

SB 1531 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Senate Committee On Judiciary

Prepared By: Whitney Perez, Counsel

Meeting Dates: 2/6, 2/8

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Requires law enforcement officers to meet with a mental health professional once every two years. Directs the employing law enforcement agency to pay the costs of these sessions. Specifies that these sessions are not mental health evaluations. Defines "law enforcement agency" and "law enforcement officer." Specifies that these sessions are in addition to sessions required when an officer is involved in the use of deadly physical force.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Fiscal implications
- Helps identify and manage stress
- Employment consequences and collective bargaining agreements
- Session does not constitute a fitness evaluation

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

Current law requires a police officer who is involved in the use of deadly physical force to complete at least one session with a mental health professional. A law enforcement agency is responsible for the cost of up to two of these sessions. The sessions must be held within six months of the incident. Otherwise, law enforcement officers are not currently required under state law to attend mental health sessions. Police officers are required to complete 24 hours of mental illness recognition for basic certification. In addition, public safety professional applicants must undergo a background investigation to determine if the applicant has good character.

Senate Bill 1531 requires law enforcement officers to have at least one session with a mental health professional every two years. Law enforcement agencies are responsible for the cost of these sessions. SB 1531 specifies that these sessions are not mental health evaluations. It also specifies that these sessions are in addition to the session an officer must attend if the officer is involved in the use of deadly physical force.