SENATE BILL 454

By: Senators Pinsky, Augustine, Feldman, Griffith, Guzzone, Kelley, Rosapepe, and Washington
Introduced and read first time: January 27, 2020
Assigned to: Judicial Proceedings

A BILL ENTITLED

AN ACT concerning Public Safety – Mandatory Mental Health Training – First Responders and Law Enforcement Officers

FOR the purpose of requiring each first responder and law enforcement officer in the State to complete certain mental health awareness training approved by the Maryland Police Training and Standards Commission; defining a certain term; and generally relating to training for first responders and law enforcement officers.

BY adding to Article – Public Safety Section 7–404 Annotated Code of Maryland (2018 Replacement Volume and 2019 Supplement)

SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND, That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

Article – Public Safety

7–404.

(A) (1) IN THIS SECTION THE FOLLOWING WORDS HAVE THE MEANINGS INDICATED.

(2) “FIRST RESPONDER” MEANS AN INDIVIDUAL WHO IS LICENSED OR CERTIFIED UNDER § 13–516 OF THE EDUCATION ARTICLE.

(3) “LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER” MEANS:

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.
[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.
(I) A LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER WHO, IN AN OFFICIAL CAPACITY, IS AUTHORIZED TO MAKE ARRESTS; OR

(II) A SHERIFF, DEPUTY SHERIFF, OR ASSISTANT SHERIFF.

(B) EACH FIRST RESPONDER AND LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER IN THE STATE SHALL COMPLETE MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS TRAINING APPROVED BY THE MARYLAND POLICE TRAINING AND STANDARDS COMMISSION, INCLUDING TRAINING TO:

1. COMBAT THE STIGMA OF MENTAL ILLNESS;
2. CONNECT INDIVIDUALS WITH MENTAL ILLNESS TO MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES;
3. EMPLOY CRISIS DE-ESCALATION TECHNIQUES;
4. ENABLE EARLY INTERVENTION THROUGH RECOGNITION OF SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF MENTAL ILLNESS;
5. IDENTIFY INDIVIDUALS WITH MENTAL ILLNESS; AND
6. PROMOTE MENTAL HEALTH LITERACY.

SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect October 1, 2020.