

## CHAPTER 277

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**GOVERNMENT - STATE**

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## SENATE BILL 22-005

BY SENATOR(S) Bridges and Cooke, Buckner, Coram, Danielson, Donovan, Fields, Gardner, Ginal, Hansen, Hinrichsen, Holbert, Kirkmeyer, Kolker, Lee, Liston, Moreno, Pettersen, Priola, Rankin, Scott, Simpson, Smallwood, Story, Winter, Woodward, Zenzinger, Fenberg;  
also REPRESENTATIVE(S) Roberts and Woog, Bernett, Bird, Bockenfeld, Carver, Lindsay, McCluskie, McCormick, McLachlan, Michaelson Jenet, Snyder, Titone, Van Winkle, Young.

**AN ACT**

**CONCERNING THE INCREASE OF AVAILABLE FUNDS FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCY PEACE OFFICERS SUPPORTIVE SERVICES, AND, IN CONNECTION THEREWITH, MAKING AN APPROPRIATION.**

*Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Colorado:*

**SECTION 1. Legislative declaration.** (1) The general assembly finds and declares that:

(a) According to the centers for disease control and prevention, peace officers are fifty-four percent more likely to commit suicide, with suicide being the second leading cause of death among peace officers following COVID-19;

(b) The Invisible Wounds Project found that one in four peace officers suffers from post-traumatic stress disorder;

(c) Good mental and psychological health is essential for peace officers to effectively keep Colorado and local communities safe from crime and violence;

(d) Improving mental health resiliency can also help peace officers prepare for, recover from, and adapt to stress and adversity;

(e) The experiences of peace officers and public safety mental health professionals, along with scientific research, show that providing peace officers with mental health support services following traumatic incidents promotes positive outcomes;

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*Capital letters or bold & italic numbers indicate new material added to existing law; dashes through words or numbers indicate deletions from existing law and such material is not part of the act.*

(f) Allowing law enforcement agencies to hire full-time behavioral health professionals can aid in addressing confidentiality concerns, improve cultural competencies, and help law enforcement agencies systematically identify and refer peace officers to mental health services;

(g) Increased availability to behavioral health services will increase peace officers' empathy toward those experiencing mental health crises and provide the tools and awareness peace officers need to improve how they handle difficult situations;

(h) Improved access to behavioral health support services through peer support programs and other programs reduces barriers peace officers may have toward behavioral health support services and will increase their cultural competency in behavioral health support practices;

(i) Cross-training peace officers in behavioral health and providing student loan repayment options for current and former certified peace officers to receive this training can increase empathy; and

(j) While behavioral health training is essential for peace officers, there is no training or experience that can fully prepare them for the types of calls and situational challenges they face on a daily basis. Investing in tools and programs to help peace officers manage the stressors that accompany their work can have a positive impact on peace officers' mental health, as well as on community outcomes.

(2) Therefore, the general assembly declares that investing in additional mental and behavioral health funding and training for peace officers will improve interactions between peace officers and members of the community, have positive public safety outcomes, and help peace officers recover from on-the-job trauma in order to handle the daily stressors of their job.

**SECTION 2.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, 24-32-3501, **amend** (2)(e), (2)(f), (4), and (7)(a); and **add** (2)(g) and (9) as follows:

**24-32-3501. Peace officers behavioral health support and community partnerships grant program - created - report - rules - fund - definitions - repeal.** (2) Grant recipients may use money received through the grant program for the following purposes:

(e) Training and education programs that teach peace officers and their immediate family members the symptoms of job-related mental trauma and how to prevent and treat such trauma; ~~and~~

(f) Peer support programs for peace officers; AND

(g) **HIRING, CONTRACTING, OR DEVELOPING A REMOTE NETWORK TO PROVIDE BEHAVIORAL HEALTH COUNSELING, THERAPY, OR OTHER RELATED SUPPORT SERVICES TO PEACE OFFICERS INVOLVED IN JOB-RELATED TRAUMATIC SITUATIONS.**

(4) The department shall administer the grant program and, subject to available appropriations, shall award grants as provided in this section from the fund created

in subsection (7) of this section. THE DEPARTMENT SHALL TRANSFER THE AWARDED GRANT MONEY TO A GRANT RECIPIENT AS SOON AS PRACTICABLE AFTER THE GRANT RECIPIENT'S GRANT APPLICATION IS APPROVED.

(7) (a) The peace officers behavioral health support and community partnership fund, referred to in this section as the "fund", is created in the state treasury. The fund consists of gifts, grants, and donations credited to the fund pursuant to subsection (7)(b) of this section and any other money that the general assembly may appropriate or transfer to the fund. Subject to annual appropriation by the general assembly, the department may expend money from the fund for the purposes of this section. ANY UNEXPENDED AND UNENCUMBERED MONEY FROM AN APPROPRIATION MADE FOR THE PURPOSES OF THIS SECTION REMAINS AVAILABLE FOR EXPENDITURE BY THE DEPARTMENT FOR THE NEXT TWO FISCAL YEARS WITHOUT FURTHER APPROPRIATION. The department may use up to ~~five~~ SEVEN percent of the money annually appropriated to the fund to pay the direct and indirect costs that the department incurs in administering the grant program.

(9) IN ADDITION TO ANY OTHER MONEY APPROPRIATED OR TRANSFERRED TO THE FUND, FOR STATE FISCAL YEAR 2022-23, THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY SHALL APPROPRIATE THREE MILLION DOLLARS FROM THE GENERAL FUND TO THE FUND. THE MONEY APPROPRIATED PURSUANT TO THIS SECTION MUST BE USED FOR PURPOSES DESCRIBED IN SUBSECTIONS (2)(c) TO (2)(g) OF THIS SECTION. THIS SUBSECTION (9) IS REPEALED, EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2026.

**SECTION 3. Appropriation.** (1) For the 2022-23 state fiscal year, \$3,000,000 is appropriated to the peace officers behavioral health support and community partnership fund created in section 24-32-3501 (7)(a), C.R.S. This appropriation is from the general fund. The department of local affairs is responsible for the accounting related to this appropriation.

(2) For the 2022-23 fiscal year, \$3,000,000 is appropriated to the department of local affairs. This appropriation is from reappropriated funds in the peace officers behavioral health and community partnership fund pursuant to subsection (1) of this section and is based on the assumption that the department will require an additional 2.5 FTE. To implement this act, the department may use the appropriation for the peace officers mental health support grant program.

**SECTION 4. Safety clause.** The general assembly hereby finds, determines, and declares that this act is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety.

Approved: May 31, 2022