

SENATE BILL SB-78

Introduced by Senator Sasha Renee Perez (D-25)

An act relating to Peace Officer Screening Act .

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB-78, Sasha Renee Perez (D-25). Peace Officer Screening Act .

Existing law establishes minimum qualifications for peace officers, including requirements concerning moral character, physical fitness, and psychological suitability. These qualifications are assessed during the hiring process through background investigations, medical examinations, and psychological evaluations.

This bill would require covered California peace officers to undergo annual psychological wellness screenings conducted by qualified, licensed mental health professionals. The screenings would assess officers' psychological well-being and identify potential concerns related to occupational stress and emotional health.

Lastly, this bill would appropriate twenty million dollars (\$20,000,000) annually from the State General Fund to support annual psychological wellness screenings, related administrative expenses, and program oversight.

Vote: Majority. **Appropriations/fiscal:** yes. **Local program:** yes.

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. Section 13510 of the Penal Code is amended to read:

- (a) For the purpose of raising the level of competence of local law enforcement officers, the commission shall adopt rules establishing and upholding minimum standards relating to physical, mental, and moral fitness that shall govern the recruitment of peace officers.
- (b) Beginning January 1, 2028, peace officers covered by this act shall be required to undergo one psychological wellness screening annually, conducted by a qualified, licensed mental health professional.
- (c) The annual screenings shall assess psychological well-being and identify potential concerns relating to occupational stress and emotional health.

SECTION 2. Section 1031 of the Government Code is amended to read:

- (a) Be legally authorized to work in the United States under Federal Law
- (b) Be 18 years of age or older
- (c) Be fingerprinted for purposes of searching local, state, and national fingerprint files to disclose a criminal record.
- ~~(d) Be of good moral character, as determined by a thorough background investigation.~~
- (d) Be of good moral character, as determined through annual psychological evaluations.*
- (e) Seeking psychological treatment or having a mental health diagnosis shall not, by itself, constitute a determination that an officer is unfit for duty.

SECTION 3. Funding

- a. The funds shall be allocated as follows:
 - 1. Sixteen million dollars (\$16,000,000) for annual psychological wellness screenings of covered peace officers (aprox. 80,000 officers)
 - 2. Two million dollars (\$2,000,000) to reimburse eligible law enforcement agencies for administrative expenses associated with scheduling and implementing the required screenings.
 - 3. Two million dollars (\$2,000,000) for program oversight, implementation training, and contingency expenses.