

## House Bill 1310 concerning permissible uses of force by law enforcement and correctional officers

House Bill 1310 became effective on July 25, 2021, requiring police and sheriff offices across the state to adjust the way they do their work. Some law enforcement agencies have publicly stated that they will not respond to calls involving public health and care tasks.

Some local law enforcement agencies have interpreted the legislation to mean they can only respond to calls reporting crimes. House Bill 1310 limits when police use force and requires peace officers to, "... exhaust all viable and appropriate de-escalation tactics prior to using any physical force... and leaving the area if there is no threat of imminent harm and no crime has been committed, or is about to be committed."

### How does this affect communities, services, and families?

We are trained to call 911 when there is a crisis or an emergency. The 911 call center determines if ambulance, fire, or police are needed. Under the current interpretation of HB 1310 by some law enforcement agencies, the local police or sheriff's department may determine if the call involves a crime or not before an officer or deputy responds.

Based on their interpretation of the new law, some law enforcement agencies may not send support to calls involving health and safety issues like wellness checks or accompanying a mental health professional to determine if a person in crisis needs help.

### What can I do?

If you believe you are in a situation that requires emergency assistance, you should still call 911.

Find out how your local police and sheriff's offices are interpreting and responding to House Bill 1310 so you know what to expect if you need to contact your local law enforcement agency.

Next, make a plan.

- What are the sources of help close to you? Work with family, friends, and neighbors to build natural supports that can respond first in a crisis.
- Identify the people and professionals that help with other issues. These may include counselors, social workers, nurses, doctors, and others professionals. Work with these people to develop plans for issues that grow into crises or emergencies.
- If you or your loved one receives services from a local mental health agency:
  - Review the crisis plan the mental health agency has developed.
  - Ask how things will change given your police and sheriff department's understanding of House Bill 1310.
  - Find out how any changes to law enforcement and mental health agency's crisis policies affect you or your loved one.
  - Ask if the local mental health agency has a local crisis line phone number, or find your county's crisis line at <https://www.hca.wa.gov/health-care-services-supports/behavioral-health-recovery/mental-health-crisis-lines>. Crisis lines are

available to ALL Washingtonians regardless of insurance status or income level and are answered 24/7/365.

- Update the crisis plan for your loved one and make sure you have a copy.
- If you or our loved one receives services from the Developmental Disabilities Administration, work with your case resource manager to:
  - Review any supports and plans that may be available to prevent and respond to crises.
  - Ask if there are additional resources.
  - Work with your case resource manager to update plans as needed.
  - If you receive contracted community residential support services (Supported Living, Adult Family Home, Group Home, Group Training Home, Companion Home, SOLA) work with your agency and DDA case resource manager to develop an emergency plan that will best address your needs in a crisis situation.