



OHIO LEGISLATIVE SERVICE COMMISSION

Joseph Rogers

Fiscal Note & Local Impact Statement

Bill: H.B. 79 of the 132nd G.A.

Status: As Reported by Senate Judiciary

Sponsor: Reps. Retherford and Hagan

Local Impact Statement Procedure Required: No

Subject: Tactical medical professionals and coroner's investigators authorized to carry firearms while on duty

State Fiscal Highlights

- The annual costs for the Attorney General (including the Ohio Peace Officer Training Commission and the Ohio Peace Officer Training Academy) to perform certification and training duties are likely to be minimal at most. The costs are likely to be offset, at least to some degree, by money, in particular training tuition, collected from tactical medical professionals and coroner's investigators or their respective employing agencies.
- The potential is created for minimal annual fee revenue to be lost for the General Reimbursement Fund (Fund 1060), which the Attorney General uses, in part, to fund the cost of concealed carry work performed by the Bureau of Criminal Investigation (BCI). The revenue loss would, to some extent, be offset by an expenditure reduction, as BCI may have fewer concealed carry-related tasks to perform.

Local Fiscal Highlights

- The annual expenditures likely to be incurred by any given local law enforcement agency or county coroner's office for the cost of training will be minimal at most.
- The potential is created for minimal annual fee revenue to be lost for each county's Sheriff's Concealed Handgun License Issuance Expense Fund. The revenue loss would, to some extent, be offset by an expenditure reduction, as county sheriffs may have fewer concealed carry-related tasks to perform.

Detailed Fiscal Analysis

Firearms training

The bill permits, under certain specified circumstances, a tactical medical professional or a coroner's investigator to carry firearms while on duty. For the professional or investigator to be eligible to carry firearms, (1) the employing local law enforcement agency or county coroner's office must specifically authorize the professional or investigator to carry firearms while on duty, and (2) the professional or investigator must have completed an approved training program.

The bill requires: (1) the Ohio Attorney General to adopt training rules, (2) the Ohio Peace Officer Training Commission to recommend rules to the Attorney General, (3) the Commission to certify and issue appropriate certificates to tactical medical professionals and coroner's investigators, and (4) the Ohio Peace Officer Training Academy to permit such professionals and investigators to attend training courses at the Academy. The Academy already offers a range of firearms qualification courses, and has indicated that a training course for tactical medical professionals and coroner's investigators can be ready with no more than a minimal one-time expense.

The number of tactical medical professionals or coroner's investigators likely to receive such training in any given year is uncertain, but likely to be relatively small. In most, if not all, Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) team units there are no more than a few tactical medical professionals (EMTs, paramedics, nurses, or physicians trained to render tactical combat casualty care in the field). A further limiting factor is that some local law enforcement agencies and county coroner's offices may decide that they will not authorize their respective professionals and investigators to carry firearms while on duty. Additionally, some of these professionals and investigators may already have been certified to carry firearms through previous employment and training. Thus, the number of professionals and investigators statewide likely to require such training in any given year will be relatively small.

The anticipated cost of the Academy training course is \$100 per day for each person, plus the cost of ammunition. The bill permits the local law enforcement agency or county coroner's office to pay the tuition costs. The training course-related expenditures for any given local law enforcement agency or county coroner's office are likely to be minimal at most annually.

The annual costs for the Attorney General (including the Ohio Peace Officer Training Commission and the Ohio Peace Officer Training Academy) to perform the necessary certification and training duties are likely to be minimal at most. The costs are likely to be offset, at least to some degree, by money (tuition) collected from the professionals or investigators who receive the training or their employing agency.

Concealed carry

The bill permits a tactical medical professional who is authorized to carry a firearm while on duty to carry a concealed handgun without obtaining a concealed handgun license. This provision may reduce the number of new and renewed concealed handgun licenses issued annually, as these are individuals who, absent this provision, otherwise might have obtained a license. The number of new or renewal licenses issued to such professionals in any given year is uncertain, but likely to be fairly small.

Under current law, the fee for a concealed carry license is as follows: new (\$67/\$91) and renewal (\$50/\$74).¹ A license is valid for five years. The fees are collected by the county sheriff as part of their duties and responsibilities to administer and enforce the state's Concealed Handgun Law. The sheriff retains a portion of the fee (\$40 of a new license and \$35 of the renewal license) for crediting to the Sheriff's Concealed Handgun License Issuance Expense Fund, which may be used to cover costs incurred by the sheriff in connection with performing any functions related to the issuance of concealed handgun licenses and to provide ammunition and firearms to the sheriff and the sheriff's employees. The remainder is forwarded to the state for crediting to the General Reimbursement Fund (Fund 1060), which the Attorney General uses, in part, to fund the cost of background checks performed by the Bureau of Criminal Investigation (BCI), as well as any checks requested from the FBI.

As a result of this concealed carry provision, the potential is created for fee revenue to be lost for Fund 1060 and each county's Sheriff's Concealed Handgun License Issuance Expense Fund. This potential revenue loss would, to some extent, be offset by an expenditure reduction, as county sheriffs and BCI will have fewer concealed carry-related tasks to perform. For the state and counties, this potential revenue loss and related expenditure reduction will likely be minimal at most annually.

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¹ Applicants residing in Ohio for five years or more pay a fee of \$67 for a new license or \$50 for a renewal license. Applicants residing in Ohio for less than five years pay an additional \$24 for a new or renewal license for the cost of the required FBI background check (R.C. 2923.125).