
SUBSTITUTE HOUSE BILL 1310

State of Washington

67th Legislature

2021 Regular Session

By House Public Safety (originally sponsored by Representatives J. Johnson, Lovick, Ryu, Simmons, Berry, Fitzgibbon, Hackney, Wylie, Sells, Wicks, Cody, Callan, Gregerson, Santos, Senn, Ortiz-Self, Chopp, Davis, Valdez, Dolan, Bateman, Ormsby, Bergquist, Morgan, Ramel, Ramos, Lekanoff, Frame, Harris-Talley, Pollet, Macri, and Peterson)

1 AN ACT Relating to permissible uses of force by law enforcement
2 and correctional officers; amending RCW 43.101.450; adding a new
3 section to chapter 43.101 RCW; adding a new chapter to Title 10 RCW;
4 creating a new section; and repealing RCW 10.31.050.

5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

6 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature recognizes that additional
7 clarity is necessary following the passage of Initiative Measure No.
8 940 (chapter 1, Laws of 2019) and Substitute House Bill No. 1064
9 (chapter 4, Laws of 2019). The legislature intends to address
10 excessive force and discriminatory policing by establishing a
11 requirement for law enforcement and correctional officers to act with
12 reasonable care when carrying out their duties, including using de-
13 escalation tactics and alternatives to deadly force. Further, the
14 legislature intends to address public safety concerns by limiting the
15 use of deadly force to very narrow circumstances where there is an
16 imminent threat of serious physical injury or death.

17 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** The definitions in this section apply
18 throughout this chapter unless the context clearly requires
19 otherwise.

1 (1) "Law enforcement agency" includes any "general authority
2 Washington law enforcement agency" and any "limited authority
3 Washington law enforcement agency" as those terms are defined in RCW
4 10.93.020, except "law enforcement agency" does not include the
5 department of corrections.

6 (2) "Less lethal alternatives" include, but are not limited to,
7 conducted energy weapons, devices that deploy oleoresin capsicum,
8 batons, and beanbag rounds.

9 (3) "Peace officer" includes any "general authority Washington
10 peace officer," "limited authority Washington peace officer," and
11 "specially commissioned Washington peace officer" as those terms are
12 defined in RCW 10.93.020, except "peace officer" does not include any
13 corrections officer or other employee of a jail, correctional, or
14 detention facility.

15 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** (1)(a) Except as otherwise provided under
16 this section, a peace officer may use physical force against another
17 person when necessary to effect an arrest, prevent an escape as
18 defined under chapter 9A.76 RCW, or otherwise protect against an
19 imminent threat of bodily injury to the peace officer or another
20 person.

21 (b) A peace officer may use deadly force against another person
22 only when necessary to protect against an imminent threat of serious
23 physical injury or death to the officer or another person.

24 (2) A peace officer shall use reasonable care when determining
25 whether to use physical force and when using any physical force
26 against another person. To that end, a peace officer shall:

27 (a) When possible, exhaust available and appropriate de-
28 escalation tactics prior to using any physical force, such as:
29 Creating physical distance by employing tactical repositioning and
30 repositioning as often as necessary to maintain the benefit of time,
31 distance, and cover; when there are multiple officers, designating
32 one officer to communicate in order to avoid competing commands;
33 calling for additional resources such as a crisis intervention team
34 or mental health professional when possible; calling for back-up
35 officers when encountering resistance; taking as much time as
36 necessary, without using physical force or weapons; and leaving the
37 area if there is no threat of imminent harm or no crime is being
38 committed;

1 (b) When using physical force, use only the minimal degree of
2 physical force necessary to overcome resistance under the
3 circumstances. This includes a consideration of the characteristics
4 and conditions of a person for the purposes of determining whether to
5 use force against that person and, if force is necessary, determining
6 the appropriate and minimal degree of force. Such characteristics and
7 conditions may include, for example, whether the person: Is visibly
8 pregnant, or states that they are pregnant; is known to be a minor,
9 objectively appears to be a minor, or states that they are a minor;
10 is known to be a vulnerable adult, or objectively appears to be a
11 vulnerable adult as defined in RCW 74.34.020; displays signs of
12 mental, behavioral, or physical impairments or disabilities; is
13 experiencing perceptual or cognitive impairments typically related to
14 the use of alcohol, narcotics, hallucinogens, or other drugs; is
15 suicidal; has limited English proficiency; or is in the presence of
16 children;

17 (c) Terminate the use of physical force as soon as the necessity
18 for such force ends;

19 (d) When possible, use available and appropriate less lethal
20 alternatives before using deadly force; and

21 (e) Make less lethal alternatives issued to the officer
22 reasonably available for their use.

23 (3) A peace officer may not use any force tactics prohibited by
24 applicable departmental policy, this chapter, or otherwise by law.

25 (4) Nothing in this section prevents a law enforcement agency
26 from adopting policies or standards with additional requirements for
27 de-escalation and greater restrictions on the use of physical and
28 deadly force than provided in this section.

29 (5) For the purposes of this subsection and subsection (1)(b) of
30 this section:

31 (a) "Imminent threat" means that, based on the totality of the
32 circumstances, it is objectively reasonable to believe that a person
33 has the present and apparent ability, opportunity, and intent to
34 immediately cause death or serious bodily injury to the peace officer
35 or another person.

36 (b) "Necessary" means that, under the totality of the
37 circumstances, a reasonably effective alternative to the use of
38 deadly force does not exist, and that the amount of force used was a
39 reasonable and proportional response to the threat posed to the
40 officer and others.

1 (c) "Totality of the circumstances" means all facts known to the
2 peace officer leading up to and at the time of the use of force, and
3 includes the actions of the person against whom the peace officer
4 uses such force, and the actions of the peace officer.

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** (1) By July 1, 2022, the attorney general
6 shall develop and publish model policies on law enforcement's use of
7 force and de-escalation tactics consistent with section 3 of this
8 act.

9 (2) By September 31, 2022, all law enforcement agencies shall:
10 Adopt policies consistent with the model policies and submit copies
11 of the applicable policies to the attorney general; or, if the agency
12 did not adopt policies consistent with the model policies, provide
13 notice to the attorney general stating the reasons for any departures
14 from the model policies and an explanation of how the agency's
15 policies are consistent with section 3 of this act, including a copy
16 of the agency's relevant policies. After September 31, 2022, whenever
17 a law enforcement agency modifies or repeals any policies pertaining
18 to the use of force or de-escalation tactics, the agency shall submit
19 notice of such action with copies of any relevant policies to the
20 attorney general within 60 days.

21 (3) By December 1st of each year, the attorney general shall
22 publish on its website a report on the requirements of this section,
23 including copies of the model policies, information as to the status
24 of individual agencies' policies, and copies of any agency policies
25 departing from the model policies.

26 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 5.** A new section is added to chapter 43.101
27 RCW to read as follows:

28 The basic training provided to criminal justice personnel by the
29 commission must be consistent with the standards in section 3 of this
30 act and the model policies established by the attorney general under
31 section 4 of this act.

32 **Sec. 6.** RCW 43.101.450 and 2019 c 1 s 3 (Initiative Measure No.
33 940) are each amended to read as follows:

34 (1) Beginning one year after December 6, 2018, all law
35 enforcement officers in the state of Washington must receive violence
36 de-escalation training. Law enforcement officers beginning employment
37 after December 6, 2018, must successfully complete such training

1 within the first (~~fifteen~~) 15 months of employment. The commission
2 shall set the date by which other law enforcement officers must
3 successfully complete such training.

4 (2) All law enforcement officers shall periodically receive
5 continuing violence de-escalation training to practice their skills,
6 update their knowledge and training, and learn about new legal
7 requirements and violence de-escalation strategies.

8 (3) The commission shall set training requirements through the
9 procedures in RCW 43.101.455.

10 (4) Violence de-escalation training provided under this section
11 must be consistent with section 3 of this act and the model policies
12 established by the attorney general under section 4 of this act.

13 (5) The commission shall submit a report to the legislature and
14 the governor by January 1st and July 1st of each year on the
15 implementation of and compliance with subsections (1) and (2) of this
16 section. The report must include data on compliance by agencies and
17 officers. The report may also include recommendations for any changes
18 to laws and policies necessary to improve compliance with subsections
19 (1) and (2) of this section.

20 NEW SECTION. Sec. 7. RCW 10.31.050 (Officer may use force) and
21 2010 c 8 s 1031, Code 1881 s 1031, 1873 p 229 s 211, & 1854 p 114 s
22 75 are each repealed.

23 NEW SECTION. Sec. 8. Sections 2 through 4 of this act
24 constitute a new chapter in Title 10 RCW.

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