

Department of Planning and Budget 2022 Fiscal Impact Statement

1. Bill Number: SB429

House of Origin Introduced Substitute Engrossed
Second House In Committee Substitute Enrolled

2. Patron: Dunnivant

3. Committee: Education and Health

4. Title: Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services; Department of State Police.

5. Summary: Requires the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services (DBHDS) to develop or obtain a mental health mobile application for suicide prevention and the provision of educational materials related to suicide prevention. The bill requires the mobile application to provide a means to directly connect to the 988 Suicide Prevention Lifeline. The bill directs the Secretary of Health and Human Resources and the Secretary of Education to promote, market, and advertise the use of such application using existing resources. The bill also requires the Department of State Police to develop or obtain a public safety mobile application to provide to individuals in the Commonwealth a platform that is capable of receiving text, audio, images, and video to submit confidential tips concerning a suspected, anticipated, or completed criminal violation, including bullying and threats of school violence. The Department of State Police shall develop a referral system to ensure that tips received through the mobile application are referred to the chief law-enforcement officer of the relevant jurisdiction for proper coordination of response and investigation. The bill directs the Secretary of Public Safety and Homeland Security to promote, market, and advertise the use of such application using existing resources. The provisions of the bill related to an application developed by DBHDS have a delayed effective date of July 1, 2023.

6. Budget Amendment Necessary: See Item 8.

7. Fiscal Impact Estimates: Indeterminate. See Item 8.

8. Fiscal Implications: This legislation will have an impact primarily on two state agencies – the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services and the Virginia Department of State Police. The impacts are detailed below.

Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services

As part of the federal requirements, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) requires covered text providers to support text messaging to 988 by routing certain text messages sent to 988 to the National Suicide Prevention Hotline by July 16, 2022.

Additionally, the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline, which is being integrated into Virginia’s 9-8-8 as part of the statewide implementation, is available through online chats using a browser. However, there is no separate app interface. Simple app development is not a current component in the contract with Netsmart. An app that includes educational materials will require more funding and is out of the scope of the current contract. A recent Healthcare IT study estimates the average cost to develop a mobile health application from conception to launch to be approximately \$425,000. A similar application, Utah’s SafeUT application, initially cost \$298,400 to develop and launch in 2015.

It is unknown how many additional individuals will access the crisis call center if a mobile application function is added, or if some individuals who would have otherwise called the hotline would use the mobile application in its place. Based on the assumptions for the statewide hotline, one clinician will be needed for every 2,100 calls or contacts. For the purposes of this fiscal impact statement, it is assumed that school-aged children and college-aged adults will be the largest group of users of the mobile application function. Utah’s experience equates to approximately 2,750 chats per 100,000 students enrolled in the application. Virginia has an estimated 2,100,000 school-aged children and young adults. If the same assumptions are made, with 85 percent of the school and college-aged population downloading the application, a total of 49,088 contacts can be expected. If a similar ramp-up is used for the mobile application as is assumed for the statewide hotline, DBHDS estimates the crisis line would need to hire a minimum of an additional 9 to 12 clinicians in the first year of operation, and 23 clinicians once operational. Because of the delayed implementation date, staffing costs are not assumed until FY 2024.

	Salary + Fringe	FY 2024 - Minimum		FY 2025+	
		FTEs	Total Salary Cost	FTEs	Total Salary Cost
Northern Virginia	\$104,650	2	\$209,300	5	\$523,250
Rest of State	\$91,000	7	\$637,000	18	\$1,638,000
			\$846,300		\$2,161,250

There may be nongeneral fund revenues available to cover the short-term costs of this legislation. DBHDS is currently pursuing a grant through the federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration for 988 capacity-building, which if received could help cover the cost of app development and educational materials if permitted by the grant maker. If this grant is not received or not permitted for use on app development, then the agency would require additional funding for app development and educational materials.

Chapter 248, 2021 Acts of Assembly, Special Session I created the nonreverting Crisis Call Center Fund, which receives revenues from a wireless surcharge. The Code currently requires that all “moneys in the Fund shall be used solely for the purposes of establishing and administering the crisis call center”, thus, if this function is added as part of the call center, these funds may be used for this purpose.

In the fiscal impact statement for Chapter 248 (SB1302), the Department of Taxation estimated the total anticipated deposits into the Crisis Call Center Fund would be approximately \$9.2 million in FY 2022 and \$10.0 million in FY 2023 and beyond. These funds are appropriated in the introduced budget beginning in FY 2023 for the costs of staffing and maintaining the call center, however, because this is a new revenue stream, the introduced budget used a conservative approach which may result in balances in FY 2022 and FY 2023. If balances from FY 2022 and FY 2023 are available in the Crisis Call Center Fund, they could be used to offset the cost of this legislation in the short term, however would be insufficient to fully fund additional staff on a long-term, structural basis. As of February 2, 2022, the Crisis Call Center Fund has a cash balance of \$4.5 million.

Crisis Call Center Funding	FY 2023		F 2024	
	GF	NGF	GF	NGF
Staffing	\$ 4,732,000	\$ 4,732,000	\$ 2,732,000	\$ 7,453,798
System and Maintenance	\$ 500,000		\$ 500,000	\$ 1,671,214
Total	\$ 5,232,000	\$ 4,732,000	\$ 3,232,000	\$ 9,125,012

Virginia Department of State Police

This bill will require the Department of State Police to develop or obtain a public safety mobile application to facilitate a platform for confidential tips associated with suspected, anticipated, or completed criminal violation or bullying, threats of school violence, or other school-related safety concerns. The See Something, Send Something application currently being used by the Virginia Fusion Center does not have all the characteristics specified by the bill for a school safety mobile application such as audio and video capabilities. The See Something, Send Something mobile application will need to be modified or a new mobile application obtained. A total of six civilian FTEs will be needed in the Department of State Police to implement and manage sections (i) and (ii) of the bill for a public safety mobile application.

Position	Qty	Salary Per FTE	Total Estimated Costs Per FTE
Equipment & Application Specialist(NOC)	3	\$60,813 salary only	\$304,301.00
Intelligence Analyst Senior	2	\$55,096 salary only	\$188,554.00
Systems Analyst/System Administrator	1	\$87,211 salary only	\$134,479.00
Total	6		\$627,334.00

Item	Year One Estimated Costs	Year Two Estimated Costs
Office Space	\$21,420.00	\$21,420.00

Furniture	\$0.00	\$0.00
IT Hardware	\$11,946.00	\$0.00
Mobile App Mods & Support	\$400,000.00	\$180,000.00
Specialty Equipment	\$18,000.00	\$10,000.00
Total Cost	\$451,366.00	\$211,420.00

Estimated Cost	Total Year One Estimated Costs	Total Year Two Estimated Costs
Total	\$1,078,700.00	\$838,754.00
Total Two Year Estimated Costs		\$1,917,454.00

Executive Offices of Health and Human Resources and Education

This legislation requires the Secretaries of Health and Human Resources and Education to promote, market, and advertise the app using existing resources. Again, it is possible that funds from the Crisis Call Center Fund or other grant funds could be used for this purpose in the short term.

9. Specific Agency or Political Subdivisions Affected: Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services, Virginia Department of State Police, Secretary of Health and Human Resources, Secretary of Education, Secretary of Public Safety and Homeland Security.

10. Technical Amendment Necessary: No.

11. Other Comments: There are additional pieces of proposed legislation related to the crisis call center. If multiple pieces of legislation pass that rely on the balances in the Crisis Call Center Fund, the balances may not be sufficient in the short term or long term to cover the fiscal impacts of the various bills.