

# SENATE BILL 594

E4

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By: **Senators Nathan–Pulliam, Robinson, and Young**

Introduced and read first time: February 2, 2017

Assigned to: Judicial Proceedings

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## A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Baltimore City and Baltimore County – Police Behavioral Health Units –**  
3 **Training Requirements**

4 FOR the purpose of requiring a certain training program for officers of police behavioral  
5 health units in the Baltimore City Police Department and the Baltimore County  
6 Police Department to consist of a certain minimum number of hours of instruction;  
7 and generally relating to police training.

8 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,  
9 Article – Public Safety  
10 Section 3–510  
11 Annotated Code of Maryland  
12 (2011 Replacement Volume and 2016 Supplement)

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

15 **Article – Public Safety**

16 3–510.

17 (a) To the extent practicable, on or before October 1, 2016, the Baltimore City  
18 Police Department and the Baltimore County Police Department each shall establish a  
19 behavioral health unit.

20 (b) A behavioral health unit shall consist of at least six officers who are specially  
21 trained:

22 (1) to understand the needs of individuals with mental health, substance  
23 use, or co–occurring mental health and substance use disorders; and

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EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 (2) in cultural sensitivity and cultural competency.

2 (c) (1) Training for officers in a behavioral health unit shall be developed in  
3 consultation with the Behavioral Health Administration in the Department of Health and  
4 Mental Hygiene.

5 (2) **THE TRAINING PROGRAM DEVELOPED IN ACCORDANCE WITH**  
6 **THIS SUBSECTION SHALL CONSIST OF A MINIMUM OF 60 HOURS OF INSTRUCTION.**

7 (d) The purpose of a behavioral health unit is to respond to emergency calls  
8 involving an individual suspected of having a mental health, substance use, or co-occurring  
9 mental health and substance use disorder.

10 (e) The goals of a behavioral health unit are to:

11 (1) divert individuals with mental health, substance use, or co-occurring  
12 mental health and substance use disorders into treatment instead of the criminal justice  
13 system; and

14 (2) prevent and reduce unnecessary use of force and loss of life in situations  
15 involving individuals with mental health, substance use, or co-occurring mental health and  
16 substance use disorders.

17 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect  
18 October 1, 2017.