

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE—2025-2026 SIMULATION SESSION

SENATE BILL

NO 73

Introduced by Senator Seyarto

October 17, 2025

This bill would provide competitive grants to local agencies for the purpose of establishing or expanding mental health and wellness programs for first responders, including firefighters, peace officers, and emergency medical personnel.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 73, as introduced, Senator Seyarto. First Responder Wellness Grant Program

Existing law establishes the Office of Emergency Services and provides for coordination of State and local emergency response activities. Existing law also provides certain benefits and protections for firefighters, peace officers, and emergency medical personnel.

This bill would create the First responders Wellness Grant Program administered by the Office of Emergency Services, to provide competitive grants to local agencies for the purpose of establishing or expanding mental health and wellness programs for first responders, which include firefighters, peace officers, and emergency medical personnel.

This bill would authorize and grant funds to be used for peer support programs, counseling services, suicide prevention trainings, and wellness resources.

In a few more brief paragraphs, describe what your bill would change about existing law. In addition, you will need to identify the agency/agencies responsible for the implementation of your bill, as well as any amount of funds to be appropriated for its purposes.

Vote: majority Appropriation: yes Fiscal Committee: yes Local Program: yes

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

SECTION 1.

The Office of Emergency services shall administer and establish the First Responder Wellness Grant Program

SEC. 2.

- (a) The purpose of this program is to provide financial support to local organizations for the development, expansion, and enforcement of programs designed to improve the mental health and resilience of first responders; including firefighters, peace officers, and emergency medical personnel.
- (b) Grant funds may be used for, but are not limited to, the following purposes:
 - (1) Establishing or expanding peer support and mental health programs

- (2) Provide counseling and psychological services specifically tailored to the needs of first responders
- (3) Training in stress management, and suicide prevention practices
- (4) Provide family support for spouses and children of first responders

(C) The office of emergency services shall adopt guidelines for the administration of the program, such as eligibility and requirements to be a grant recipient

(B) The office of emergency services shall also encourage first responders to collaborate with non-profit organizations, mental health professionals, and veteran first responders for the delivery of this wellness program.

SEC. 2. The sum of twenty-five million (\$25,000,00) will hereby be appropriated from the general fund to the office of emergency services for the purpose of establishing a First Responder Wellness grant program.

- (1) The grant will only be allocated to whose agency applied to grant and met all requirements and eligibility
- (2) Once agency allocates grant, it must be intended for mental health and wellness program
- (3) If agency caught misusing grant, office of emergency services can fine agency to redistribute