

CHAPTER 331
SB 357-FN - FINAL VERSION

4May2022... 1625h

2022 SESSION

22-3008
08/10

SENATE BILL

357-FN

AN ACT relative to mental health training for first responders.

SPONSORS: Sen. Birdsell, Dist 19; Sen. Carson, Dist 14; Sen. Watters, Dist 4; Sen. Cavanaugh,
Dist 16; Rep. Soucy, Merr. 16; Sen. Prentiss, Dist 5; Rep. S. Pearson, Rock. 6

COMMITTEE: Executive Departments and Administration

ANALYSIS

This bill reestablishes the commission to study incidence of post traumatic stress disorder in first responders and ensures that mental health training is available for first responders, law enforcement, fire service, emergency medical service, and corrections personnel.

Explanation: Matter added to current law appears in ***bold italics***.
Matter removed from current law appears ~~[in brackets and struck through.]~~
Matter which is either (a) all new or (b) repealed and reenacted appears in regular type.

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STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

In the Year of Our Lord Two Thousand Twenty Two

AN ACT relative to mental health training for first responders.

Be it Enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court convened:

1 331:1 New Section; Commission to Study the Incidence of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder in First
2 Responders Reestablished. Amend RSA 281-A by inserting after section 17-d the following new section:

3 281-A:17-e Commission to Study the Incidence of Post-traumatic Stress Disorder in First
4 Responders Reestablished.

5 I.(a) There is reestablished the commission to study the incidence of post-traumatic stress
6 disorder in first responders and whether such disorder should be covered under workers' compensation.
7 The members of the commission shall be as follows:

8 (1) One member of the senate, appointed by the president of the senate.

9 (2) Three members of the house of representatives, one of whom shall be from the labor,
10 industrial and rehabilitative services committee, one of whom shall be from the executive departments
11 and administration committee, and one of whom shall be from the state-federal relations and veterans
12 affairs committee, appointed by the speaker of the house of representatives.

13 (3) The labor commissioner, or designee.

14 (4) The commissioner of safety, or designee.

15 (5) The insurance commissioner, or designee.

16 (6) The commissioner of the department of corrections, or designee.

17 (7) A representative of the New Hampshire Municipal Association, appointed by the
18 association.

19 (8) A representative of the New Hampshire Association of Counties, appointed by the
20 association.

21 (9) A representative of the National Alliance on Mental Illness New Hampshire, appointed
22 by the alliance.

23 (10) A fire chief, appointed by the New Hampshire Association of Fire Chiefs.

24 (11) One member appointed by the New Hampshire Association of Chiefs of Police.

25 (12) One member appointed by the New Hampshire Police Association.

26 (13) A representative of the Professional Firefighters of New Hampshire, appointed by
27 that organization.

28 (14) A representative of the New Hampshire Association of Emergency Medical
29 Technicians, appointed by the association.

30 (15) A representative of the New Hampshire Public Risk Management Exchange,
31 appointed by that organization.

32 (16) An attorney, appointed by the New Hampshire Association for Justice.

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1 (b) Legislative members of the commission shall receive mileage at the legislative rate when
2 attending to the duties of the commission.

3 II.(a) The commission shall study:

4 (1) Costs associated with training and resources, application of training, and operation of
5 the presumption that post-traumatic stress disorder in first responders is occupationally caused.

6 (2) Whether a first responder's death from suicide is a line of duty death.

7 (3) Life insurance payouts for first responders who die of suicide.

8 (4) Life insurance payouts for retired first responders who die of suicide.

9 (5) Federal line of duty deaths by suicide.

10 (6) Cost and administration of resiliency training.

11 (7) The need for culture change to enable first responders to openly address PTSD
12 issues without impacting their careers.

13 (8) Discuss the intersection of benefits provided by workers' compensation and the New
14 Hampshire retirement system when a first responder retires because of PTSD and whether additional
15 benefits are warranted, including a retirement insurance subsidy.

16 (b) The commission may solicit input from any person or entity the commission deems
17 relevant to its study.

18 III. The members of the commission shall elect a chairperson from among the members. The
19 first meeting of the commission shall be called by the senate member. The first meeting of the
20 commission shall be held within 45 days of the effective date of this section. Nine members of the
21 commission shall constitute a quorum.

22 IV. On or before November 1, 2022, the commission shall submit an interim report of its findings
23 and any recommendations for proposed legislation to the president of the senate, the speaker of the
24 house of representatives, the senate clerk, the house clerk, the governor, and the state library and shall
25 submit a final report on or before November 1, 2023.

26 331:2 New Section; Mental Health Training for Law Enforcement Officers. Amend RSA 106-L by
27 inserting after section 7 the following new section:

28 106-L:7-a Mental Health Training for Law Enforcement Officers.

29 I. No person shall assume their role as a law enforcement officer or dispatcher unless such
30 person has satisfactorily completed mental health training focusing on post-traumatic stress from a
31 program developed and delivered by the New Hampshire police standards and training council.
32 Subsequent to initial training, all law enforcement officers and dispatchers shall successfully complete
33 annual online training. No current officer shall be required to attend in-person training at the academy.

34 II. Mental health training focusing on post-traumatic stress disorder shall be made available
35 annually to any law enforcement officers after their retirement.

36 331:3 New Section; Mental Health Training for Fire Services and Emergency Medical Services
37 Personnel. Amend RSA 21-P by inserting after section 12-f the following new section:

38 21-P:12-g Mental Health Training for First Responders.

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I. No person shall assume their role as fire service personnel, fire service dispatcher or emergency medical services personnel unless such person has satisfactorily completed mental health training focusing on post-traumatic stress from a program developed and delivered by the division of fire standards and training and emergency medical services. Subsequent to initial training, all fire service, fire service dispatcher, or emergency medical services personnel shall successfully complete annual online training. No current personnel shall be required to attend in-person training at the academy.

II. Mental health training focusing on post-traumatic stress disorder shall be made available annually to all fire service or emergency medical services personnel after their retirement.

331:4 New Section; Mental Health Training for Corrections Officers. Amend RSA 21-H by inserting after section 15 the following new section:

21-H:16 Mental Health Training for Corrections Officers. No person shall assume their role as a corrections officer unless such person has satisfactorily completed mental health training focusing on post-traumatic stress from a program developed and delivered by the New Hampshire police standards and training council. Subsequent to initial training, all corrections officers shall successfully complete annual online training. No current corrections officer shall be required to attend in-person training at the academy.

331:5 Repeal. RSA 281-A:17-e, relative to the commission to study incidence of PTSD in first responders, is repealed.

331:6 Effective Date.

I. Section 5 of this act shall take effect November 1, 2023.

II. The remainder of this act shall take effect 60 days after its passage.

Approved: July 08, 2022

Effective Date:

I. Section 5 effective November 1, 2023

II. Remainder effective September 6, 2022

