law
10 enforcement agency or emergency services provider, including
11 peer support counselors who have received training in
12 counseling and moral support.

13 "Law enforcement agency" means any county sheriff,
14 municipal police department, police department established by
15 a university, Department of State Police, Department of
16 Corrections, Department of Children and Family Services,
17 Division of Probation Services of the Supreme Court, the Office
18 of the Statewide 9-1-1 Administrator, and other local or county
19 agency comprised of county probation officers, corrections
20 employees, or 9-1-1 telecommunicators or emergency medical
21 dispatchers.

22 "Peer support counseling session" means communication with
23 a counselor through an employee assistance program or a trained
24 peer support counselor designated by the emergency services
25 provider or law enforcement agency.

1 "Public safety personnel" means any employee of a law
2 enforcement agency.

3 Section 15. Establishment of employee assistance program;
4 applicability.

5 (a) This Act applies to peer support counseling sessions
6 conducted by an employee or other person who:

7 (1) has been designated by a law enforcement agency or
8 emergency services provider or by an employee assistance
9 program to act as a counselor; and

10 (2) has received training in counseling to provide
11 emotional and moral support to public safety personnel or
12 emergency services personnel who have been involved in
13 emotionally traumatic incidents by reason of their
14 employment that may affect their ability to execute their
15 respective duties.

16 (b) An emergency services provider or law enforcement
17 agency may establish an employee assistance program to assist
18 emergency services personnel and public safety personnel,
19 including designating a person within the emergency services
20 provider or law enforcement agency to act as a peer support
21 counselor. An emergency services provider or law enforcement
22 agency shall give appropriate training in counseling to provide
23 emotional and moral support to persons designated as a peer
24 support counselor. Emergency services personnel and public
25 safety personnel may refer any person to an employee assistance

1 program or peer support counselor within the emergency services
2 provider or law enforcement agency, or if those services are
3 not available within the agency, to another employee assistance
4 program or peer support counseling program that is available.

5 Section 20. Confidentiality; exemptions.

6 (a) Any communication made by a participant or counselor in
7 a peer support counseling session conducted by a law
8 enforcement agency or by an emergency services provider for
9 public safety personnel or emergency services personnel and any
10 oral or written information conveyed in the peer support
11 counseling session is confidential and may not be disclosed by
12 any person participating in the peer support counseling
13 session.

14 (b) Any communication relating to a peer support counseling
15 session made confidential under this Section that is made
16 between counselors, between counselors and the supervisors or
17 staff of an employee assistance program, or between the
18 supervisor or staff of an employee assistance program, is
19 confidential and may not be disclosed.

20 (c) This Section does not prohibit any communications
21 between counselors who conduct peer support counseling
22 sessions or any communications between counselors and the
23 supervisors or staff of an employee assistance program.

24 (d) This Section does not apply to:

25 (1) any threat of suicide or homicide made by a

1 participant in a peer counseling session or any information
2 conveyed in a peer support counseling session related to a
3 threat of suicide or homicide;

4 (2) any information relating to the abuse of children
5 or of the elderly or other information that is required to
6 be reported by law; or

7 (3) any admission or knowledge of criminal conduct.

8 (e) All communications, notes, records, and reports
9 arising out of a peer support counseling session shall be
10 exempt from inspection and copying under the Freedom of
11 Information Act.

12 (f) A cause of action exists for public safety personnel or
13 emergency services personnel if the emergency services
14 provider or law enforcement agency uses confidential
15 information obtained during a confidential peer support
16 counseling session conducted by a law enforcement agency or by
17 an emergency services provider for an adverse employment action
18 against the participant.

19 Section 25. Judicial proceedings.

20 (a) Any oral communication or written information made or
21 conveyed by a participant or counselor in a peer support
22 session, including an employee assistance program, is not
23 admissible in any judicial proceeding, arbitration proceeding,
24 or other adjudicatory proceeding, except to the extent
25 necessary in an action described in subsection (f) of Section

1 20 or if related to information obtained under subsection (d)
2 of Section 20.

3 (b) Nothing in this Section limits the discovery or
4 introduction into evidence, knowledge acquired by any public
5 safety personnel or emergency services personnel from
6 observations made during the course of employment or material
7 or information acquired during the course of employment that is
8 otherwise subject to discovery in evidence.

9 Section 110. The Department of State Police Law of the
10 Civil Administrative Code of Illinois is amended by adding
11 Section 2605-99 as follows:

12 (20 ILCS 2605/2605-99 new)

13 Sec. 2605-99. Training; suicide prevention. The
14 Department, in consultation with a statewide association that
15 represents public pension funds under Article 3 and Article 4
16 of the Illinois Pension Code, shall conduct or approve a 2-day
17 in-service training program for State Police officers in
18 job-related stress management and suicide prevention. The
19 in-service training program shall train State Police officers
20 to recognize signs of work-related cumulative stress and other
21 related issues that may lead to suicide and offer appropriate
22 solutions for intervention. This in-service training program
23 shall be completed every 2 years by each State Police officer.
24 The Department shall establish the training program on or

1 before January 1, 2020.

2 Section 115. The Illinois Police Training Act is amended by
3 changing Section 7 and by adding Section 10.17-2 as follows:

4 (50 ILCS 705/7) (from Ch. 85, par. 507)

5 Sec. 7. Rules and standards for schools. The Board shall
6 adopt rules and minimum standards for such schools which shall
7 include, but not be limited to, the following:

8 a. The curriculum for probationary police officers
9 which shall be offered by all certified schools shall
10 include, but not be limited to, courses of procedural
11 justice, arrest and use and control tactics, search and
12 seizure, including temporary questioning, civil rights,
13 human rights, human relations, cultural competency,
14 including implicit bias and racial and ethnic sensitivity,
15 criminal law, law of criminal procedure, constitutional
16 and proper use of law enforcement authority, vehicle and
17 traffic law including uniform and non-discriminatory
18 enforcement of the Illinois Vehicle Code, traffic control
19 and accident investigation, techniques of obtaining
20 physical evidence, court testimonies, statements, reports,
21 firearms training, training in the use of electronic
22 control devices, including the psychological and
23 physiological effects of the use of those devices on
24 humans, first-aid (including cardiopulmonary

1 resuscitation), training in the administration of opioid
2 antagonists as defined in paragraph (1) of subsection (e)
3 of Section 5-23 of the Substance Use Disorder Act, handling
4 of juvenile offenders, recognition of mental conditions
5 and crises, including, but not limited to, the disease of
6 addiction, which require immediate assistance and response
7 and methods to safeguard and provide assistance to a person
8 in need of mental treatment, recognition of abuse, neglect,
9 financial exploitation, and self-neglect of adults with
10 disabilities and older adults, as defined in Section 2 of
11 the Adult Protective Services Act, crimes against the
12 elderly, law of evidence, the hazards of high-speed police
13 vehicle chases with an emphasis on alternatives to the
14 high-speed chase, and physical training. The curriculum
15 shall include specific training in techniques for
16 immediate response to and investigation of cases of
17 domestic violence and of sexual assault of adults and
18 children, including cultural perceptions and common myths
19 of sexual assault and sexual abuse as well as interview
20 techniques that are age sensitive and are trauma informed,
21 victim centered, and victim sensitive. The curriculum
22 shall include training in techniques designed to promote
23 effective communication at the initial contact with crime
24 victims and ways to comprehensively explain to victims and
25 witnesses their rights under the Rights of Crime Victims
26 and Witnesses Act and the Crime Victims Compensation Act.

1 The curriculum shall also include training in effective
2 recognition of and responses to stress, trauma, and
3 post-traumatic stress experienced by police officers. The
4 curriculum shall also include a block of instruction aimed
5 at identifying and interacting with persons with autism and
6 other developmental or physical disabilities, reducing
7 barriers to reporting crimes against persons with autism,
8 and addressing the unique challenges presented by cases
9 involving victims or witnesses with autism and other
10 developmental disabilities. The curriculum for permanent
11 police officers shall include, but not be limited to: (1)
12 refresher and in-service training in any of the courses
13 listed above in this subparagraph, (2) advanced courses in
14 any of the subjects listed above in this subparagraph, (3)
15 training for supervisory personnel, and (4) specialized
16 training in subjects and fields to be selected by the
17 board. The training in the use of electronic control
18 devices shall be conducted for probationary police
19 officers, including University police officers.

20 b. Minimum courses of study, attendance requirements
21 and equipment requirements.

22 c. Minimum requirements for instructors.

23 d. Minimum basic training requirements, which a
24 probationary police officer must satisfactorily complete
25 before being eligible for permanent employment as a local
26 law enforcement officer for a participating local

1 governmental agency. Those requirements shall include
2 training in first aid (including cardiopulmonary
3 resuscitation).

4 e. Minimum basic training requirements, which a
5 probationary county corrections officer must
6 satisfactorily complete before being eligible for
7 permanent employment as a county corrections officer for a
8 participating local governmental agency.

9 f. Minimum basic training requirements which a
10 probationary court security officer must satisfactorily
11 complete before being eligible for permanent employment as
12 a court security officer for a participating local
13 governmental agency. The Board shall establish those
14 training requirements which it considers appropriate for
15 court security officers and shall certify schools to
16 conduct that training.

17 A person hired to serve as a court security officer
18 must obtain from the Board a certificate (i) attesting to
19 his or her successful completion of the training course;
20 (ii) attesting to his or her satisfactory completion of a
21 training program of similar content and number of hours
22 that has been found acceptable by the Board under the
23 provisions of this Act; or (iii) attesting to the Board's
24 determination that the training course is unnecessary
25 because of the person's extensive prior law enforcement
26 experience.

1 Individuals who currently serve as court security
2 officers shall be deemed qualified to continue to serve in
3 that capacity so long as they are certified as provided by
4 this Act within 24 months of June 1, 1997 (the effective
5 date of Public Act 89-685). Failure to be so certified,
6 absent a waiver from the Board, shall cause the officer to
7 forfeit his or her position.

8 All individuals hired as court security officers on or
9 after June 1, 1997 (the effective date of Public Act
10 89-685) shall be certified within 12 months of the date of
11 their hire, unless a waiver has been obtained by the Board,
12 or they shall forfeit their positions.

13 The Sheriff's Merit Commission, if one exists, or the
14 Sheriff's Office if there is no Sheriff's Merit Commission,
15 shall maintain a list of all individuals who have filed
16 applications to become court security officers and who meet
17 the eligibility requirements established under this Act.
18 Either the Sheriff's Merit Commission, or the Sheriff's
19 Office if no Sheriff's Merit Commission exists, shall
20 establish a schedule of reasonable intervals for
21 verification of the applicants' qualifications under this
22 Act and as established by the Board.

23 g. Minimum in-service training requirements, which a
24 police officer must satisfactorily complete every 3 years.
25 Those requirements shall include constitutional and proper
26 use of law enforcement authority, procedural justice,

1 civil rights, human rights, mental health awareness and
2 response, officer wellness, and cultural competency.

3 h. Minimum in-service training requirements, which a
4 police officer must satisfactorily complete at least
5 annually. Those requirements shall include law updates and
6 use of force training which shall include scenario based
7 training, or similar training approved by the Board.

8 (Source: P.A. 99-352, eff. 1-1-16; 99-480, eff. 9-9-15; 99-642,
9 eff. 7-28-16; 99-801, eff. 1-1-17; 100-121, eff. 1-1-18;
10 100-247, eff. 1-1-18; 100-759, eff. 1-1-19; 100-863, eff.
11 8-14-18; 100-910, eff. 1-1-19; revised 9-28-19.)

12 (50 ILCS 705/10.17-2 new)

13 Sec. 10.17-2. Training; suicide prevention. The Board, in
14 consultation with a statewide association that represents
15 public pension funds under Article 3 and Article 4 of the
16 Illinois Pension Code, shall conduct or approve an in-service
17 training program for law enforcement officers in job-related
18 stress management and suicide prevention. The in-service
19 training program shall train law enforcement officers of local
20 government agencies to recognize signs of work-related
21 cumulative stress and other related issues that may lead to
22 suicide and offer appropriate solutions for intervention. This
23 in-service training program shall be completed every 3 years by
24 each local law enforcement officer. The Board shall establish
25 the training program on or before January 1, 2020.

1 Section 999. Effective date. This Act takes effect upon
2 becoming law.