



Economic Impact Analysis Virginia Department of Planning and Budget

6 VAC 20-180 – Crime Prevention Specialists

Department of Criminal Justice Services

March 11, 2004

The Department of Planning and Budget (DPB) has analyzed the economic impact of this proposed regulation in accordance with Section 2.2-4007.G of the Administrative Process Act and Executive Order Number 21 (02). Section 2.2-4007.G requires that such economic impact analyses include, but need not be limited to, the projected number of businesses or other entities to whom the regulation would apply, the identity of any localities and types of businesses or other entities particularly affected, the projected number of persons and employment positions to be affected, the projected costs to affected businesses or entities to implement or comply with the regulation, and the impact on the use and value of private property. The analysis presented below represents DPB's best estimate of these economic impacts.

Summary of the Proposed Regulation

§9.1-161 of the Code of Virginia mandates that the Criminal Justice Services Board establish minimum standards for certification of crime prevention specialists.

The proposed regulation (1) expands the crime prevention specialist program to allow the chief executive of any local, state, or federal government agency to designate staff serving in a law enforcement, crime prevention, or criminal justice capacity to become certified as a crime prevention specialist, (2) updates the topics in which training is required in order to be certified or recertified as a crime prevention specialist, (3) requires that individuals applying for certification receive additional training in at least four of the topics listed in the regulation and individuals applying for recertification receive additional training in at least two of the topics listed in the regulation, and (4) adds a section to the existing regulation allowing the Department of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) to revoke certification under certain circumstances.

The proposed regulation also includes changes that clarify the intent and various other aspects of the regulation.

Estimated Economic Impact

(1) The proposed regulation expands the crime prevention specialist program to allow the chief executive of any local, state, or federal government agency to designate staff serving in a law enforcement, crime prevention, or criminal justice capacity to become certified as a crime prevention specialist. Under the existing regulation, only chief executives of local or state law enforcement agencies could designate one of their employees to become trained and certified as a crime prevention specialist. The proposed change is mandated by Chapter 209 of the 2002 Acts of Assembly.

The proposed change could result in more individuals working at local, state, and federal agencies in the areas of law enforcement, crime prevention, and criminal justice seeking and obtaining certification as a crime prevention specialist. DCJS estimates that the proposed regulation is likely to result in 40-50 additional applications per year. DCJS does not intend to charge either a certification fee or a training fee. Both services are to be provided free of charge.

The training required to be a crime prevention specialist is currently offered through DCJS to the various state and local law enforcement agencies free of charge. The Code of Virginia mandates that the Crime Prevention Center at DCJS provide basic and advanced crime prevention training. Training costs include the cost of hiring instructors, purchasing course-related materials, providing meeting facilities and audiovisual equipment, and any administrative overhead. According to DCJS, it costs an average of \$1,000 per training day for a class of 25-30 participants. The agency currently provides the Virginia Crime Prevention Association approximately \$75,000 a year to conduct 25-30 training courses each year (approximately five basic courses and 20-25 advanced courses). DCJS believes that variety and volume of training program currently offered are sufficient to meet the training needs of the additional applicants. Thus, no additional training costs are likely to be incurred as a result of the proposed regulation.

DCJS also incurs administrative costs in reviewing applications and issuing certifications/recertifications. The agency currently receives approximately 80 applications for certification and recertification a year. It takes 10% of the program administration specialists' time to process these applications, amounting to approximately \$5,000 a year or \$100 per

application. With 40-50 additional applications expected per year, it could cost the agency between \$4,000 and \$5,000 a year to process these applications.

The proposed change could also produce some economic benefits. Individuals involved in school and public housing security, crime prevention personnel at military bases, and employees of state agencies such as DCJS, the Department of Juvenile Justice, the Department of Transportation, and the Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control will now be allowed to train and be certified as a crime prevention specialist free of charge. This is likely to encourage individuals involved in crime prevention and criminal justice at the local, state, or federal level to get the required training and be certified. To the extent that the required training improves crime prevention efforts at the local, state, and federal level and provides for improved public safety, the proposed change is likely to produce economic benefits.

The net economic impact of the proposed change will depend on whether the additional costs imposed by the proposed change are greater than or less than its benefits. The extent to which the training required for certification improves crime prevention efforts is not known. The proposed regulation does not prohibit or limit any local, state, or federal agency from assigning personnel not certified as crime prevention specialists to crime prevention tasks. Thus, it is likely that employees at local, state, or federal agencies are currently involved and experienced in crime prevention activities although they may not be certified as crime prevention specialists. The extent to which additional training is likely to improve their performance and effectiveness is not clear. In the absence of a precise estimate of the benefits of the proposed change, it is not possible to determine the net economic impact of the proposed change. However, given that the costs involved and the number of additional applicants expected are small, the net economic impact of the proposed change is not likely to be very large.

(2) The proposed regulation updates the topics in which training is required in order to be certified or recertified as a crime prevention specialist. The proposed regulation includes two additional topics (crime prevention through environmental design and security assessments) as part of the introductory crime prevention training required to be certified and six additional topics (such as homeland security/terrorism prevention and identity theft) as part of the additional crime prevention training required to be certified or recertified. The proposed change

is intended to update training topics for crime prevention specialists to better reflect current types of crimes and threats.

While the number of hours of introductory training is held constant at 40 hours, individuals seeking to be certified as crime prevention specialists will be required to cover two additional topics. The increase in the number of topics for additional training to be certified or recertified is not likely to have a significant impact. Individuals seeking to be certified or recertified are not required to cover all the training topics listed under additional crime prevention training. Instead they are required to complete the required number of hours of training in a subset of these topics. Thus, the net economic impact of the proposed change will depend on whether the benefits of requiring crime prevention specialists to go through introductory training in a wider variety of topics is greater than or less than the cost of reducing the amount of time they spend training in any individual topic. A precise estimate of these benefits and costs are not available at this time.

(3) The proposed regulation requires that individuals applying for certification receive additional training in at least four of the topics listed in the regulation and individuals applying for recertification receive additional training in at least two of the topics listed in the regulation. Under the existing regulation, they are required to receive additional training in at least two topics in order to be certified and in at least one topic in order to be recertified. The proposed change is intended to increase the breadth of knowledge of individuals certified as crime prevention specialists.

While the number of hours of additional training is held constant at 80 hours for certification and 40 hours for recertification, individuals seeking to be certified or recertified as crime prevention specialists will be required to cover twice the number of topics in the same amount of time. The net economic impact of the proposed change will depend on whether the benefits of requiring crime prevention specialists to have additional training in a wider variety of topics is greater than or less than the cost of reducing the amount of time they spend on any individual topic. A precise estimate of these benefits and costs are not available at this time.

(4) The proposed regulation adds a section to the existing regulation allowing DCJS to revoke certification under certain circumstances. These include the misrepresentation of qualifications, conviction of a crime, and leaving government employment. The existing

regulation did not provide for the decertification of individuals previously certified as crime prevention specialists.

The proposed change is likely to have a small positive net economic impact. To the extent that the proposed change provides for individuals deemed to no longer be qualified to serve as crime prevention specialists to be decertified, the proposed change is likely to improve public safety and produce economic benefits.

Businesses and Entities Affected

The proposed regulation is likely to affect all individuals seeking to be certified or recertified as crime prevention specialists. Individuals employed at various local, state, and federal agencies will now be eligible to apply for certification. Certification will require individuals to cover two additional topics during the 40-hour introductory training. Certification or recertification will require individuals to cover twice the number of topics currently covered during the 80-hour additional training for certification and the 40-hour additional training for recertification. Individuals who are discovered to have misrepresented their qualifications, been convicted of a crime, or have left government employment may have their certification revoked by DCJS.

According to DCJS, there currently are approximately 450 certified crime prevention specialists operating in Virginia. The agency receives approximately 80 applications for certification and recertification per year. The proposed regulation is likely to result in an additional 40-50 applications per year.

Localities Particularly Affected

The proposed regulation will apply to all localities in the Commonwealth. Localities will now be able to designate staff serving in a crime prevention or criminal justice capacity to become certified as crime prevention specialists.

While the training and certification costs for these employees will be borne by DCJS, the localities will incur some economic costs associated with sending their employees for crime prevention training. The time taken to get the required training must be valued as time that would have otherwise been used for regular work-related activities. By diverting time away from regular work responsibilities, sending employees for crime prevention training is likely to

result in a loss of productivity and impose some economic costs. There are also likely to be travel-related costs to be borne by localities, including costs related to traveling to and from the training center and costs related to any overnight stays. However, along with these costs, localities could also receive economic benefits in terms of improved public safety by having individuals trained and certified in crime prevention.

Projected Impact on Employment

The proposed regulation is not likely to have a significant impact on employment in Virginia.

Effects on the Use and Value of Private Property

To the extent that the proposed regulation increases the number of individuals qualified to serve as crime prevention specialists and the quality of their training and leads to an increase in the effectiveness of crime prevention efforts and improves public safety in Virginia, it is likely to have a positive effect on property values in the state.