



2025 SENATE BILL 318

June 11, 2025 - Introduced by Senators JAMES, PFAFF, RATCLIFF and SPREITZER, cosponsored by Representatives DONOVAN, ANDERSON, BARE, B. JACOBSON, BROWN, BRILL, CALLAHAN, DESMIDT, EMERSON, GOEBEN, GUNDRUM, JOHNSON, KAUFERT, KREIBICH, MELOTIK, MIRESE, NOVAK, PALMERI, PENTERMAN, PIWOWARCZYK, PRADO, ROE, SHEEHAN, STEFFEN, STUBBS, SUBECK, TUSLER and UDELL. Referred to Committee on Judiciary and Public Safety.

- 1 **AN ACT** *to create* 16.23 of the statutes; **relating to:** small law enforcement
- 2 agency grant pilot program.

Analysis by the Legislative Reference Bureau

This bill requires the Department of Administration to establish and administer a pilot program to provide grants to small law enforcement agencies to pay training costs for new law enforcement and tribal law enforcement officers. The bill defines “small law enforcement agency” to mean a police department, tribal police department, combined protective services department, or sheriff’s office that employs no more than 25 full-time equivalent, nonsupervisory law enforcement or tribal law enforcement officers. Under the bill, an agency may apply for a grant if it receives notice that a currently employed officer will be leaving or retiring from the agency within six months or if the agency has at least a 20 percent vacancy rate in its authorized officer positions.

The bill requires the grants be used only to pay for training a student who is enrolled in a program to become a law enforcement or tribal law enforcement officer and for the on-the-job training costs the agency incurs during the first six months of that individual’s employment. The bill requires any individual whose training is paid for under the pilot program to commit to work for the small law enforcement agency for one year following the training. If the individual does not fulfill the commitment because he or she voluntarily leaves employment or is terminated for cause, DOA may seek repayment from the individual of the training costs on a

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prorated basis. Under the bill, the pilot program terminates 18 months after all grant funding has been disbursed.

For further information see the state fiscal estimate, which will be printed as an appendix to this bill.

The people of the state of Wisconsin, represented in senate and assembly, do enact as follows:

1 **SECTION 1.** 16.23 of the statutes is created to read:

2 **16.23 Small law enforcement agency training pilot program. (1)**

3 DEFINITIONS. In this section:

4 (a) “Law enforcement officer” has the meaning given in s. 165.85 (2) (c).

5 (b) “Law enforcement officer recruit” means a law enforcement officer or
6 tribal law enforcement officer employed on a probationary or temporary basis in
7 compliance with the minimum recruitment qualifications set by the law
8 enforcement standards board under s. 165.85 (3) (b).

9 (c) “Preservice law enforcement officer student” means an individual who
10 meets the minimum recruitment qualifications set by the law enforcement
11 standards board under s. 165.85 (3) (b) and who enrolls in preparatory training
12 under s. 165.85 (4) (a) 1. prior to employment as a law enforcement officer or tribal
13 law enforcement officer.

14 (d) “Small law enforcement agency” means any of the following that employs
15 25 or fewer full-time equivalent law enforcement officers or tribal law enforcement
16 officers who are not supervisors:

17 1. A police department.

18 2. A tribal police department.

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1 3. A combined protective services department under s. 60.553, 61.66, or 62.13
2 (2e).

3 4. A sheriff's office.

4 (e) "Tribal law enforcement officer" has the meaning given in s. 165.85 (2) (g).

5 (2) ADMINISTRATION. The department shall establish and administer a pilot
6 program to provide training grants to small law enforcement agencies. The
7 program shall provide for all of the following:

8 (a) The department shall maintain a list of small law enforcement agencies in
9 this state and make the list available to law enforcement agencies in this state.

10 (b) A small law enforcement agency may apply for a training grant, using a
11 form created by the department, if any of the following criteria are met:

12 1. The agency has been notified that a law enforcement officer or tribal law
13 enforcement officer it employs will, within 6 months, be retiring or leaving the
14 agency.

15 2. The agency has a 20 percent or higher vacancy rate in its authorized law
16 enforcement officer or tribal law enforcement officer positions.

17 (c) A small law enforcement agency shall use a grant awarded under the
18 program to pay costs only for the following training:

19 1. Preparatory training under s. 165.85 (4) (a) 1. for a preservice law
20 enforcement officer student who will be employed by the small law enforcement
21 agency after completion of the training.

22 2. Compensation and other employment costs for up to 6 months of on-the-job
23 training of a law enforcement officer recruit whose preparatory training costs were
24 paid under subd. 1.

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1 (c) If the department receives a grant application from a small law
2 enforcement agency on the list in par. (a) and money is available under the
3 program, the department shall, within one week of receiving the application,
4 distribute sufficient moneys to pay for training under par. (c) 1. or 2. occurring
5 while the application is being reviewed by the department. The department shall
6 seek reimbursement of such moneys from the agency if the department
7 subsequently denies the application. If the department approves the application,
8 the department shall distribute the training grant as soon as practicable to the
9 agency.

10 (d) If a small law enforcement agency received reimbursement for training a
11 preservice law enforcement officer student or law enforcement officer recruit from
12 the law enforcement standards board under s. 165.85 (5) (b), the amount of a grant
13 received under this section may not exceed the difference between the amount
14 reimbursed and the actual costs incurred by the agency.

15 (e) A preservice law enforcement officer student or law enforcement officer
16 recruit whose training costs are paid for with a grant under the program shall
17 commit to working at the small law enforcement agency that received the grant for
18 one year after the training has ended. If the individual does not fulfill the
19 commitment due to any reason besides termination other than for cause, the
20 department may seek repayment from the individual of the training costs paid for
21 by the grant on a prorated basis.

22 (f) A small law enforcement agency that receives a grant under the program
23 may exclude a law enforcement officer recruit whose training costs were paid by the

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1 grant in any required maintenance of effort for law enforcement officer staffing for
2 6 months after the recruit completes training.

3 (g) The program terminates 18 months after all moneys available under the
4 program have been disbursed, as determined by the secretary. After that date, the
5 department shall continue to make reasonable efforts to seek repayment under par.
6 (e).

7 (END)