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## HOUSE BILL NO. 5127

Offered August 24, 2020

A *BILL to amend and reenact § 9.1-187 of the Code of Virginia, relating to crisis intervention teams; bilingual and multilingual members.*

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Patron—Kory

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Referred to Committee on Public Safety

**Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:****1. That § 9.1-187 of the Code of Virginia is amended and reenacted as follows:****§ 9.1-187. Establishment of crisis intervention team programs.**

A. By January 1, 2010, the Department of Criminal Justice Services and the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services, utilizing such federal or state funding as may be available for this purpose, shall support the development and establishment of crisis intervention team programs in areas throughout the Commonwealth. Areas may be composed of any combination of one or more localities or institutions of higher education contained therein that may have law-enforcement officers as defined in § 9.1-101. The crisis intervention teams shall assist law-enforcement officers in responding to crisis situations involving persons with mental illness, substance abuse problems, or both. The goals of the crisis intervention team programs shall be:

1. Providing immediate response by specially trained law-enforcement officers;
2. Reducing the amount of time officers spend out of service awaiting assessment and disposition;
3. Affording persons with mental illness, substance abuse problems, or both, a sense of dignity in crisis situations;
4. Reducing the likelihood of physical confrontation;
5. Decreasing arrests and use of force;
6. Identifying underserved populations with mental illness, substance abuse problems, or both, and linking them to appropriate care;
7. Providing support and assistance for mental health treatment professionals;
8. Decreasing the use of arrest and detention of persons experiencing mental health and/or substance abuse crises by providing better access to timely treatment;
9. Providing a therapeutic location or protocol for officers to bring individuals in crisis for assessment that is not a law-enforcement or jail facility;
10. Increasing public recognition and appreciation for the mental health needs of a community;
11. Decreasing injuries to law-enforcement officers during crisis events;
12. Reducing inappropriate arrests of individuals with mental illness in crisis situations; and
13. Decreasing the need for mental health treatment in jail.

B. The Department, in collaboration with the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services, shall establish criteria for the development of crisis intervention teams that shall include assessment of the effectiveness of the area's plan for community involvement, training, and therapeutic response alternatives and a determination of whether law-enforcement officers have effective agreements with mental health care providers and all other community stakeholders. *Such criteria shall include a requirement that each crisis intervention team include at least two individuals who are fluent in a language or languages other than English that are commonly spoken in the community.*

C. By November 1, 2009, the Department, and the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services, shall submit to the Joint Commission on Health Care a report outlining the status of the crisis intervention team programs, including copies of any requests for proposals and the criteria developed for such areas.

INTRODUCED

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