

1 SB92  
2 204394-2  
3 By Senator Smitherman  
4 RFD: Governmental Affairs  
5 First Read: 04-FEB-20

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8 SYNOPSIS: This bill would require law enforcement  
9 officers in this state to complete a program of  
10 sensitivity training. This bill also would require  
11 law enforcement agencies to engage in efforts to  
12 recruit social workers licensed at the clinical  
13 level of practice to be law enforcement officers.

14  
15 A BILL  
16 TO BE ENTITLED  
17 AN ACT

18  
19 Relating to law enforcement; to require law  
20 enforcement officers in this state to complete a program of  
21 sensitivity training and to require law enforcement agencies  
22 to engage in efforts to recruit social workers licensed at the  
23 clinical level of practice to be law enforcement officers.

24 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA:

25 Section 1. (a) The Alabama Peace Officers' Standards  
26 and Training Commission shall require a program of sensitivity  
27 training to be included in any law enforcement officer academy

1 course of study. The sensitivity training program shall be  
2 developed in collaboration with the Alabama Chapter of the  
3 National Association of Social Workers or a similar  
4 organization.

5 (b) Certified law enforcement officers in this state  
6 shall be required to complete and report earned hours of  
7 continuing education courses in sensitivity training to the  
8 commission.

9 (c) Commencing January 1, 2021, all law enforcement  
10 officers certified by the commission shall be required to  
11 complete a program of sensitivity training described in  
12 subsection (a). The training shall do all of the following:

13 (1) Include focus on social, ethnic, and racial  
14 bias, cultural competency and diversity, and law enforcement  
15 interaction with minorities, the disabled, the mentally ill,  
16 unlawfully present aliens, and other populations.

17 (2) Provide instruction on situational assessment,  
18 decision making, and alternative de-escalation tactics that  
19 will better equip law enforcement officers to handle difficult  
20 socially volatile situations.

21 (d) The commission shall establish rules and  
22 policies to ensure compliance with this section.

23 (e) The commission shall submit a report regarding  
24 compliance to the Speaker of the House of Representatives and  
25 the President Pro Tempore of the Senate on or before the first  
26 day of each regular session of the Legislature.

1                   Section 2. Commencing on January 1, 2021, state and  
2 local law enforcement agencies shall engage in efforts to  
3 recruit social workers licensed at the clinical level of  
4 practice into the law enforcement officer workforce. The  
5 social workers shall complete all necessary standards and  
6 training to become sworn officers of the law. Licensed social  
7 workers that become law enforcement officers shall assist law  
8 enforcement agencies and first responding agencies in all of  
9 the following areas to aid in the mitigation of high intensity  
10 situations:

11                   (1) Human behavior in social environments.

12                   (2) Crisis intervention.

13                   (3) Diversity.

14                   (4) Ethics.

15                   (5) Diagnostic impression, assessment, and opinion  
16 expertise.

17                   Section 3. A uniformed law enforcement officer who  
18 carries a firearm also shall carry a non-lethal weapon and  
19 shall be trained in the appropriate use of that non-lethal  
20 weapon.

21                   Section 4. This act shall become effective on the  
22 first day of the third month following its passage and  
23 approval by the Governor, or its otherwise becoming law.