

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center

S.B. 496
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Criminal Justice
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As Filed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

9-1-1 call-takers and dispatchers are essential community workers who are often the first point of contact for a person in an emergency situation. Although they are critical to emergency operations, 9-1-1 call-takers and dispatchers do not have mandatory, standard guidelines for training. What's more, with little research available regarding how 9-1-1 call-takers and dispatchers gather and relay information, it is difficult to determine if current protocols are adequate, efficient, and effective.

S.B. 496 would require the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement, in consultation with Texas A&M Engineering Extension Services, to study how 9-1-1 call-takers and dispatchers are trained to identify, to classify, and to communicate information. This would allow for the development of evidence-based training that would result in more accurate situational analysis, improve resource utilization, and promote better outcomes for the persons requiring emergency assistance.

As proposed, S.B. 496 amends current law relating to a study on potential improvements to training provided to 9-1-1 emergency service call takers and dispatchers.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

This bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, institution, or agency.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. (a) Defines "commission."

(b) Requires the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement (TCOLE), in consultation with the Texas A&M Engineering Extension Service, to conduct a study to identify potential improvements to training provided to 9-1-1 emergency service call takers and dispatchers.

(c) Requires TCOLE, in conducting the study, to consider:

(1) the effectiveness of current training provided to 9-1-1 emergency service call takers and dispatchers on communicating accurate information to law enforcement officers;

(2) potential improvements to the training to ensure 9-1-1 emergency service call takers and dispatchers are accurately identifying, classifying, and communicating information.

(d) Authorizes TCOLE, in conducting the study, to collaborate with law enforcement agencies, community representatives, and other interested parties.

(e) Requires TCOLE to prepare and submit to the legislature, not later than September 1, 2024, a written report containing the results of the study and any recommendations for legislative or other action.

(f) Provides that this Act expires September 1, 2025.

SECTION 2. Effective date: September 1, 2023.