



Criminal Justice Training Commission

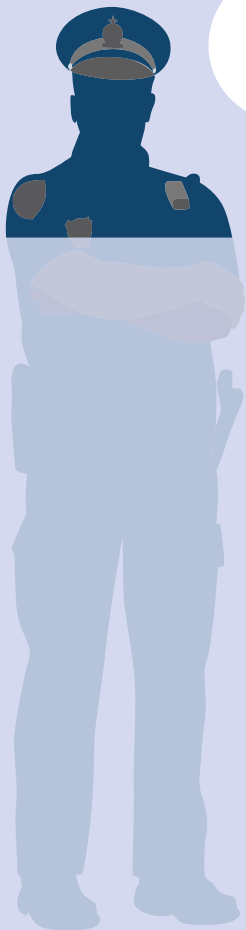
HB 1253 – Shorter training wait times

Help ensure safe communities by providing sufficient funding for law enforcement training.

1 Timely access to basic training is critical to provide public safety.

2 Police departments face a wave of retirements, increasing the need for new recruits.

3 Cities currently face long wait times to get newly-hired recruits trained.



23.7% of Washington's law enforcement officers are eligible for retirement.

1 Most law enforcement officers in our state are employed by cities. Each year, cities contribute a significant amount of traffic ticket revenue to the General Fund. Per the original agreement, these revenues fund basic law enforcement officer training. Cities ask the Legislature to honor that agreement and fully fund law enforcement training to ensure that our police officers are adequately trained in a timely matter.

2 Nearly a quarter of law enforcement officers are eligible to retire. Because these vacancies impact public safety, cities look to fill these positions as quickly and efficiently as possible. More funding will provide for additional classes, allowing more officers to get trained.

3 Long wait times at the training academy add to the already lengthy and costly period between when an officer is hired to when they are an effective presence on the street. Combining the time it takes waiting for academy openings, training, and gaining required field experience – it can take eighteen months to get a new officer ready to serve the community. Cities request full funding to shorten wait times and get officers trained and ready faster.

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Additional information

Why was the Criminal Justice Training Commission created?

In the early 1970s, numerous basic law enforcement trainings were held around the state – independently taught without standardized curriculum. In response, the Washington Legislature established the Washington State Criminal Justice Training Commission (CJTC), to provide standardized, mandatory training for law enforcement agencies statewide. Washington was the first state in the nation to provide mandated law enforcement training through a centralized, standard model and is considered a national pioneer.

What is the Basic Law Enforcement Academy (BLEA)?

Newly-hired law enforcement officers must receive training at BLEA within six months of hire per Washington law. Each class of 30 recruits spends five months on basic training with instruction on criminal procedure, cultural awareness, traffic enforcement, crisis intervention, defensive tactics, firearms, and more.

How is BLEA funded?

State and local governments originally agreed that training would be funded through a portion of local law enforcement traffic ticket revenue. In 1984, the state created a dedicated account for this purpose—the Public Safety and Education Account (PSEA). In 2009, the state eliminated the PSEA account and moved the traffic ticket revenue into the state’s General Fund. The General Fund is the state’s largest fund and, unlike the PSEA, it is not dedicated for specific purposes. Cities and counties contributed over \$22 million in traffic ticket revenue into the General Fund in FY 2016.

How much do cities pay for basic training?

For over 30 years, local traffic ticket revenue was used to pay for the full cost of training new law enforcement officers. In 2009, during recession-era budgets, the state required local law enforcement employers to pay 25% of the cost of basic training and also required that they reimburse CJTC for the costs of a recruit’s ammunition. In FY 2019, the average cost to train a BLEA recruit is \$11,445 with the employer paying \$3,143. These costs are in addition to the salaries and benefits recruits are paid while they wait for and attend basic training.

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