



Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services

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BILL: HOUSE BILL 123

POSITION: SUPPORT

EXPLANATION: House bill 123 alters the membership of the Maryland Correctional Training Commission by including the Director of the Division of Parole and Probation as a member.

COMMENTS:

- The Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services is responsible for overseeing the Division of Parole and Probation (DPP), which manages individuals placed on mandatory supervision, parole, or probation. DPP provides the necessary supervision and support to help these individuals stay focused on breaking the cycle of reoffending and successfully reintegrating into society.
- The community supervision component ensures that individuals are adhering to the conditions established by the courts and the Parole Commission. DPP operates 37 field offices across the State supervising over 42,000 individuals in the community.
- Since the establishment of the Correctional Training Commission (CTC) in 1971, the role of the correctional professional has significantly evolved. The CTC now establishes selection and training standards for correctional officers, parole and probation agents, and Juvenile Services staff. The CTC's responsibilities have expanded to include updating regulations related to selection criteria and training for this broader range of correctional professionals.
- Commission involvement in shaping selection criteria and training for parole and probation officers is distinctive, as these Agents are assigned to field offices or work in the community, rather than being based in a jail or state facility.

- The DPP Director is responsible for 895 mandated classifications requiring annual certification through the CTC and 89 clerical support staff classifications requiring mandated training. Additionally, the Director is required to coordinate training needs with the Commission to develop, secure, and make recommendations for evidence based training per statute.
- Lastly, the Department, in collaboration with the Correctional Training Commission, developed a comprehensive 40-hour mandatory safety focused training curriculum for Parole and Probation Agents, that includes identifying behavioral health conditions, field and agent safety, defensive tactics, use of force, and equipment usage.
- Therefore, it is crucial for the DPP Director to offer guidance and evidence-based practices to the CTC to help inform the development of future standards and training for Parole and Probation Agents.

CONCLUSION: For these reasons, the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services respectfully requests this Committee vote **FAVORABLY** on House Bill 123.