

BILL ANALYSIS

S.B. 1359
By: Hughes
Homeland Security & Public Safety
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Law enforcement officers face some of the most mentally stressful situations imaginable in carrying out their duties. As such, law enforcement agencies should be equipped with every tool available to best serve their officers' mental health. S.B. 1359 requires each law enforcement agency to develop and adopt a mental health leave policy for its peace officers who experience a traumatic event in the scope of their employment.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE IMPACT

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly create a criminal offense, increase the punishment for an existing criminal offense or category of offenses, or change the eligibility of a person for community supervision, parole, or mandatory supervision.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, department, agency, or institution.

ANALYSIS

S.B. 1359 amends the Government Code to require each law enforcement agency to develop and adopt a policy allowing the use of mental health leave by the peace officers employed by the agency who experience a traumatic event in the scope of that employment. The mental health leave policy must do the following:

- provide clear and objective guidelines establishing the circumstances under which a peace officer is granted mental health leave and may use mental health leave;
- entitle a peace officer to mental health leave without a deduction in salary or other compensation;
- enumerate the number of mental health leave days available to a peace officer; and
- detail the level of anonymity for a peace officer who takes mental health leave.

The mental health leave policy may provide a list of mental health services available to peace officers in the area of the law enforcement agency.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2021.