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SENATE BILL NO. 140

Offered January 14, 2026

Prefiled January 6, 2026

A BILL to amend and reenact § 9.1-203.1 of the Code of Virginia, relating to Department of Fire Programs; mental health awareness training.

Patron—McPike

Referred to Committee on General Laws and Technology

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That § 9.1-203.1 of the Code of Virginia is amended and reenacted as follows:

§ 9.1-203.1. Firefighter mental health awareness training.

A. Each fire department as defined in § 27-6.01 shall develop curricula for mental health awareness training for its personnel, which shall include training regarding the following:

1. Understanding signs and symptoms of cumulative stress, depression, anxiety, exposure to acute and chronic trauma, compulsive behaviors, and addiction;
2. Combating and overcoming stigmas;
3. Responding appropriately to aggressive behaviors such as domestic violence and harassment;
4. Accessing available mental health treatment and resources; and
5. Managing stress, self-care techniques, and resiliency.

B. Any fire department may develop the mental health awareness training curricula in conjunction with other fire departments or firefighter stakeholder groups or may use any training program, developed by any entity, that satisfies the criteria set forth in subsection A.

~~C. Firefighters who receive mental health awareness training in accordance with this section~~ *The Department of Fire Programs shall receive appropriate continuing education credits from the Department of Fire Programs and the Virginia Fire Services Board develop a standardized training program that satisfies the criteria set forth in subsection A. Each fire department may use such standardized training program as guidance in developing its own mental health awareness training for its personnel.*