

HB 59S01 – First Responder Mental Health Amendments (Rep Eliason)

**Anticipated Fiscal Impact for the State Health Plan:
\$9,000 annually for State Risk Pool**

Summary

1 Sub HB 59 clarifies that first responders' mental health benefits would apply to forensic interviewers, investigators or prosecutors of sexual crimes against children, and private law enforcement agencies. In addition, it added definitions for retirees and separated employees and clarified that these benefits would also apply to separated employees for three years following separation or retirement. While benefits for active employees are paid through the health plan, benefits for retirees or separated individuals no longer covered would be paid through a separate benefit outside of the health plan - which would mostly be outside of PEHP. If the State wanted to offer this benefit for retirees or separated employees, they may do so through their Employee Assistance Program (EAP) and Blomquist/Hale which provides certain mental health services. Those funds for the State's EPA are paid out of the PEHP state employee risk pool.

Assuming this substitute bill applies to State employees and retirees, we would estimate an increase of costs of an additional \$9,000/year in EAP expenses which includes \$6,000 for retiree spouses as we discussed in our first response to this bill, and \$3,000 for certain separated employees and spouses. This substitute bill would increase the people that could use those visits to retiree spouses of first responders as well as certain separated employees and spouses, and also extend those visits for three years from retirement or separation. We have not been tracking separated employees, but would assume an additional 2.5 visits/month (or 5% of the total current visits) or 30 visits/year. For both separated employees and spouses and retiree spouses, we would expect an additional 90 visits per year at an average of \$100/visit. Thus, if this bill is applicable to the state, the state would pay an additional estimated \$9,000 in EAP expenses over what it currently pays for active employees and retirees.

PEHP – no	Updated 01/23/2023 14:50:50 by David Hansen
State Revenue - no	Updated 01/23/2023 14:50:49 by David Hansen
Local Government - no	Updated 01/23/2023 14:50:45 by David Hansen
Business / Individual - no	Updated 01/23/2023 14:50:48 by David Hansen