

VIRGINIA ACTS OF ASSEMBLY -- 2020 SPECIAL SESSION I

CHAPTER 32

An Act to amend and reenact §§ 9.1-102, 15.2-1705, and 15.2-1709 of the Code of Virginia, relating to minimum qualifications for law-enforcement officer, etc.; disclosure of information.

[H 5104]

Approved October 28, 2020

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That §§ 9.1-102, 15.2-1705, and 15.2-1709 of the Code of Virginia are amended and reenacted as follows:

§ 9.1-102. Powers and duties of the Board and the Department.

The Department, under the direction of the Board, which shall be the policy-making body for carrying out the duties and powers hereunder, shall have the power and duty to:

1. Adopt regulations, pursuant to the Administrative Process Act (§ 2.2-4000 et seq.), for the administration of this chapter including the authority to require the submission of reports and information by law-enforcement officers within the Commonwealth. Any proposed regulations concerning the privacy, confidentiality, and security of criminal justice information shall be submitted for review and comment to any board, commission, or committee or other body which may be established by the General Assembly to regulate the privacy, confidentiality, and security of information collected and maintained by the Commonwealth or any political subdivision thereof;

2. Establish compulsory minimum training standards subsequent to employment as a law-enforcement officer in (i) permanent positions, and (ii) temporary or probationary status, and establish the time required for completion of such training;

3. Establish minimum training standards and qualifications for certification and recertification for law-enforcement officers serving as field training officers;

4. Establish compulsory minimum curriculum requirements for in-service and advanced courses and programs for schools, whether located in or outside the Commonwealth, which are operated for the specific purpose of training law-enforcement officers;

5. Establish (i) compulsory minimum training standards for law-enforcement officers who utilize radar or an electrical or microcomputer device to measure the speed of motor vehicles as provided in § 46.2-882 and establish the time required for completion of the training and (ii) compulsory minimum qualifications for certification and recertification of instructors who provide such training;

6. [Repealed];

7. Establish compulsory minimum entry-level, in-service and advanced training standards for those persons designated to provide courthouse and courtroom security pursuant to the provisions of § 53.1-120, and to establish the time required for completion of such training;

8. Establish compulsory minimum entry-level, in-service and advanced training standards for deputy sheriffs designated to serve process pursuant to the provisions of § 8.01-293, and establish the time required for the completion of such training;

9. Establish compulsory minimum entry-level, in-service, and advanced training standards, as well as the time required for completion of such training, for persons employed as deputy sheriffs and jail officers by local criminal justice agencies and correctional officers employed by the Department of Corrections under the provisions of Title 53.1. For correctional officers employed by the Department of Corrections, such standards shall include training on the general care of pregnant women, the impact of restraints on pregnant inmates and fetuses, the impact of being placed in restrictive housing or solitary confinement on pregnant inmates, and the impact of body cavity searches on pregnant inmates;

10. Establish compulsory minimum training standards for all dispatchers employed by or in any local or state government agency, whose duties include the dispatching of law-enforcement personnel. Such training standards shall apply only to dispatchers hired on or after July 1, 1988;

11. Establish compulsory minimum training standards for all auxiliary police officers employed by or in any local or state government agency. Such training shall be graduated and based on the type of duties to be performed by the auxiliary police officers. Such training standards shall not apply to auxiliary police officers exempt pursuant to § 15.2-1731;

12. Consult and cooperate with counties, municipalities, agencies of the Commonwealth, other state and federal governmental agencies, and institutions of higher education within or outside the Commonwealth, concerning the development of police training schools and programs or courses of instruction;

13. Approve institutions, curricula and facilities, whether located in or outside the Commonwealth, for school operation for the specific purpose of training law-enforcement officers; but this shall not prevent the holding of any such school whether approved or not;

14. Establish and maintain police training programs through such agencies and institutions as the Board deems appropriate;
15. Establish compulsory minimum qualifications of certification and recertification for instructors in criminal justice training schools approved by the Department;
16. Conduct and stimulate research by public and private agencies which shall be designed to improve police administration and law enforcement;
17. Make recommendations concerning any matter within its purview pursuant to this chapter;
18. Coordinate its activities with those of any interstate system for the exchange of criminal history record information, nominate one or more of its members to serve upon the council or committee of any such system, and participate when and as deemed appropriate in any such system's activities and programs;
19. Conduct inquiries and investigations it deems appropriate to carry out its functions under this chapter and, in conducting such inquiries and investigations, may require any criminal justice agency to submit information, reports, and statistical data with respect to its policy and operation of information systems or with respect to its collection, storage, dissemination, and usage of criminal history record information and correctional status information, and such criminal justice agencies shall submit such information, reports, and data as are reasonably required;
20. Conduct audits as required by § 9.1-131;
21. Conduct a continuing study and review of questions of individual privacy and confidentiality of criminal history record information and correctional status information;
22. Advise criminal justice agencies and initiate educational programs for such agencies with respect to matters of privacy, confidentiality, and security as they pertain to criminal history record information and correctional status information;
23. Maintain a liaison with any board, commission, committee, or other body which may be established by law, executive order, or resolution to regulate the privacy and security of information collected by the Commonwealth or any political subdivision thereof;
24. Adopt regulations establishing guidelines and standards for the collection, storage, and dissemination of criminal history record information and correctional status information, and the privacy, confidentiality, and security thereof necessary to implement state and federal statutes, regulations, and court orders;
25. Operate a statewide criminal justice research center, which shall maintain an integrated criminal justice information system, produce reports, provide technical assistance to state and local criminal justice data system users, and provide analysis and interpretation of criminal justice statistical information;
26. Develop a comprehensive, statewide, long-range plan for strengthening and improving law enforcement and the administration of criminal justice throughout the Commonwealth, and periodically update that plan;
27. Cooperate with, and advise and assist, all agencies, departments, boards and institutions of the Commonwealth, and units of general local government, or combinations thereof, including planning district commissions, in planning, developing, and administering programs, projects, comprehensive plans, and other activities for improving law enforcement and the administration of criminal justice throughout the Commonwealth, including allocating and subgranting funds for these purposes;
28. Define, develop, organize, encourage, conduct, coordinate, and administer programs, projects and activities for the Commonwealth and units of general local government, or combinations thereof, in the Commonwealth, designed to strengthen and improve law enforcement and the administration of criminal justice at every level throughout the Commonwealth;
29. Review and evaluate programs, projects, and activities, and recommend, where necessary, revisions or alterations to such programs, projects, and activities for the purpose of improving law enforcement and the administration of criminal justice;
30. Coordinate the activities and projects of the state departments, agencies, and boards of the Commonwealth and of the units of general local government, or combination thereof, including planning district commissions, relating to the preparation, adoption, administration, and implementation of comprehensive plans to strengthen and improve law enforcement and the administration of criminal justice;
31. Do all things necessary on behalf of the Commonwealth and its units of general local government, to determine and secure benefits available under the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (P.L. 90-351, 82 Stat. 197), as amended, and under any other federal acts and programs for strengthening and improving law enforcement, the administration of criminal justice, and delinquency prevention and control;
32. Receive, administer, and expend all funds and other assistance available to the Board and the Department for carrying out the purposes of this chapter and the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968, as amended;
33. Apply for and accept grants from the United States government or any other source in carrying out the purposes of this chapter and accept any and all donations both real and personal, and grants of

money from any governmental unit or public agency, or from any institution, person, firm or corporation, and may receive, utilize and dispose of the same. Any arrangements pursuant to this section shall be detailed in the annual report of the Board. Such report shall include the identity of the donor, the nature of the transaction, and the conditions, if any. Any moneys received pursuant to this section shall be deposited in the state treasury to the account of the Department. To these ends, the Board shall have the power to comply with conditions and execute such agreements as may be necessary;

34. Make and enter into all contracts and agreements necessary or incidental to the performance of its duties and execution of its powers under this chapter, including but not limited to, contracts with the United States, units of general local government or combinations thereof, in Virginia or other states, and with agencies and departments of the Commonwealth;

35. Adopt and administer reasonable regulations for the planning and implementation of programs and activities and for the allocation, expenditure and subgranting of funds available to the Commonwealth and to units of general local government, and for carrying out the purposes of this chapter and the powers and duties set forth herein;

36. Certify and decertify law-enforcement officers in accordance with §§ 15.2-1706 and 15.2-1707;

37. Establish training standards and publish and periodically update model policies for law-enforcement personnel in the following subjects:

a. The handling of family abuse, domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking cases, including standards for determining the predominant physical aggressor in accordance with § 19.2-81.3. The Department shall provide technical support and assistance to law-enforcement agencies in carrying out the requirements set forth in subsection A of § 9.1-1301;

b. Communication with and facilitation of the safe return of individuals diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease;

c. Sensitivity to and awareness of cultural diversity and the potential for biased policing;

d. Protocols for local and regional sexual assault response teams;

e. Communication of death notifications;

f. The questioning of individuals suspected of driving while intoxicated concerning the physical location of such individual's last consumption of an alcoholic beverage and the communication of such information to the Virginia Alcoholic Beverage Control Authority;

g. Vehicle patrol duties that embody current best practices for pursuits and for responding to emergency calls;

h. Criminal investigations that embody current best practices for conducting photographic and live lineups;

i. Sensitivity to and awareness of human trafficking offenses and the identification of victims of human trafficking offenses for personnel involved in criminal investigations or assigned to vehicle or street patrol duties; and

j. Missing children, missing adults, and search and rescue protocol;

38. Establish compulsory training standards for basic training and the recertification of law-enforcement officers to ensure sensitivity to and awareness of cultural diversity and the potential for biased policing;

39. Review and evaluate community-policing programs in the Commonwealth, and recommend where necessary statewide operating procedures, guidelines, and standards which strengthen and improve such programs, including sensitivity to and awareness of cultural diversity and the potential for biased policing;

40. Establish a Virginia Law-Enforcement Accreditation Center. The Center may, in cooperation with Virginia law-enforcement agencies, provide technical assistance and administrative support, including staffing, for the establishment of voluntary state law-enforcement accreditation standards. The Center may provide accreditation assistance and training, resource material, and research into methods and procedures that will assist the Virginia law-enforcement community efforts to obtain Virginia accreditation status;

41. Promote community policing philosophy and practice throughout the Commonwealth by providing community policing training and technical assistance statewide to all law-enforcement agencies, community groups, public and private organizations and citizens; developing and distributing innovative policing curricula and training tools on general community policing philosophy and practice and contemporary critical issues facing Virginia communities; serving as a consultant to Virginia organizations with specific community policing needs; facilitating continued development and implementation of community policing programs statewide through discussion forums for community policing leaders, development of law-enforcement instructors; promoting a statewide community policing initiative; and serving as a statewide information source on the subject of community policing including, but not limited to periodic newsletters, a website and an accessible lending library;

42. Establish, in consultation with the Department of Education and the Virginia State Crime Commission, compulsory minimum standards for employment and job-entry and in-service training curricula and certification requirements for school security officers, including school security officers described in clause (b) of § 22.1-280.2:1, which training and certification shall be administered by the

Virginia Center for School and Campus Safety (VCSCS) pursuant to § 9.1-184. Such training standards shall be specific to the role and responsibility of school security officers and shall include (i) relevant state and federal laws; (ii) school and personal liability issues; (iii) security awareness in the school environment; (iv) mediation and conflict resolution, including de-escalation techniques such as a physical alternative to restraint; (v) disaster and emergency response; (vi) awareness of cultural diversity and implicit bias; (vii) working with students with disabilities, mental health needs, substance abuse disorders, and past traumatic experiences; and (viii) student behavioral dynamics, including child and adolescent development and brain research. The Department shall establish an advisory committee consisting of local school board representatives, principals, superintendents, and school security personnel to assist in the development of the standards and certification requirements in this subdivision. The Department shall require any school security officer who carries a firearm in the performance of his duties to provide proof that he has completed a training course provided by a federal, state, or local law-enforcement agency that includes training in active shooter emergency response, emergency evacuation procedure, and threat assessment;

43. License and regulate property bail bondsmen and surety bail bondsmen in accordance with Article 11 (§ 9.1-185 et seq.);

44. License and regulate bail enforcement agents in accordance with Article 12 (§ 9.1-186 et seq.);

45. In conjunction with the Virginia State Police and the State Compensation Board, advise criminal justice agencies regarding the investigation, registration, and dissemination of information requirements as they pertain to the Sex Offender and Crimes Against Minors Registry Act (§ 9.1-900 et seq.);

46. Establish minimum standards for (i) employment, (ii) job-entry and in-service training curricula, and (iii) certification requirements for campus security officers. Such training standards shall include, but not be limited to, the role and responsibility of campus security officers, relevant state and federal laws, school and personal liability issues, security awareness in the campus environment, and disaster and emergency response. The Department shall provide technical support and assistance to campus police departments and campus security departments on the establishment and implementation of policies and procedures, including but not limited to: the management of such departments, investigatory procedures, judicial referrals, the establishment and management of databases for campus safety and security information sharing, and development of uniform record keeping for disciplinary records and statistics, such as campus crime logs, judicial referrals and Clery Act statistics. The Department shall establish an advisory committee consisting of college administrators, college police chiefs, college security department chiefs, and local law-enforcement officials to assist in the development of the standards and certification requirements and training pursuant to this subdivision;

47. Assess and report, in accordance with § 9.1-190, the crisis intervention team programs established pursuant to § 9.1-187;

48. In conjunction with the Office of the Attorney General, advise law-enforcement agencies and attorneys for the Commonwealth regarding the identification, investigation, and prosecution of human trafficking offenses using the common law and existing criminal statutes in the Code of Virginia;

49. Register tow truck drivers in accordance with § 46.2-116 and carry out the provisions of § 46.2-117;

50. Administer the activities of the Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence Program Professional Standards Committee by providing technical assistance and administrative support, including staffing, for the Committee;

51. In accordance with § 9.1-102.1, design and approve the issuance of photo-identification cards to private security services registrants registered pursuant to Article 4 (§ 9.1-138 et seq.);

52. In consultation with the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia and the Virginia Association of Campus Law Enforcement Administrators, develop multidisciplinary curricula on trauma-informed sexual assault investigation;

53. In consultation with the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services, develop a model addiction recovery program that may be administered by sheriffs, deputy sheriffs, jail officers, administrators, or superintendents in any local or regional jail. Such program shall be based on any existing addiction recovery programs that are being administered by any local or regional jails in the Commonwealth. Participation in the model addiction recovery program shall be voluntary, and such program may address aspects of the recovery process, including medical and clinical recovery, peer-to-peer support, availability of mental health resources, family dynamics, and aftercare aspects of the recovery process;

54. Establish compulsory minimum training standards for certification and recertification of law-enforcement officers serving as school resource officers. Such training shall be specific to the role and responsibility of a law-enforcement officer working with students in a school environment and shall include (i) relevant state and federal laws; (ii) school and personal liability issues; (iii) security awareness in the school environment; (iv) mediation and conflict resolution, including de-escalation techniques; (v) disaster and emergency response; (vi) awareness of cultural diversity and implicit bias; (vii) working with students with disabilities, mental health needs, substance abuse disorders, or past traumatic experiences; and (viii) student behavioral dynamics, including current child and adolescent

development and brain research;

55. Establish a model policy for the operation of body-worn camera systems as defined in § 15.2-1723.1 that also addresses the storage and maintenance of body-worn camera system records;

56. Establish compulsory minimum training standards for detector canine handlers employed by the Department of Corrections, standards for the training and retention of detector canines used by the Department of Corrections, and a central database on the performance and effectiveness of such detector canines that requires the Department of Corrections to submit comprehensive information on each canine handler and detector canine, including the number and types of calls and searches, substances searched for and whether or not detected, and the number of false positives, false negatives, true positives, and true negatives;

57. Establish compulsory training standards for basic training of law-enforcement officers for recognizing and managing stress, self-care techniques, and resiliency; ~~and~~

58. *Establish guidelines and standards for psychological examinations conducted pursuant to subsection C of 15.2-1705; and*

59. Perform such other acts as may be necessary or convenient for the effective performance of its duties.

§ 15.2-1705. Minimum qualifications; waiver.

A. The chief of police and all police officers of any locality, all deputy sheriffs and jail officers in ~~this the~~ Commonwealth, and all law-enforcement officers as defined in § 9.1-101 who enter upon the duties of such office after July 1, 1994, are required to meet the following minimum qualifications for office. Such person shall (i) be a citizen of the United States; (ii) be required to undergo a background investigation including fingerprint-based criminal history records inquiries to both the Central Criminal Records Exchange and the Federal Bureau of Investigation; (iii) have a high school education or have passed a high school equivalency examination approved by the Board of Education; (iv) possess a valid driver's license if required by the duties of office to operate a motor vehicle; (v) undergo a physical examination, subsequent to a conditional offer of employment, conducted under the supervision of a licensed physician; (vi) be at least ~~eighteen~~ 18 years of age; (vii) not have been convicted of or pled guilty or no contest to a felony or any offense that would be a felony if committed in the Commonwealth; and (viii) not have produced a positive result on a pre-employment drug screening, if such screening is required by the hiring law-enforcement agency or jail, where the positive result cannot be explained to the law-enforcement agency or jail administrator's satisfaction. In addition, all such officers who enter upon the duties of such office on or after July 1, 2013, shall not have been convicted of or pled guilty or no contest to (a) any misdemeanor involving moral turpitude, including but not limited to petit larceny under § 18.2-96, or any offense involving moral turpitude that would be a misdemeanor if committed in the Commonwealth; (b) any misdemeanor sex offense in the Commonwealth, another state, or the United States, including but not limited to sexual battery under § 18.2-67.4 or consensual sexual intercourse with a minor 15 years of age or older under clause (ii) of § 18.2-371; or (c) domestic assault under § 18.2-57.2 or any offense that would be domestic assault under the laws of another state or the United States.

B. *In addition, if the police officer, deputy sheriff, or jail officer had been employed at any time by another law-enforcement agency or jail, the hiring law-enforcement agency or jail shall request from all prior employing law-enforcement agencies or jails any information (i) related to an arrest or prosecution of a former police officer, deputy sheriff, or jail officer, including any expunged arrest or criminal charge known to the agency or disclosed during the hiring process that would otherwise be prohibited from disclosure in accordance with § 19.2-392.4; (ii) related to a civil suit regarding a former police officer's, deputy sheriff's, or jail officer's employment or performance of his duties; (iii) obtained during the course of any internal investigation related to a former police officer's, deputy sheriff's, or jail officer's alleged criminal conduct, use of excessive force, or other official misconduct in violation of the state professional standards of conduct adopted by the Criminal Justice Services Board; and (iv) related to a former police officer, deputy sheriff, or jail officer's job performance that led to such officer's or deputy sheriff's resignation, dismissal, demotion, suspension, or transfer. The hiring agency or jail may request this information subsequent to a conditional offer of employment; however, no police officer, deputy sheriff, or jail officer may be employed in such position until the requested information is received from all prior employing law-enforcement agencies in the Commonwealth. The hiring agency or jail shall request that the police officer, deputy sheriff, or jail officer complete a waiver or release liability authorizing the hiring agency or jail to request such information as listed in this subsection from all prior employing law-enforcement agencies or jails, including law-enforcement agencies or jails located outside the Commonwealth. Any sheriff or chief of police in the Commonwealth, any director or chief executive of any law-enforcement agency or jail in the Commonwealth, and the Director of the Department of Criminal Justice Services or his designee who receives such request for information shall disclose such requested information within 14 days of receiving such request to the requesting hiring law-enforcement agency or jail.*

C. *In addition, the hiring law-enforcement agency or jail may require a candidate for employment to undergo a psychological examination, subsequent to a conditional offer of employment, conducted under*

the supervision of a licensed psychiatrist or a licensed clinical psychologist.

D. Upon request of a sheriff or chief of police, or the director or chief executive of any agency or department employing law-enforcement officers as defined in § 9.1-101, or jail officers as defined in § 53.1-1, the Department of Criminal Justice Services is hereby authorized to waive the requirements for qualification as set out in subsection A of this section for good cause shown.

§ 15.2-1709. Employer immunity from liability; disclosure of information regarding former deputy sheriffs and law-enforcement officers.

Any sheriff or chief of police, ~~the~~ any director or chief executive of any agency or department employing deputy sheriffs or law-enforcement officers as defined in § 9.1-101, or jail officers as defined in § 53.1-1, and the Director of the Department of Criminal Justice Services or his designee who discloses information about a former deputy sheriff's or law-enforcement officer's or jail officer's job performance *or information requested pursuant to subsection B of § 15.2-1705* to a prospective law-enforcement or jail employer of the former appointee or employee is ~~presumed to be acting in good faith and, unless lack of good faith is shown by clear and convincing evidence,~~ is immune from civil liability for such disclosure or its consequences. ~~For purposes of this section, the presumption of good faith is rebutted upon a showing that~~ *unless* the information disclosed by the former employer was knowingly false or deliberately misleading, was rendered with malicious purpose, or violated any civil right of the former employee or appointee.